

Deep Ocean or Deep Space

What are the benefits of space and ocean exploration? Do they justify their costs? Which of the two is more important? It's all discussed in this short lesson.

Before you read

Match the words with the definitions.

atmosphere	the outer or top layer of something
exploration	a set of animals or plants with similar characteristics
resources	to show that something is reasonable, right, or true
to use up	a layer of gases surrounding the earth or another planet
to preserve	to finish a supply
surface	to protect, to maintain
species	the action of searching an area
to justify	all the materials available in our environment

Article

Today's guests on Discovery Now, Ronnie Jones and Johanna Flores, are here to discuss the question: Which is more important, space or ocean exploration? Ronnie?

I would definitely prefer to explore space rather than study the ocean. There's so much mystery beyond Earth's atmosphere. And we can learn more from research into space than most people realize. Without it we would probably never have inventions like phone cameras, ear thermometers, wireless headsets, and even clean energy technology.

I disagree. How about the benefits of underwater research for industry, for medicine, for technology? And it's much less expensive and a lot safer than space travel. Space exploration just isn't useful enough to justify the cost.

Good point. Can you justify the cost, Ronnie?

Of course. The earth is getting overcrowded, and it won't be long before we'll need other places to live. Solving future problems on Earth is worth any price.

It's less important to fix future problems than to fix current ones. People depend on the ocean for jobs, food, and even breathing! Ocean plants produce about 70 percent of Earth's oxygen. Maybe we should find ways to preserve our oceans' resources instead of using them up - which is a lot easier than trying to live in space.

But what about life in space? On Mars, for example, there's water, and where there's water, there could be life!

But we don't know for sure if any other planets support life. However, there's definitely life below the surface of the ocean we still know almost nothing about. We keep discovering amazing species deep under the water. Only about five to ten percent of the deep ocean has been explored. Overall, it is obvious to me that there are fewer benefits to space exploration.

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After you read

What's your take on the topic? Talk to a friend and see if they have the same idea. Also, try to use three new words that you have learned from the article.

