

UNIT 07

THE THREAT OF POLLUTION



• Reading Passage 1

Environmental pollution is one of the impacts of human activities on the Earth. It is also one of the biggest problems of the world today because it brings about contamination, ecosystem, and the cause of some diseases that most people do not know about. There are four types of pollution, namely, air pollution, soil pollution, water pollution and noise pollution.

Most of the air pollution results from the burning of fossil fuels, motor vehicles, factories, aircraft and rockets. This can cause acid rain which damages water, soil, and vegetation. Air pollution also contributes to the greenhouse effect which can lead to a series of environmental problems such as global warming, polar ice melting, rise of sea levels and loss of land.

Soil pollution is a result of dumping plastic or other inorganic waste in the ground and the overuse of chemical fertilizers in agriculture. The long-term effects of soil pollution are contaminated vegetation and the decrease of soil fertility.

Water pollution is a result of dumping pollutants such as detergents, pesticides, oil, and other chemicals in rivers, which makes the water unclean or contaminated. Rubbish blockages in rivers can also cause pollution.

The effects of water pollution include the destruction of ecosystem of rivers, lakes and the pollution of groundwater, surface water and seawater.

Noise pollution is caused by loud and annoying sounds of motor vehicles, railway, aircraft and jet engines, factory machinery and musical instruments. It can cause stress and psychological and health problems for humans such as increased heart rate and hearing damage.

Environmental pollution is becoming an increasingly serious problem or threat that needs to be taken care of as soon as possible, not only for the sake of the environment, but also for the people that live in it.

Quick quiz:

What should be the best title of the passage?

- a. Natural Resource Depletion
- b. The Long-term Damage of Soil
- c. Environmental Pollution
- d. The Destruction of Ecosystem

Exercise 1: Match the vocabulary with the correct definition and write a–f next to the numbers 1–6.

1. ecosystem	a. chemicals used to kill insects
2. pesticides	b. plants in general
3. inorganic	c. manures or substances that support plant growth
4. vegetation	d. not related to animals, plants or trees
5. fertilizer	e. things that make the air, water and soil unclean or contaminated
6. pollutants	f. a complex set of relationships among the living resources, habitats, and residents of an area. It includes plants, trees, animals, fish, birds, etc.

Exercise 2: Read the passage again and decide whether these statements are True or False:

Statements	True	False
1. People nowadays are highly aware of the effects caused by environmental pollution.		
2. Excessive use of chemical substances in farming impoverishes soil.		
3. Both people's mental and physical health is negatively affected by noise pollution.		
4. Noise from musical instruments may ease people's stress.		
5. Acid rain can deteriorate natural resources.		

• Reading passage 2

There are no more dinosaurs living on the Earth. They are extinct, which means there is no longer a certain kind of plant or animal living anywhere in the world. A species is a certain group of living organisms, like dinosaurs, humans, birds, and many others. Scientists believe many organisms, along with the dinosaurs, died out when a large asteroid collided with the Earth. The collision caused a mass extinction, which occurs at a faster rate over a very short time-period.

There are usually two reasons for the extinction of animals and other living things. The first is naturally, which may take place when animals do not adapt to natural changes in their environment. For example, if the habitat of a bird suddenly changes, and if the bird does not adapt, it could become extinct.

Examples of naturally occurring extinction may take place during a change in the climate. This took place during the Ice Age when the temperature of the Earth was much lower. As a matter of fact, a certain species may be eliminated by new killers that blend in the environment. The food needed to survive may no longer be available.

Another example of this type of extinction was the woolly mammoth, a relative of the elephant, which died out 10,000 years ago due to climate change and the disappearance of its habitat.

The second reason for the extinction of animals is human interaction, which includes hunting and habitat destruction caused by people. An animal's environment may be destroyed by pollution or construction, such as the destruction of parts of a rainforest. Humans also overhunt sometimes wiping out an entire species. In addition, the moving of non-native species into an area where they are not usually found may lead to the extinction of another species.

Examples include the Dodo bird that became extinct due to overhunting and other animals moving into its environment. The passenger pigeon died out due to the destruction of its habitat, as well as overhunting. There are many animals that have become extinct, but when animals are in danger of becoming extinct, yet still survive, they are called endangered animals.

Endangered means a plant or animal is at risk of becoming extinct. This occurs when the population of a certain animal is so low, that they are in danger of dying out forever and becoming extinct. The reasons for an animal to become endangered are mostly the same as for those that have become extinct. There are many animals in the world today that are on the endangered species list. Some are so in danger of becoming extinct, they can only be found in a zoo.

Some of the endangered animals in the world as of 2017 include the black rhino, found in Africa, where hunting has led to the decline of its population with fewer than 5,000 of them still surviving. The orangutan found in the country of Malaysia is a highly intelligent relative of the ape family, but it too has been endangered due to the loss of their habitat and overhunting. The blue whale is endangered and threatened by climate change, habitat loss, and poisonous substances in the water. Finally, two other endangered species examples include the Bengal tiger, giant panda, mountain gorilla, sea lions, and others.

