



TEACHING HUMAN DIGNITY

# What is Flourishing?

Human Flourishing and the  
Common Good



# Pre-Assessment

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- What does it mean to flourish? Do you know? Share what you think.
- What do you need to flourish? Is it the same as other people?
- What is the common good?
- How does your personal “good” relate to the “good” of others?





# Unit Introduction

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- In this Unit we will:
  - Consider what human communities need to flourish.
  - Learn about the concept of the common good and its critical attributes (characteristics).
  - Apply the concept of the common good to real-world situations.
- In order to do this...we first need to understand what communities are and what it means to flourish.
- Lesson #1 will lay the groundwork by exploring environmental ecosystems and their flourishing.



# Learning Objectives

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- What does it mean to flourish?
- What are characteristics of flourishing **environmental ecosystems**?
- How do humans influence the flourishing of **environmental ecosystems**?
- What are the characteristics of flourishing **human ecosystems**?
- How do humans influence the flourishing of **human ecosystems**?

# Poison Dart Frog

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What does a  
poison dart frog  
need to  
flourish?



# Poison Dart Frog

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- Territory/habitat
- Place to deposit eggs
- Water/humid environment
- Oxygen
- Food: ants, centipedes, mites
- Toxins from food
- Male and female frogs



What are different types of ecosystems?



# Ecosystems

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- **Forest:** Tropical Rainforest, Coniferous forest
- **Grassland:** Prairies, Savannahs
- **Deserts:** Hot, Cold
- **Tundra:** Arctic, Alpine
- **Freshwater:** Wetland, Stream, Lake
- **Marine:** Coral Reef, Estuary, Ocean

