Environment: Vocabulary and Key Questions

Look up the meaning of these words and write your own definitions. Follow your interests and reputable sources to learn more about the environment.

Biodiversity: the variety of life and richness of species on the Earth or in a particular region

Biomimicry: respecting the wisdom of all species, using the biological process used in nature to reduce harm to the environment

Climate Change looks like large shifts in weather patterns. While there have been periods of natural climate change in the past, humans have made a significant global change because of fossil fuels, deforestation, and some farming practices.

Environmental Stewardship is the careful and responsible management of the natural environment, which is in our care.

Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Sustainability means taking care of the land and water, especially in regards to farming, in a way that it stays healthy for the long term.

Watershed is the area of land that drains to a specific body of water, such as a lake or river.

Watershed management is assuring healthy use of the land in the area in order to improve the quality of water and other natural resources.

Key Questions

- What are the environmental issues you observe in your own communities?
- What resources, like a local water treatment plant or a volunteer event, spark interest in what our community does for us and what we can do for our community?
- What are the bodies of water, parks, and natural resources in your community?
- How do you use your local natural resources? What does it take to keep them healthy? Whose responsibility is it to care for them?
- Communities work because of interconnectedness. What does it mean to be a global environmental community?
- How healthy are our land, air, and water? What contaminants and practices pose risks to environmental health?
- How can government, business, and nonprofits work together to sustain the environment and shared resources?
- How does responding to a disaster spark discussions about water and land management and lead to research and action?