

ETWINNING PROJECT : TAKE ACTION FOR YOUR ENVIRONMENT
GREENHOUSE GAS: what is it ? How can we avoid it ?

Read about global warming and greenhouse gases. Then answer the questions that follow.

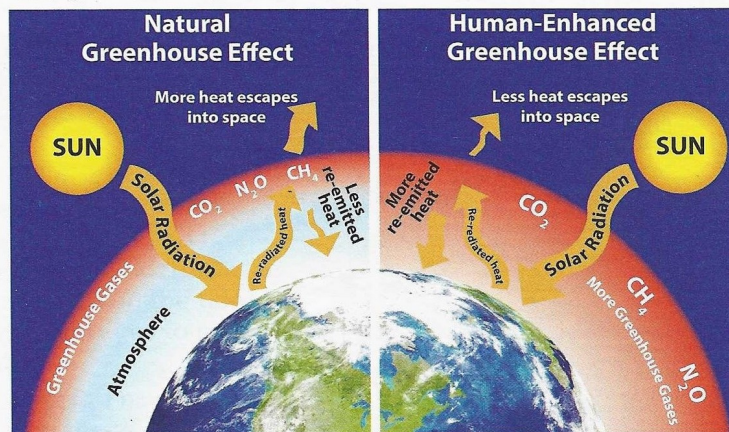
The Greenhouse Effect

The Earth gets energy from the Sun in the form of sunlight. The Earth's surface absorbs some of this energy and heats up. [...] The Earth cools down by giving off this energy in a different form, called infrared radiation. But before all this radiation can escape to outer space, greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, like carbon dioxide (CO₂), absorb some of it, which makes the atmosphere warmer. As the atmosphere gets warmer, it makes the Earth's surface warmer, too. This is called the greenhouse effect.

Greenhouse gases

Greenhouse gases trap heat in the atmosphere, which makes the Earth warmer. This can have disastrous effects on the Earth's weather and change the environment

with harmful effects on wildlife, plants and humans. People are adding several types of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere which can make matters even worse.



From A Student's Guide to Global Climate Change, EPA

GLOSSARY

carbon footprint

the amount of carbon dioxide or carbon compounds released into the atmosphere by the activities of an individual, company or country

MEDC

a country that is more economically developed at this point in the twenty-first century

CO₂ emissions

the release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere as a pollutant

radiation

energy that comes from a particular source

- What is the name of the energy that the Earth reflects off its surface?
- Look closely at the diagrams above. State one major difference between the natural greenhouse effect and the one caused by human activity.
- Why is there more radiated heat in the right-hand part of the diagram?

TOP TIP

Make sure you use the correct units or percentages when you are answering questions on graphs and pie charts. For example:

Private transport accounts for 10% of a person's carbon footprint.

In 2005, carbon dioxide emissions stood at 28 000 million metric tons.