

Active Reading

Section 2: The Environment and Society

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

The decisions and actions of all people in the world affect our environment. But the unequal distribution of wealth and resources around the world influences the environmental problems that a society faces and the choices it can make. The United Nations classifies countries as either developed or developing. *Developed countries* have higher average incomes, slower population growth, diverse industrial economies, and stronger social support systems. They include the United States, Canada, Japan, and the countries of Western Europe. *Developing countries* have lower average incomes, simple and agriculture-based economies, and rapid population growth. Developed and developing countries have different consumption patterns that affect the environment in different ways. In addition, different developing countries are on different paths. Some are experiencing little change in living conditions, while others, like Brazil, China, and India, have emerged as major international economic powers with environmental impacts and challenges similar to those in developed countries.

IDENTIFYING MAIN IDEAS

One reading skill is the ability to identify the main idea of a passage. The main idea is the main focus or key idea. Frequently a main idea is accompanied by supporting information that offers detailed facts about main ideas.

Read each question and write the answer in the space provided.

1. What organization has classified countries as developing or developed?

2. List two developed countries.

VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

In the space provided, write the letter of the phrase that best completes each statement.

- _____ 3. Developed countries often
- have higher average incomes and faster population growth.
 - have higher average incomes and slower population growth.
 - have faster population growth and diverse industrial economies.
 - eventually become developing countries.

Active Reading *continued*

- _____ 4. Developing countries often
- a. have lower average incomes and slower population growth.
 - b. have middle incomes.
 - c. have higher average incomes and faster population growth.
 - d. have lower average incomes and faster population growth.

RECOGNIZING SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

One reading skill is the ability to recognize similarities and differences between two phrases, ideas, or things. This is sometimes known as comparing and contrasting.

Read each question and write your answer in the space provided.

5. The suffix *-ed* forms the past participle of a verb: work becomes *worked*. The suffix *-ing* is used to form the present participle of a verb: *swim* becomes *swimming*. Using this information, define a developed country.

6. Define a developing country.

7. What type of economy does a developed country have?

8. What type of economy does a developing country have?

9. How do the social support systems of developed countries differ from those of developing countries?

RECOGNIZING CAUSE AND EFFECT

One reading skill is the ability to recognize cause and effect.

Read the question and write your answer in the space provided.

10. What factor affects environmental problems and the number of choices a society can make?
