

Multiple Choice Questions—Environment and Society

Answer Key

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

answer: d

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.

answer: a

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.

answer: c

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.

answer: d

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.

answer: b

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.

answer: c

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

answer: d

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.

answer: a

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

answer: b

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.

answer: c

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.

answer: d

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.

answer: c

13. Why are poor people in many parts of the world are 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.

answer: b

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.

answer: d

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.

answer: a

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.

answer: c

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.

answer: d

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.

answer: a

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.

answer: c

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.

answer: d