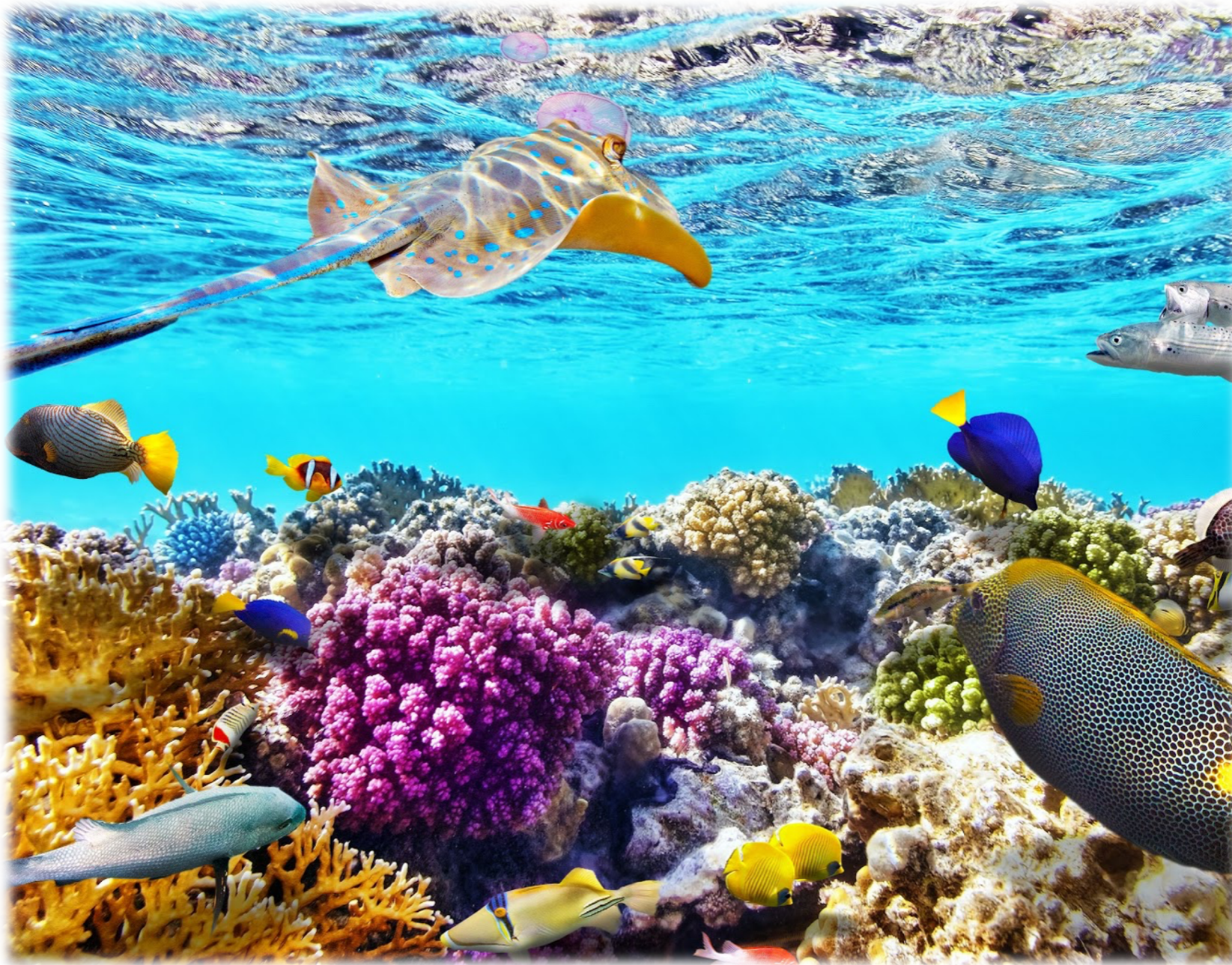






- What type of ecosystem is this?
- What are the various living/non-living entities? Imagine the animals that live in this ecosystem that you might not see in this image.
- Why is each important? What does each contribute?
- How are they interconnected?
- How do you know if this ecosystem is flourishing?





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# Features of a Flourishing Ecosystem

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- Made of unique elements that contribute to the functioning of the ecosystem.
- Living and nonliving things share certain necessary conditions for existence (e.g., balance, resources, etc.).
- Living elements rely on other living elements and also non-living elements.
- Living elements can influence other living elements and also non-living elements.
- Elements are interdependent. The health of one element affects that of another and a balance is required for individual and ecosystem health.
- What is good for one element or species is ultimately good for all (because it promotes this balance).

**All of these features must be present!**



# Human Interactions with Ecosystems

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- We affect an environment's ability to flourish.



# Human Interactions with Ecosystems

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- We affect an environment's ability to flourish.
- We can cause it to be out of balance (pollution).



# Melting of Glaciers





# Human Interactions with Ecosystems

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- We affect an environment's ability to flourish.
- We can cause it to be out of balance (pollution).
- We can cause it to collapse by introducing or removing something from it.

# Asian Carp: An Invasive Species

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# Human Interactions with Ecosystems

