











What is the atmosphere?

The atmosphere:

-  holds down the temperature on the surface of the Earth, which makes it possible for living organisms to exist;
-  determines the climate of the Earth;
-  filters many of the ultraviolet rays of the sun, which are harmful to people, plants and animals;
-  dissipates the smoke and noxious gases released as a result of natural processes and human activities;
-  serves as a reservoir of the various gases that sustain life;
-  plays a major role in the natural water cycle;
-  transmits sound waves, which makes hearing possible; and
-  is the medium in which various smells and flavours spread, which is important for the pollination of plants and the orientation of animals.

Plants and animals depend on the gases in the atmosphere.

Plants need carbon dioxide for photosynthesis.

Oxygen is released as a product of photosynthesis, and this oxygen is taken in by animals and human beings, who then exhale carbon dioxide.

