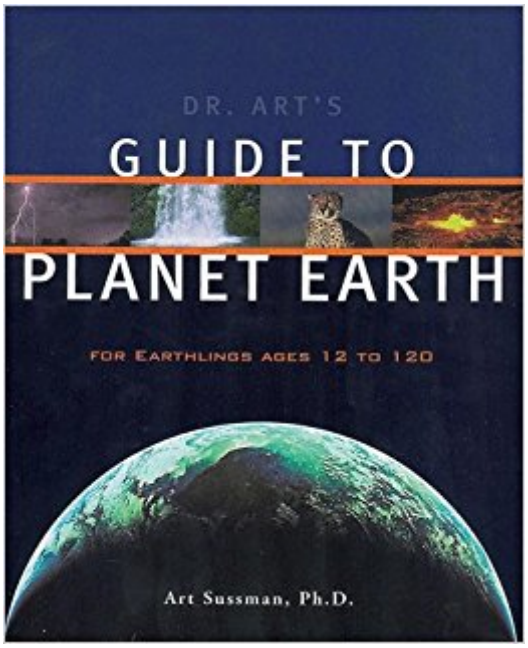
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Dr. Art's Guide To Planet Earth : For Earthlings Ages 12 To 120



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Synopsis

Too often the term "sustainable living" carries ponderous overtones, as if only government policymakers or serious academics could understand the key ideas. Dr. Art’s Guide to Planet Earth explains the Earth’s cycles in a lively and colorful way that is comprehensible to Earthlings who are normal curious citizens of the planet, including students of all ages.Providing a remarkably accessible introduction to the scientific discipline known as "systems theory," Dr. Art describes the three main components that comprise existence on Earth--matter, energy, and life. Next he explains the reciprocal loops that define "Earth’s operating system"--matter cycles, energy flows, and life webs. The Earth continuously receives energy from the sun, which directly or indirectly fuels all our vital processes, then leaves the planet as heat that flows to outer space. Dr. Art celebrates the vast and intricate network of relationships that connect the planet’s organisms with each other and with the cycles of matter and flows of energy. The book concludes with practical advice about what we can actually do to live in environmentally healthy communities.The portrait of the planet presented here is one that provides a foundation for the world view of Chelsea Green’s Beyond the Limits and Believing Cassandra. This is not "Sustainable Living for Dummies" or even "Sustainable Living Lite," but rather a colorful, entertaining, and memorable introduction to a subject we all need to understand better--how our planet works."Dr. Art" Sussman is a scientist and nationally acclaimed educator who teaches complex environmental concepts in ways that are meaningful, innovative, and fun. He has performed his "Environmental Medicine Show" for students and teachers throughout the country. Through Dr. Art’s book, interactive show, and related Web sites, many more people will learn about the primary systems that govern a complex planet.The Children’s Book Council has selected the Chelsea Green publication Dr. Art’s Guide to Planet Earth as an "Outstanding Science Trade Book for Children for 2001." This award is the result of a cooperative project between the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) and the Children’s Book Council. Dr. Art’s Guide to Planet Earth was also highlighted as a "Selector’s Choice," a designation for books to which the review panelists responded with particular enthusiasm. The Children’s Book Council publishes the full list in the March 2001 issue of the NSTA publication "Science and Children," and displays copies of the selected books at meetings and conventions around the country.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

"...Highly readable book [recommended] for people of all ages...interested in learning how the earth's physical and life systems are interconnected." -- Dr. Bruce Alberts, President, National Academy of Sciences"...Vividly, clearly and concisely...Sussman explains how our planet works and what can happen when the balance of nature is upset." -- Dr. Jane Goodall, Ecologist and Author

Dr. Art Sussman is a biochemist by training who has worked as an educator and curriculum designer for over twenty years. He is the director of WestEd Eisenhower Regional Consortium for Science and Mathematics Education, a federally funded project that helps coordinate educational reform throughout California, Arizona, Nevada, and Utah. He is also a partner in EETAP, the nation's largest federally funded environmental education project. Dr. Art lives in San Francisco, California.

Not interested in science? The problem with science is that it gets so technical; the vocabulary, the process, the explanation and analysis of evidence. Dr. Art Sussman puts everything Earth science in a proper light. You do not have to be a scientist to wonder and care about Earth. Read this book and you will discover that geoscience is a study of how each process on Earth is connected to something else, and connected to us all. Especially useful is an explanation of the carbon cycle, the amount of time it spends locked up in various places; and why humanity should be consider how they use, treat, and control Earth and its resources.

I am an Earth Science teacher for 9th graders. I have found this book to be excellent for mapping out the sequence of my course topics and developing my curriculum. Also, it has been a great literacy tool for some of my students, who struggle with reading the textbook. I highly recommended this book for any teacher or student of Earth Science.

