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Sinopsis

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This book starts with the big picture, relating Einstein's famous mass-energy formula $E = mc^2$ to the global climate; and then proceeds to examine the structure and dynamics of the atmosphere, from the synoptic scale through to the microscale, including the interaction of living things with their environment. It covers a range of topics from the laboratory to the field, including the analysis of thermodynamic diagrams and dispersion of pollutants, simple micrometeorological experiments on a sports field, as well as a detailed study on the measurement of carbon dioxide exchange between the atmosphere and tropical rainforests.

Straightforward, simple models and short arguments are used wherever possible to promote physical understanding, for example, in the discussion of the greenhouse effect. The aim is to bring the reader to the point where he or she is able to understand and analyze weather charts in daily use around the world; obtain an appreciation of current experimental techniques; and also make informed, quantitative estimates in relation to current issues surrounding the current debate on climate change.