

5th Grade Earth Science
Human Interaction with Earth Vocabulary

1. Recycle – to properly dispose of used resources so they can be reprocessed into new products
2. Conservation – to protect resources and avoid wasteful and destructive use
3. Natural Disaster – catastrophe caused by nature that causes great damage or loss of life (flood, tornado, hurricane)
4. Man-made disaster – a disastrous event caused directly by human actions (oil spills, nuclear explosions, fires)
5. Pollution – the introduction of harmful substances or products into the environment
6. Renewable resource – a resource that can be replenished as fast as it is used (oxygen, water, solar, biomass)
7. Nonrenewable resource – a resource that takes longer than our lifetime to replenish such as fossil fuels (oil *also known as petroleum*, coal, and gas)
8. Watershed– the region or area drained by a river or stream
9. Erosion – the loss of soil as it is carried off by wind or water
10. Alternative energy source – energy that can replace or reduce the need for traditional fossil-fuel sources (solar, wind, nuclear, geothermal)
11. Natural resource - materials or substances that occur in nature and can be used (minerals, forests, water, fertile land)
12. Sustainable – a system that maintains its own kind by using techniques that allow for continual use

Important words to know:

1. Levee – an embankment designed to prevent the flooding of a river
2. Biodegradable – capable of decaying through the action of living organisms
3. Deforestation – to clear trees from an area
4. Landfill – a low area of land that is built up from deposits of solid waste in layers covered by soil
5. Fertilizer – a chemical used to enrich the soil
6. Greenhouse gas - a gas that contributes to the greenhouse effect by absorbing radiant heat and chemical compounds such as carbon dioxide
7. No-till farming - the practice of planting crops without breaking up the soil
8. Fertile – bearing, producing, or capable of producing vegetation, crops, fruit
9. Emissions – the release of toxic fumes
10. Biomass – organic matter used as fuel (wood, crops, manure, garbage)

