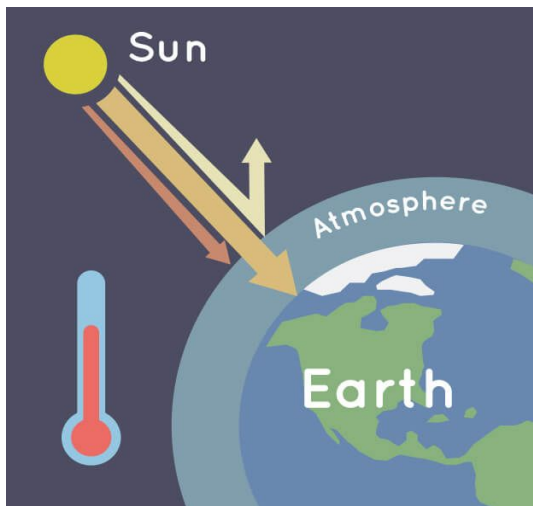


What is the Greenhouse Effect?



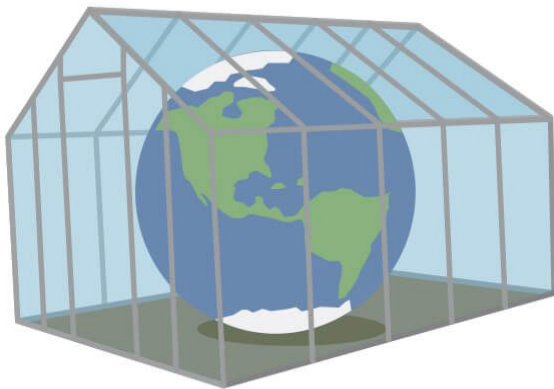
The greenhouse effect works ... like a greenhouse! A greenhouse is a building with glass walls and a glass roof. Greenhouses are used to grow plants year round because they stay warm inside.

Gases in the atmosphere, such as carbon dioxide, trap heat just like the glass roof of a greenhouse. These heat-trapping gases are called greenhouse gases.



During the day, the Sun shines through the atmosphere. Earth's surface warms up in the sunlight. At night, Earth's surface cools, releasing heat back into the air. But some of the heat is trapped by the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Human activities are changing Earth's natural greenhouse effect. Burning fossil fuels like coal and oil puts more carbon dioxide into our atmosphere. Too much of these greenhouse gases can cause Earth's atmosphere to trap more and more heat.



This causes global warming, in which Earth's overall average temperature increases, or warms up.

Understand Main Ideas:

1. What is the greenhouse effect?
2. What are greenhouse gases?
3. What is global warming?
4. What human activities contribute to global warming?

Think Critically:

5. Describe at least two ways in which humans can reduce the greenhouse effect on Earth?