

Active Reading

Section 1: Energy Resources and Fossil Fuels

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

When petroleum fuels are burned, they release pollutants. Internal combustion engines in vehicles that burn gasoline and diesel pollute the air in many cities. These pollutants contribute to the formation of smog and cause health problems. Emissions regulations and technology such as catalytic converters have reduced air pollution in many areas. However, in developing countries, cars are generally older, and the gasoline that they burn contains significantly more sulfur, a pollutant that contributes to acid precipitation. In addition, the carbon dioxide released from burning petroleum fuels may contribute to climate change.

Oil spills are another potential environmental problem of oil use. Drilling in deep water or very cold ecosystems is increasing, and potential spills from the drilling process are problematic. Compared with surface wells, stopping leaks is very difficult when the wellhead is 5,000 feet under water. In arctic ecosystems, cold temperatures hinder clean-up efforts. Non-point pollution from everyday sources, such as leaking cars or improperly handled motor oil, adds more pollution to waterways but is less obvious to the public.

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 the main idea.

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

1. What are two potential hazards associated with oil use?

2. What is one reason the air in cities is often polluted?

3. What factor might be contributing to climate change?

4. What are issues associated with drilling in deep water and cold ecosystems?

Active Reading *continued*

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 the answer in the space provided.

5. What is the difference between cars in developed countries and cars in developing countries?

RECOGNIZING CAUSE AND EFFECT

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

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

6. What negative effects do pollutants from vehicles cause in cities?

7. What problem does the burning of gasoline with sulfur contribute to?

8. Name two things that have reduced air pollution in many areas.

9. What does the author suggest will reduce the negative effects of using oil?