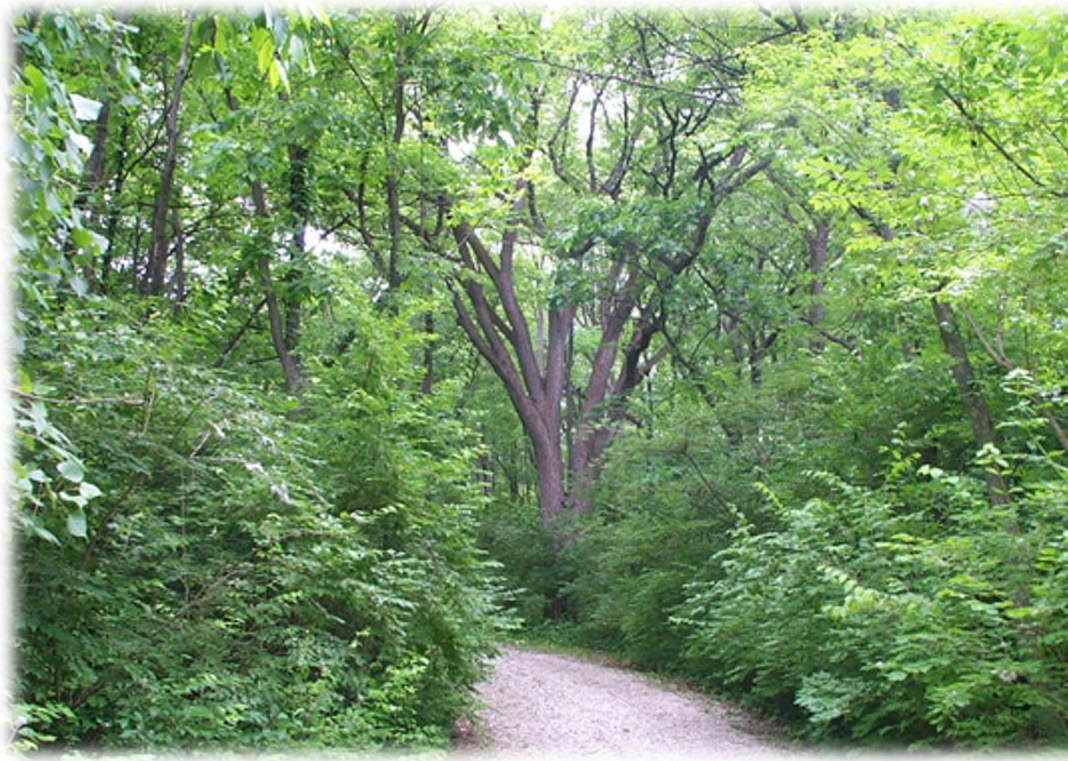
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- We affect an environment's ability to flourish.
- We can cause it to be out of balance (pollution).
- We can cause it to collapse by introducing or removing something from it.
- God empowers us with the ability to ruin, sustain, or repair an ecosystem.



# Honeysuckle: An Invasive Species

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# Bridges, Tunnels, and More








# Generalizations About Human Interactions

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- The actions outlast the person who causes them
- The individual effects have a collective impact



What does a flourishing  
human ecosystem  
(community) look like?



# Natural Ecosystems / Human Communities

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Natural Ecosystem	Human Community
Unique elements each make a particular contribution to the overall functioning.	
Living and nonliving things share certain necessary conditions for existence.	
Living elements rely on living and non-living elements.	
Living elements influence living and non-living elements.	
Elements are interdependent. The health of one affects the health of another and a balance is required for individual and ecosystem health.	
What is good for one element or species is ultimately good for all (because it promotes this balance).	

# Natural Ecosystems / Human Communities

Natural Ecosystem	Human Community
Unique elements each make a particular contribution to the overall functioning.	Each individual person is unique and unrepeatable and makes his or her own contribution to the community.
Living and nonliving things share certain necessary conditions for existence.	Persons in a community share the air, sun, water, library, school, laws (e.g. speed limits), etc.
Living elements rely on living and non-living elements.	Persons need food, water, oxygen, and friendships to survive.
Living elements influence living and non-living elements.	Persons influence one another and the environment.
Elements are interdependent. The health of one affects the health of another and a balance is required for individual and ecosystem health.	Human persons are connected and can impact the well-being of one another. Someone not following the speed limit may cause a car crash.
What is good for one element or species is ultimately good for all (because it promotes this balance).	What is good for one individual person is good for the human community.



# Human Flourishing

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Humans are a unique creation!

- Capacity to reflect on actions and make correction
- Union of body and soul
  - Material needs: food, water, shelter
  - Nonmaterial needs: loving and just relationships, pursuit of meaning and truth, acknowledgement of dignity
- Capacity to reflect on the meaning of order and how a well ordered and just community ought to function



# Upcoming Lesson

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- Explore how communities and every person in a community flourishes—common good
- 3-2-1 Exit ticket
  - 3 new things you learned today
  - 2 things reinforced today
  - 1 question about flourishing or the common good



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