

Multiple Choice Questions—Environment and Society

1. What is smog?
 - a. the combination of ozone and oxygen in the stratosphere
 - b. a direct result of the greenhouse effect
 - c. emissions from hydroelectric dams
 - d. a combination of particulates and chemicals such as nitrogen oxides in the air close to the ground
2. Which of the following statements about the greenhouse effect is not true?
 - a. There would be no greenhouse effect without global warming.
 - b. The greenhouse effect occurs when the atmosphere traps heat emitted from the earth's surface.
 - c. The greenhouse effect contributes to the phenomenon of global warming.
 - d. People couldn't live on earth without the greenhouse effect.
3. Which is not a characteristic of "good ozone"?
 - a. It blocks some of the sun's ultraviolet light.
 - b. It exists in the stratosphere.
 - c. It can be replenished by the use of CFCs.
 - d. It is currently depleted over Antarctica and other parts of the southern hemisphere.
4. Which of the following statements is not true?
 - a. Tropical rainforest soil is generally poor in nutrients.
 - b. Tropical soils tend to be red in color and high in clay content.
 - c. Farming in tropical rainforest regions can lead to erosion.
 - d. Tropical rainforest soil is highly fertile and good for farming.
5. Which of the following provides an example of an activity or occurrence that can pollute an entire watershed?
 - a. Julie carelessly threw her McDonald's leftovers off the pier and into the ocean.
 - b. Some mountain residents have been dumping their used motor oil into the local streams.
 - c. Factories dump too much pollution into the Great Lakes.
 - d. Bob's cigarette emitted secondhand smoke that could be detected on the other side of the river.

6. Why are invasive species so problematic?
 - a. They travel from Europe to the United States.
 - b. They kill millions of elm trees.
 - c. They threaten the ecosystems in their new homes.
 - d. They eat most of the other species in their new homes.
7. Which of the following does not represent a direct environmental impact of a dam?
 - a. Habitat is flooded upstream from the dam.
 - b. Water flow is reduced downstream from the dam.
 - c. Electricity is generated without the use (or without much use) of fossil fuels.
 - d. A poorly constructed dam may break after extremely heavy rains upstream.
8. Which of the following offers an example of how technology impacted the environment in prehistoric times?
 - a. People harnessed fire to keep warm, enabling them to move to more northerly latitudes.
 - b. The ability to domesticate animals provided a steady source of food.
 - c. Fire enabled people to cook more nutritious foods.
 - d. The plow allowed people to increase the number of crops they could grow on their fields.
9. Which of the following represents one reason why scientists and biotechnology companies have modified the genes of food plants?
 - a. to prevent plant genes from contaminating other plants
 - b. to produce pest-resistant crops
 - c. to promote vegetarian diets
 - d. to protect farm ecosystems
10. Why do so many adobe houses exist in New Mexico?
 - a. adobe is made from mud imported from nearby Mexico
 - b. adobe's dark color absorbs light and heat
 - c. adobe helps keep the home cool
 - d. adobe is cheaper to use than other building materials

11. Which of the following does not represent an example of a limit to growth?
- a. It's difficult to grow rice in the desert without a good irrigation system.
 - b. In mountainous areas, the least desirable farm plots are located on the steepest slopes because they're the hardest to cultivate; also, erosion poses a big problem on slopes.
 - c. If farmers don't take steps to keep their soils free from excess salt, they will have serious problems with next year's crop.
 - d. California's moderate climate enables many farmers to grow crops throughout the year.
12. Which of the following statements is true?
- a. More Americans live in arid regions of the country than in regions with more precipitation.
 - b. There is no clear relationship between precipitation levels and human settlement in the United States.
 - c. Fewer Americans live in arid regions of the country than in regions with more precipitation.
 - d. Most Americans live in the central part of the country.
13. Why are poor people in many parts of the world more vulnerable to the devastating effects of natural hazards?
- a. They tend to live in smaller houses.
 - b. They tend to live in houses that aren't "disaster-proof."
 - c. They tend to live closer to the ocean.
 - d. They tend to live far away from hospitals.
14. Which of the following statements is not true?
- a. Coal is one of China's major natural resources.
 - b. South Africa is known for its diamond mines.
 - c. Venezuela is an oil-rich nation.
 - d. South African coal miners tend to be wealthy members of the community.
15. Which statement about the relationship between natural resources and the standard of living is true?
- a. A country rich in natural resources does not necessarily have a high per capita income.
 - b. All oil-rich countries have about the same per capita income.
 - c. If you live in a country wealthy in diamonds, you will probably benefit significantly from that wealth.
 - d. Most Iraqis have high standards of living as a result of their country's oil wealth.

16. Which of the following represents one way in which the Gold Rush impacted the Sierra Nevada mountain region?
- a. All the towns that began during the Gold Rush remained viable communities after much of the gold had been extracted.
 - b. Few new stores opened because of the expense of starting a business in this remote area.
 - c. Many new businesses opened, and new towns sprang up to support the mining industry.
 - d. Ghost towns developed because miners' wives started to make more of their clothing; thus, they no longer needed to rely on the stores.
17. In what way did natural resources contribute to colonialism?
- a. European countries looked for natural resources only after they'd colonized an area.
 - b. European colonists extracted natural resources only for use in building their homes.
 - c. Local people in resource-rich areas sent samples of the resources to Europe, which then colonized the regions and rewarded the locals.
 - d. European countries colonized places with abundant natural resources and often indentured the locals to extract the resources.
18. Which of the following statements is not true?
- a. A resource considered valuable today will almost certainly be valuable in 100 years.
 - b. Salt was once a highly prized mineral worth a lot of money.
 - c. The value of natural resources can change significantly in value over time.
 - d. Salt may one day be very expensive.
19. Which of the following statements about nuclear energy is not true?
- a. Nuclear energy relies on radioactive materials.
 - b. Anti-nuclear activists are concerned about how nuclear power plants might affect the public's health.
 - c. Most of our electricity in the United States comes from nuclear power.
 - d. Nuclear energy is billed as a "clean" energy source because it does not emit polluting gases like burning fossil fuels do.

20. Which of the following statements about renewable energy is not true?
- a. Hydroelectric power is renewable but can have some detrimental effects on the environment.
 - b. Geothermal power generally arises in areas with many hot springs and other seismic activities.
 - c. Wind power is most likely to be harnessed in states or regions with large, flat areas that experience windy conditions more often than hilly or mountainous areas.
 - d. Solar power is more efficient in the desert than in the temperate rainforest.