

THE OCEAN

Let's learn about the ocean and why it's so important!



The Earth has one big connected ocean, yet there are many ocean basins, such as the Atlantic, Pacific, Indian, Arctic and Southern.



The ocean covers about 70% of the planet's surface making ours a water world.



Most of the Earth's water (97%) is in the ocean.



All water on Earth is connected! Water evaporates from the earth's surface, falls as precipitation (rain, snow, sleet, etc.) onto the land and ocean, and returns to the ocean as river runoff and groundwater (underground) flow. This exchange of water is known as the hydrologic cycle.



Although the ocean is large, it is finite and resources are limited.



The ocean affects every human life! It supplies freshwater (most rain comes from the ocean) and nearly all Earth's oxygen.



The ocean influences our planet's weather and climate and affects human health.



The first life is thought to have started in the ocean. The earliest evidence of life is found in the ocean.



Ocean life ranges in size from the smallest virus to the largest animal that has lived on Earth, the blue whale.



Estuaries are coastal areas where freshwater and saltwater intermingle. Estuaries provide important and productive nursery areas for many marine and aquatic species.



From the ocean we get foods, medicines, as well as mineral and energy resources. The ocean provides jobs, serves as a highway for transportation of goods and people, and plays an important role in national security.



Much of the world's population lives in coastal areas. And, coastal regions are susceptible to natural hazards such as tsunamis, hurricanes, cyclones, sea level change, and storm surge.

