

Vocabulary Options

Dust Bowl: a series of dust storms that created an environmental disaster in the western part of the United States in the 1930's

Clean Water Act: a public law enacted in 1972 that stopped industries from dumping all pollutants directly into streams and causing water bodies to catch on fire; requires the development of comprehensive programs for preventing, reducing or eliminating the pollution of the navigable waters and groundwater and improving the sanitary condition of surface and underground waters

Watershed: an area of land that drains into a stream, river, lake or body of water

Point Source Pollution: pollution discharged into water bodies from specific, identifiable pipes or points such as a factory

Nonpoint Source Pollution: pollution that cannot be traced to a specific origin or starting point, but seems to flow from many different sources; these pollutants are generally carried off the land by stormwater runoff

Eutrophication: when excess nutrient runoff from fertilizers cause algae growth and decreasing oxygen which can lead to fish kills and very green bodies of water

Conservation: protecting and preserving natural resources

Stormwater: water that originates during precipitation events and goes directly into drains which lead directly to waterways

Best Management Practices: systems, activities and structures that human beings can construct or practice to prevent nonpoint source pollution

Buffer: vegetation along a stream or water body that will keep the stream bank in place and remove some pollutants from groundwater rushing into the stream

Grade 4 'The Atmosphere' Standard:

Erosion: the gradual wearing down of land by water, wind, or melting snow causing soil losses

Water Cycle: process in which water moves from the surface of the Earth to the air and then back again

Condensation: process by which a gas changes into a liquid

Infiltration: the process by which water on the ground surface enters the soil

Runoff: the portion of precipitation that remains on the land until it ultimately reaches streams, rivers, lakes, and other water bodies

Precipitation: another name for rain, snow, sleet, and hail

Evaporation: process by which a liquid changes into a gas

Grade 5 'Interdependence' Standard:

Environment: everything that surrounds and affects an organism, including living and nonliving things; a group of living things and the environment in which they live

Ecosystem: collection of all the organisms that live in a particular place, together with their nonliving environment

Food chain: the path of energy from one organism to another in an ecosystem; an arrangement of the organisms of an ecological community according to the order of predation (preying or consuming)

Predator/prey: An animal that hunts, catches, and eats another animal/an animal that is hunted, caught, and eaten by another animal

Natural disaster: Something natural, not a result of humans, which destroys a lot of things. (hurricane, tornado, earthquake, etc)

Threatened: when species numbers are going down steadily, scientists say it is threatened actively