



Science Hero: Sylvia Earle

– the woman who walked on the seafloor

Meet Sylvia Earle— marine biologist, explorer, campaigner for the ocean, and the woman who has spent more time underwater than almost anyone else on Earth. TIME magazine named her a “Hero of the Planet,” and the world knows her as “Her Deepness,” possibly the coolest scientist nickname ever.

When Sylvia was just a little kid, a wave knocked her off her feet, and she grinned. That spark never faded. She learned to scuba dive in the 1950s and later, led an all-women team of aquanauts who lived beneath the sea in 1970, conducting experiments and collecting samples.

Her most famous adventure came in 1979, when she walked along the seafloor 400 metres below the surface, deeper than anyone had ever walked before. Wearing a special pressurised suit, she spent over two hours in near-total darkness, surrounded by glowing creatures. Sylvia described it as “like walking through a galaxy underwater.”

Throughout her life, Sylvia has led over 100 expeditions, discovered new species, and become the first female Chief Scientist of NOAA—the US ocean and atmosphere agency. She founded “Mission Blue,” a global campaign to create “Hope Spots”—protected ocean areas where marine life can recover. She even helped add the ocean to Google Earth, so anyone can explore reefs and trenches from a laptop.

Today, having just celebrated her 90th birthday, she’s still diving, exploring, and fighting for the ocean. Her message to you:

“No water, no life. No blue, no green.”

The ocean gives us most of the oxygen we breathe, shapes our weather, and holds most of Earth’s life. When we protect the ocean, we protect ourselves. Learn the science—then do something. Reduce plastic, choose ocean-friendly foods, avoid using damaging chemicals, and share what you know.



Smart Girl Trivia: Scientists estimate we’ve explored less than 10% of the ocean. Most of the deep ocean—and most of the creatures living there—are still a mystery. Who knows what’s waiting to be discovered down there—or who will discover it? It could be you.



Ready for More Earth Science Adventures?

Good news — there's a LOT more to learn and discover. Hey Smart Girl: Book of Earth Science is packed with 30+ hands-on experiments, mind-blowing facts, inspiring scientist stories, and everything you need to understand the wild, wonderful planet you're standing on. Perfect for girls age 8-12.

Volcanoes. Oceans. Earthquakes. Rocks. Weather. Climate. It's all in there.

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