Finally, a book that takes on the Earth Systems instead of a collection of unconnected Earth facts. Dr. Art’s talent for describing the big picture through an interconnected systems approach provides the tool I’ve been waiting for as an educator and as a citizen of the global community. This readable and beautifully illustrated book is going to be the guide my students use as they travel the Earth Systems. With Dr. Art’s guide my students will learn about why the Earth is so extraordinary and what Earthlings can do when they think globally. I can’t wait to share Dr. Art’s Guide to Planet Earth with my fellow teachers and my friends. Thank you Dr. Art.

That the world we now live in is unsustainable should go without saying. Skyrocketing human populations put enormous pressure on the productive and absorptive capacities of Earth, outstripping her carrying capacity by some twenty percent. As ever more fisheries collapse, forests shrink, rangelands deteriorate, soils erode, species vanish, temperatures rise, rivers run dry, water tables fall, ozone fades and polar ice caps melt, the single most important question humanity has faced resonates ever louder: How can we live sustainably? Rather than naively banking on some techno-fix, Art believes that we must learn about earth systems in order to live in accord with those systems. In other words, he believes humanity must become ecologically literate.Written for "earthlings ages 12 to 120," Art’s Guide is at once light enough for youth to comprehend and yet comprehensive enough for adults. By breaking the subject down into three primary categories (matter systems, energy systems and life systems) he provides a simple framework for thinking about Earth’s systems within systems within systems within...you guessed it, more systems! Similarly, he explains the synergistic aspects of these systems, their deep interconnections and the complex feedback loops which work to balance or reinforce patterns of change: like the rising temp>CO2>greenhouse effect>rising temp feedback loop, commonly known as global warming.While elucidating these earth systems, Art stresses our deep interconnection with them. "Now, fill a glass with water," he says. "This glass that you hold in your hand today has more than ten million water molecules that once passed through the body of the buffalo, more than ten million water molecules that passed through the dinosaur and more than ten million water molecules that

passed through one of our African ancestors!" Along with many other passages throughout the book, the above passage shuns one the most pernicious dualisms in Western thought: namely, that humanity is somehow separate from the natural world.To keep things in perspective, Art includes a comprehensive discussion of current environmental issues: including habitat fragmentation, habitat destruction, pollution, excessive harvesting, introduction of exotic species and climate change. He also notes the major changes we must institute in order to prevent and mitigate further harm, from purchasing organic produce to selecting a home to limiting our consumption of red meat. Why red meat, you ask? I'll let Art answer that one.Part and parcel of this discussion is the typical corporation. As usual, Art takes a systems approach here. The traditional company inefficiently utilizes solar energy in the form of fossil fuels, minerals and biomass in order to produce finished goods. Processing these finished goods usually creates pollution and waste, much of it toxic. The company then sells the finished product (which is in many cases inefficient, highly-polluting and toxic itself) to willing if uninformed consumers. The consumer then uses the finished product and disposes of it, creating even more waste and introducing more pollutants into the biosphere. Thus, the modern corporation is wasteful, inefficient and ecological devastating.Art wants to close these waste loops. A sustainable company would utilize solar energy and renewable materials in an eco-efficient, non-toxic manner, thereby completely avoiding problems of pollution and waste. After selling or renting those products and services to the public, the company would then recycle all the materials back into the production of new eco-efficient products or safely reintroduce it the biosphere. In effect, a sustainable company would create zero waste. What a concept!From energy budgets to carbon cycles to the greenhouse effect, Art does not leave a stone unturned. The perfect educational tool, Art's Guide has the potential to help create a sustainable future, grounded upon a citizenry with enough environmental understanding to live harmoniously within the delicate web of life upon which we feed and are ultimately fed upon. Get a copy for your kids - but don't forget to read along!j.w.k.

I love this book! It was given to me as a guide for the Roots and Shoots program! Having had some basic Biology in college I was able to grasp everything and translate it for my seven-year-old daughter. The two of us have had a blast learning and relearning some pretty amazing facts about this great planet we call home! I would recommend this book to anyone who wants a fun and informative read! The chapters are broken into small enough parts that you don't feel like you're trudging through lenghty lectures with big scary words and ideas! I love this book!

This book is a rare gem! The concepts are described both visually and textually--even an adult could grasp the principles expressed here. It is a book every child in America should read or should read to his/her parents. Armed with this information, I now know how global warming occurs and how matter is recycled. If all of the adults governing our planet would read this easily understood manual, the world would indeed be a better place. Art Sussman, I thank you, my kids thank you and the world thanks you. Dr. Sussman is truly the Art of Science.

As a teacher of high school students of limited interest, each year I begin my integrated science class with Dr. Art. Students can read easily without tedious scientific concepts. Dr. Art's easy understanding of earth, it's balance and integration within itself allows students to understand how to respect our world. His illustrations are fun and yet he highlights what's important. I reread this book every summer just for fun!

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