

# Environmental crisis?

## Exercise 1

Match the words in the table with the definitions below and then fill in the gaps. The first one has been done for you.

|                          |                    |                |                    |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| lifestyle                | <b>environment</b> | global warming | standard of living |
| deforestation            | greenhouse gas     | recycle        | developing         |
| environmentally friendly | developed          | atmosphere     | natural resources  |

- (noun) the natural world, including the land, water, air, plants and animals.  
e.g. It is important to take care of the environment.
- (noun) the mixture of gases around the Earth  
e.g. Oxygen is one of the gases in the Earth's \_\_\_\_\_.
- (noun) the process of removing the trees from an area of land  
e.g. People often talk about \_\_\_\_\_ in the Amazon and other parts of the world.
- (adjective) economically advanced  
e.g. The United States, Germany and France are all \_\_\_\_\_ countries.
- (adjective) poor; without many industries  
e.g. She has visited a lot of \_\_\_\_\_ countries in Africa.
- (noun) the way someone lives; the things a person or group of people usually do  
e.g. Some people have a \_\_\_\_\_ that is bad for the environment.
- (adjective) designed not to harm the natural environment  
e.g. I ride a bicycle, because it's more \_\_\_\_\_ than driving a car.
- (noun) a gas that stops heat escaping from the atmosphere and causes the Earth's temperature to rise  
e.g. Carbon dioxide is a \_\_\_\_\_.
- (noun) the slow increase in the temperature of the Earth caused by increased amounts of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere  
e.g. I think governments have to do something about \_\_\_\_\_.
- (noun) valuable substances such as wood and oil that exist in a country's land and sea  
e.g. Oil is one of our most important \_\_\_\_\_, but I think we're using too much.
- (verb) to change waste materials such as newspapers and bottles so they can be used again  
e.g. We always \_\_\_\_\_ all our bottles and waste paper.
- (noun) the type of life that a person has according to the amount of money they have  
e.g. Most people in Western Europe have a good \_\_\_\_\_.

# Environmental crisis?

WORKSHEET B

## Rob

I don't think there's a solution to the global environmental crisis. The world's population is now too high, and the amount of energy being consumed is increasing all the time. Isn't it obvious that one day soon we're going to run out of natural resources?

Global warming shows us the effect that human beings are already having on the planet – it's happening because of all the greenhouse gases we put into the atmosphere from industry, planes and cars, and because of other things like deforestation. Soon, millions of people will start leaving some parts of the world because it will be impossible to live there any more, which in turn will create a whole new set of problems.

## Louise

The current environmental situation is very serious, but I believe human beings can invent the technology we need to solve the problem.

For example, we already have clean ways of making electricity, like nuclear power and wind power, so we just have to start using them a lot more.

Also, I don't believe people are completely selfish, and I think in the end most people will want to help solve the crisis. The main cause of climate change is the lifestyles of people in developed countries who already have a good standard of living, but when they really begin to understand the situation I'm sure they will start to change their ways. People just need to be made more aware of the problem, and shown ways in which they can help.

## Michael

We can now see that there has been a huge price to pay for the economic development rich countries have achieved, because to reach this standard of living we have used a lot of natural resources and polluted the atmosphere.

Now developing countries are trying to catch up, and it seems that economic growth in countries like China and India, with their huge populations, might also have a serious effect on the environment. But can we really say that poorer countries should stop developing? Obviously that wouldn't be realistic, or fair.

Of course, if we want to be more environmentally friendly we can recycle or drive cars that pollute a bit less, or even use fewer plastic bags. However, I really don't know if these small things are going to be enough.

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### Exercise 2

Now decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F), or if the text doesn't say (D).

1. Louise says that people in developing countries need to change their lifestyles.
2. Michael isn't sure if things like recycling are going to be enough to solve the environmental crisis.
3. Rob never travels by plane because he doesn't think it's environmentally friendly.
4. Louise thinks nuclear power is a good thing.
5. Rob says millions of people have started leaving some parts of the world because it is impossible to live there any more.
6. Rob thinks human beings are have caused global warming.

### Exercise 3

1. Out of Rob, Louise and Michael, who is the most optimistic about the global environmental situation? Who is the most pessimistic?
2. What does Michael mean when he says developing countries are trying to 'catch up'?
3. Why does Rob believe there is no solution to the problem?
4. What two things does Rob think are going to happen soon?
5. What examples does Louise give of the technology that she thinks can solve the global environmental crisis?
6. Michael says there has been a 'price to pay' for economic development. What does he mean by this?
7. Rob mentions four things that create extra greenhouse gases. What are they?
8. When does Louise think people in developed countries will start to 'change their ways'?
9. Why does Michael think economic growth in China and India might have a serious effect on the environment?
10. What does Michael mean by 'small things'? In your opinion, are there any 'bigger' things people could do to help the environment?