"Anyone who believes in indefinite growth of anything physical on a physically finite planet is either a madman or an economist."

Kenneth Boulding (1910 – 1993), American economist

1. Overpopulation Discussion

1. Do you think there are too many people in the world? Why or why not?
2. Are you concerned about overpopulation? What problems might it cause in the future?
3. Why does the population to keep growing? Should governments try to stop this growth or control it? Why or why not?
4. In which countries or regions is the population growing the fastest? Where is it growing the slowest? How do you explain this difference?
5. Are there enough resources in the world today? If there are, how is it possible that so many people go without food?
6. Will there be sufficient resources to provide for everyone in the future? If not, what could we do?
7. Will the population ever stop growing? How might this happen and what would the consequences of this be?
8. Could the world's population ever start to decrease? What might cause this? Would it be a good thing or a bad thing if the population reduced?

© yourENGLISHPAL.com

2. Overpopulation Vocabulary

- **high population density** (noun), **densely populated** (adjective) – *a large number of people living in a particular area.*
- **urbanisation** (noun) – *the process of a population moving from rural areas to urban areas.*
- **megacity** (noun) – *a city with more than 10 million inhabitants.*
- **urban sprawl** (noun) – *the spread of an urban area into surrounding areas, often uncontrolled.*
- **slum** (noun) – *a densely populated urban area characterised by poor quality housing, poor living conditions and high levels of poverty.*
- **food insecurity** (noun) – *a shortage or uncertain supply of nutritious food.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun):

1. Due to a lack of building regulations, the government was unable to prevent _____ into the surrounding countryside.
2. With a population of just over 10 million people according to the latest census, Colombia's capital, Bogotá, is one of the most recent _____.
3. Because of its disastrous economic policies, the USSR suffered decades of _____.
4. With a population of around one million inhabitants and high levels of poverty, Dharavi, in Mumbai, India, is one of the biggest _____ in the world.
5. With 46,000 people per square kilometre, Manila in the Philippines is the most _____ place on Earth.
6. The trend of _____ really began during the time of the industrial revolution and has been increasing ever since.

Overpopulation vocabulary comprehension questions

1. Where are the most densely populated areas in the world?
2. What are some causes of urbanisation?
3. Which megacities can you think of? Would you like to live in any of them?
4. Can you think of any examples of urban sprawls?
5. In which countries might you find slums?
6. Which places suffer from food insecurity? Why is this?

© yourENGLISHPAL.com

3. Video: How to Deal with Overpopulation

You are going to watch a Big Think video called "Hey Bill Nye, What's the Best Way to Handle Overpopulation?"

Watch the video here: https://yourenglishpal.com/blog/esl-conversation-lesson-plan-overpopulation/

While you watch the video, answer the following questions:

Multiple choice

1. What is happening with the rate of population growth?
   a) it is decreasing *b) it is increasing* *c) it is now constant*
2. Why is the rate of population growth slowing down?
   a) there are not enough resources *b) increased quality of life* *c) more education for girls*
3. How high does Bill Nye think the world's population could increase to?
   a) 8 billion *b) 9 billion* *c) 10 billion*
4. How are the Earth's resources for the future population?
   a) insufficient *b) sufficient* *c) too many*

Sentence completion

5. In order to provide resources to everyone in the future, we have to rethink how we use energy and _____.
6. The impact that a person in Niger with five children has on the environment is _____ than someone in the United States.
7. In the developed world, people use energy and water like _____.
8. Bill Nye has a negative effect on the environment because he flies in _____.

Short answer

9. Where does Bill Nye not want to do less for people?
10. How does Bill Nye want people to use resources?
11. Which systems could somebody studying chemistry and biology make changes to?
12. Everybody in the world should have access to renewable and reliable what?

© yourENGLISHPAL.com

4. Overpopulation Conversation Questions

1. What effect will overpopulation have on the environment?
2. How can we produce enough energy for everyone in the world to live like people in developed countries live?
3. How will population growth affect the crime rate?
4. What effect will the continuing growth of the population have on jobs?
5. Will overpopulation lead to more wars and conflict? Why or why not?
6. David Attenborough said that humans are a "plague on the Earth," and that if we didn't control population growth, nature would do it for us. Do you agree with him? Do you think nature is already starting to control human population growth?
7. Could overpopulation collapse society and lead to the destruction of humanity? Why or why not?
8. Should we be looking for new planets to live on to solve the problem of overpopulation? Why or why not?

5. Overpopulation Writing Task

Write about your opinion of overpopulation. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this lesson. In your answer, you could include some of the following topics:

- The causes of overpopulation.
- The problems overpopulation will bring.
- Solutions to these problems.

Alternative exam practice question:

Overpopulation in many cities around the world has led to various social problems. What are the causes of these problems and what solutions can you think of?

© yourENGLISHPAL.com