1. All the following are endangered animals EXCEPT:
 - A. Sea lions
 - B. Woolly mammoths
 - C. Bengal tigers
 - D. Giant pandas
2. All the following are extinct species EXCEPT:
 - A. Dinosaurs
 - B. Orangutans
 - C. Carrier pigeons
 - D. Dodo birds
3. Which of the following is a reason for the extinct and endangered animals?
 - A. Climate change
 - B. Habitat destruction
 - C. Overhunting
 - D. All the above
4. New predators moving into the environment may first lead to which of the following?
 - A. Extinction of another species
 - B. An increase in new food sources
 - C. Endangered species
 - D. Loss of land resources
5. Which of the following best defines a mass extinction?
 - A. An extinction that occurs at a faster rate compared to a typical extinction
 - B. An extinction of just one animal or plant species
 - C. An extinction in just one area of the world
 - D. All the above
6. Hunting and habitat destruction are reasons for which of the following types of extinction?
 - A. Natural
 - B. Human interaction
 - C. Mass
 - D. None of the above

• Reading passage 3

Read the following passage and do the task below:

Earth Hour is an annual global campaign that encourages people and businesses around the world to switch off electricity at the same time for one hour. Earth Hour started in Australia in 2007 when 2.2 million people in the city of Sydney turned off all non-essential lights for an hour. Since then it has grown to a massive global event. In 2013, millions of people in 7,000 cities and towns around the world switched off their lights for 60 minutes at the end of March. Every year landmarks and well-known buildings around the world such as the Sydney Opera House and Harbor Bridge, the Petronas towers in Malaysia, the UK Parliament, Buckingham Palace and the Empire State Building take part and **'go dark'** for Earth Hour. The campaign even went into space when astronauts reduced power on the International Space Station in 2011.

Earth Hour is organized by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). It was started by Andy Ridley, originally from Britain, who is executive director of Earth Hour Global, WWF. He came up with the idea of Earth Hour because he wanted to raise awareness of environmental issues by asking people to do something positive to help the planet. Switching off the lights for an hour can make a small difference to the amount of energy we use but Earth Hour is also a symbolic event to make people think about the problems of climate change.

The end of March is around the time of the spring and autumn equinoxes in the northern and southern hemispheres respectively, so sunset times in both hemispheres are at similar times. This means that a global 'lights out' event has most visual impact at this time of year.

In 2013 in the UK, the pop group McFly gave a live acoustic performance (using no electricity!) dressed in panda costumes (the WWF's logo is a panda) for Earth Hour. Celebrity chefs Gordon Ramsay and Raymond Blanc created special recipes for families to prepare and eat by candlelight. Actors and TV personalities including Kevin McCloud and Miranda Richardson recorded Rudyard Kipling's famous Just So Stories for families to listen to by candlelight.

As well as famous London landmarks such as Big Ben, the London Eye and Buckingham Palace switching off their lights, there are many other events around Britain. On the WWF's interactive map you can see which people, businesses, schools, organizations and landmarks are taking part this year and what they are doing <http://earthhour.wwf.org.uk/#uk-map>

The WWF's famous panda logo recently helped to promote Earth Hour. In 2014, the WWF asked their Facebook users to name a panda - not a real animal but a cute panda teddy bear. They chose some of the suggestions to name 60 panda teddy bears. These pandas were then passed around in the UK so that people could take photos of themselves with a bear and tweet a #passthepanda selfie to @wwf_uk . The WWF also encouraged everyone to join in by tweeting a #passthepanda selfie of themselves either in panda costume or wearing panda face paints!

Task 1: Match the title with the suitable paragraph above:

#passthepanda	UK events	Why March?
Who organises Earth Hour?	What is Earth Hour?	

Task 3: Choose the correct answer for each following question:

- Where does the Earth Hour first begin?
 - Australia
 - United Kingdom
 - Malaysia
 - United States
- According to the passage, what is NOT true about Andy Ridley?
 - He is originally from UK
 - He runs the WWF
 - He ruins the idea of Earth Hour
 - He wants to change people mind about the climate change
- According to the passage, who did promote for the logo of WWF first?
 - Gordon Ramsay and Raymond Blanc
 - Kevin McCloud
 - McFly
 - Buckingham Palace
- What does the word 'go dark' in line 8, paragraph 1 mean?
 - have a blackout
 - cut off the electricity
 - paint in black
 - go blinded
- According to the passage, Earth Hour:
 - is an international event
 - choose a live panda as its logo
 - is supported by billion people around the world in 2013
 - usually takes place in early spring time.
- What should be the best title of the passage?
 - Celebrities in Environmental Campaign
 - Earth Hour
 - The Best Way To Save The Earth

d. Earth Hour in Worldwide Wonders