

Environmental Science Syllabus 2018-2019

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Instructions for Parents to Access Instructional Materials:

<https://www.ck12.org/user:bwvzdgfibguzn2vkdubnbwfpbc5jb20./book/Introduction-to-Environmental-Science/>

<https://www.ck12.org/book/CK-12-Earth-Science-For-Middle-School/>

Hardback Textbook: Holt Environmental Science

The majority of the student's assignments will be located on Schoology/Google Classroom.

Major Assignments: You will have a project/major assignment due each quarter, based on one or more of the standards covered that quarter. Information, links, and timelines for these will be posted on Schoology.

Classroom variety and the reasoning behind it:

This class utilizes many different methods of learning. These include class lecture (with feedback) and note taking of various types, games, drawings and other hands-on activities, and projects. There are many reasons for this, but two main ones are these: 1. This variety has students activate different areas of the brain. The more areas of the brain we use, the more likely students are to remember and understand, and we are also more likely to hit on strengths for each student. 2. Students are more engaged when they do a variety of activities.

Make-up work and work improvement:

The make-up work guidelines are stated in the student handbook. I often allow students to correct and/or improve assignments, if they have made a good effort in the first place and have completed the assignment in a timely manner. I allow students to improve work because the purpose of classes is learning, and sometimes students are still learning. That said, we do have a schedule to which we must try to stick, so improvements can't go on forever!

Homework:

Homework for my students will often be something like reading or studying or working on a project. They will rarely have classic homework, especially homework that takes a great deal of time. The deal I make with my students is that if they give me really good effort in class, homework will be almost unnecessary and will be kept to a bare minimum.

Grading Policy

Projects and Tests - 50%

Quizzes - 30%

Classwork/Homework - 20%

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE: ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Quarter 1

EVSC.ESS2: Earth's Systems

- 1) Research the development of the theory of plate tectonics. Use the theory to construct an explanation for how changes in Earth's crust cause mountain formation, volcanoes, earthquakes, and tsunamis. Provide evidence to support the explanation using information pertaining to plate boundary types (divergent, convergent, transform).
- 2) Considering Earth's position within our solar system, use a model to demonstrate the causes of day length, seasons, and climate.
- 3) Analyze the composition of the Earth's atmosphere. Obtain information and use graphs to observe patterns regarding stability and change within the Earth's atmospheric composition (O₂, N₂, CO₂, etc.) over geologic time.
- 4) Differentiate weather and climate and analyze and interpret data examining naturally occurring patterns pertaining to each.
- 5) Plan and carry out an investigation examining the chemical and physical properties of water and the impact of water on Earth's topography. Analyze data and share findings.
- 6) Develop a model to explain soil formation and the flow of matter in the rock cycle.

Quarter 2

EVSC.LS2: Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics

- 1) Using a variety of data sources, construct an explanation for the impact of climate, latitude, altitude, geology, and hydrology patterns on plant and animal life in various terrestrial biomes.
- 2) Develop an explanation of behavioral and physical adaptations organisms have for life in aquatic habitats with varying chemical and physical features.
- 3) Using mathematical models, support arguments regarding the effects of biotic and abiotic factors on carrying capacity for populations within an ecosystem.
- 4) Compare and contrast production (photosynthesis, chemosynthesis) and respiratory (aerobic respiration, anaerobic respiration, consumption, decomposition) processes responsible for the cycling of matter and flow of

energy through an ecosystem. Using evidence, construct an argument regarding the importance of homeostasis in maintaining these processes in ecosystems.

5) Use a mathematical model to explain energy flow through an ecosystem. Using the first and second laws of thermodynamics, construct an explanation for: A) necessity for constant energy input; B) limitations on energy transfer from one trophic level to the next; and, C) limitations on number of trophic levels that can be supported.

6) Evaluate the interdependence among major biogeochemical cycles (water, carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus) in an ecosystem and recognize the importance each cycle has in maintaining ecosystem stability.

7) Examine stability and change within an ecosystem by using a model of succession (primary or secondary) to predict impacts of disruption on an ecosystem.

EVSC.LS4: Biological Change: Unity and Diversity

1) Construct an explanation based on scientific evidence for mechanisms of natural selection that result in behavioral, anatomical, and physiological adaptations in populations.

2) Justify claims with scientific evidence that changes in environmental conditions lead to speciation and extinction.

3) Evaluate the impact of habitat fragmentation and destruction, invasive species, overharvesting, pollution, and climate change on biodiversity (genetic, species, and ecosystem).

4) Engage in argument from scientific evidence critiquing effectiveness of the Endangered Species Act. Give specific examples to support your argument.

Quarter 3 and Quarter 4

EVSC.ESS3: Earth and Human Activity

1) Research Earth's natural resources (renewable and nonrenewable resources). Construct an argument from evidence supporting the claim that a particular type of resource is important for humans.

2) Interpret graphical data representing global human population growth over time. Look for patterns within this data and construct possible explanations for the patterns. Revise the explanations as needed based on research.

3) Obtain and evaluate information regarding demographics for a variety of countries. Construct an explanation for varying fertility rates and life expectancies between countries and throughout human history. Taking into account demographic transition, predict what trends are likely to occur in various countries over time.

4) Gather, organize, analyze, and present data on current land use trends by humans. Based on analysis, predict future trends. 93

- 5) Plan and carry out an investigation examining best management practices in water usage, agriculture, forestry, urban/suburban development, mining, or fishing and communicate findings.
- 6) Use a model to make predictions regarding the impact of topsoil loss due to erosion resulting from human activity. Design, evaluate, and revise a solution to preserve topsoil.
- 7) Construct an argument including claim, evidence, and scientific reasoning regarding the impact of the Green Revolution on agricultural practices, food availability, and the environment.
- 8) Research information on the environmental impacts of genetically modified organisms and engage in debate regarding pros and cons of this agricultural technology.
- 9) Evaluate ecosystem services provided by forests ecosystems. Construct an explanation for human impact on these services.
- 10) Using scientific data, analyze effectiveness of conservation versus preservation efforts. Obtain and communicate information on organizations involved in protecting natural resources.
- 11) Define problems and suggest solutions associated with using, conserving, and recycling energy and mineral resources taking into account economic, social, and environmental costs and benefits.
- 12) Ask questions about technology needed to develop alternative energy sources and obtain information from various sources to answer those questions.
- 13) Analyze and interpret data on the effects of land, water, and air pollution on the environment and on human health. Propose solutions for minimizing pollution from specific sources.
- 14) Obtain and communicate information on environmental laws pertaining to the regulation of pollution and on regulatory agencies. Provide a specific example of how a given business/industry would comply with such regulations.
- 15) Evaluate current methods of waste management and reduction and design possible improvements.
- 16) Obtain, evaluate, and communicate scientific information tracing the breakdown of ozone caused by chlorofluorocarbons and the effectiveness of efforts to address this environmental problem.
- 17) Using mathematics and computational thinking, analyze data linking human activity to climate change. Design solutions to address human impacts on climate change.
- 18) Use mathematics to calculate ecological footprints. Develop a personal plan for reducing your impact on the environment.

6.ESS3: Earth and Human Activity 1) Differentiate between renewable and nonrenewable resources by asking questions about their availability and sustainability.

- 2) Investigate and compare existing and developing technologies that utilize renewable and alternative energy resources.
- 3) Assess the impacts of human activities on the biosphere including conservation, habitat management, species endangerment, and extinction.

6.ETS1: Engineering Design

- 1) Evaluate design constraints on solutions for maintaining ecosystems and biodiversity.
- 2) Design and test different solutions that impact energy transfer.