Skills Worksheet

Active Reading

Section 1: Studying Human Populations

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

The average number of years members of a population are likely to live is their life expectancy. **Life expectancy** is most affected by *infant mortality,* the death rate of infants less than a year old. In 1900, life expectancy was about 30 years worldwide, and the infant mortality rate was very high. By 2000, the rate of infant mortality was less than one-third of the rate in 1900. Average life expectancy has increased to more than 67 years worldwide. For people in a number of developed countries, life expectancy is 80 years or more.

Expensive medical care is not necessarily helpful in preventing infant deaths. The infant mortality rate differs greatly among countries. In fact, with the highest average income in the world, the U.S. ranks only 48 out of 221 countries for infant mortality. Infant health is affected more by the parents' access to education, food, fuel, and clean water. If these basic needs are met, most children will have a good chance of surviving.

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 was the worldwide average life expectancy in 2000?
    a. about 30   c. almost 80
    b. more than 67   d. none of the above

_____ 2. What was the worldwide life expectancy in 1900?
    a. about 30   c. almost 80
    b. more than 67   d. It was not measured in 1900.

_____ 3. What is the life expectancy for people in many developed countries today?
    a. 70 years or more   c. 95 years or more
    b. 80 years or more   d. 40 years or more

VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

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

4. Unscramble the term below. What is the term's definition?

   FILE CATPYXNECE

   _____

   _____

5. Do most people want to have a low infant mortality rate or a high infant mortality rate? Explain your answer.

   _____

   _____

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 the question and write the answer in the space provided.

6. How did worldwide infant mortality and life expectancy change between 1900 and 2000?

   _____

   _____

RECOGNIZING CAUSE AND EFFECT

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

In the space provided, write the letter of the term or phrase that best completes each statement or best answers each question.

_____ 7. Which factor would be most likely to cause a low life expectancy for a country?
   a. high-tech medical care
   b. high average incomes
   c. low infant mortality rates
   d. diminished food supply

_____ 8. Which factors might have the greatest effect on infant mortality in a country?
   a. low life expectancy and women's fertility rates
   b. the country's average income and parents' access to good medical care
   c. burning of fossil fuels and population booms
   d. parents' access to education, food, fuel, and clean water