

Focus on Reading 1 Stop the Smog
Grade 11 Reading

Prediction and Scanning Exercises

Exercise 1:

Look at these three subheadings. What kind of information would you expect in each ?

1. What's in the air?
2. Where pollution comes from
3. How it affects your body

Exercise 2:

Choose THREE words or phrases from this list that you might expect to find under each subheading:

architecture	asthma attack	upper atmosphere	doctors	gases
geology	industrial processes	lungs	motor vehicles	ozone
sports	thunder	traffic fumes		

Exercise 3:

Read the text entitled "Stop the Smog" quickly and answer the following questions

1. What damage does acid rain cause?
2. Ozone has both good and bad effects?
3. What are the three main sources of air pollution?
4. What are the main illnesses that air pollution causes or makes worse?
5. How many cars will there be in 20 years time?

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Reading Passage:

STOP THE SMOG!

WHAT'S IN THE AIR?

Sulphur dioxide contributes to acid rain, which contaminates rivers, streams and lakes, causes serious erosion of buildings and endangers wildlife. It also makes breathing problems worse by tightening the tubes which carry air to the lungs.

Nitrous oxides (nitrogen dioxide and nitric oxide gases) cause acid rain and smog¹.

Carbon monoxide reduces the amount of oxygen that can be carried by the blood. Peaks occur during rush hours, and high levels are found inside cars.

Hydrocarbons are released when fuel is not completely burned. They can be gases or solids.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) are gases which form smog. Benzene escapes from the exhaust pipes of cars and from petrol tanks when cars are filling up.

Ozone is a gas produced naturally in the upper atmosphere. A thin layer of ozone helps to shield the Earth from the Sun's damaging rays. At ground level, ozone is the main enemy for people with breathing problems. It is created by the effect of sunlight on smog, a reaction which occurs most easily when weather conditions are calm and warm.

WHERE POLLUTION COMES FROM

Motor vehicles are the fastest-growing source of air pollution today, pumping out a toxic mixture of health-threatening pollutants. Traffic fumes are largely responsible for the increasing number of smogs which pollute our towns, cities and rural areas.

Industry A lot of pollutants are released into the atmosphere by industrial processes. For example, when coal is burnt in power stations to generate electricity, sulphur dioxide and nitrous oxides are produced. These are the two major gases which cause acid rain.

Waste disposal When rubbish is burned, the smoke and gases produced often contain pollutants such as dioxins, which are a threat to human health and the environment.

HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR BODY

High concentrations of ozone and the chemicals released by motor vehicles can lead to serious health problems including irritation of the lungs and a reduced resistance to infection. They also aggravate bronchitis and may even cause cancer. Many pollutants can trigger an asthma attack. During levels of peak pollution, doctors advise sufferers to stay indoors and avoid exercise.

GRIM FACTS

- Cars produce 15 per cent of worldwide greenhouse gases.
- Car ownership is rising in every country. There are now more cars than adults in the USA.
- It is estimated that the number of cars on the world's roads will rise to 1.5 billion in the next 20 years.
- The number of children admitted to hospital with asthma in the UK has more than doubled since 1980.



¹ smog: air pollution, especially in cities, which looks like a mixture of smoke and fog

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Exam Practice:

Using the reading entitled "Stop the Smog" respond to the following exam practice question

Questions 1-4

Complete each sentence 1-4 with the best ending A-I below

1. Carbon monoxide levels are at the highest during _____.
2. _____ is a gas which is commonly present at petrol filling stations.
3. Ozone is most likely to be produced during _____.
4. _____ can exist in both solid and gaseous forms.

A	acid rain
B	benzene
C	carbon monoxide
D	hydrocarbons
E	motor vehicles
F	ozone layer
G	smog
H	rush hours
I	warm weather

Using the reading entitled "Stop the Smog" respond to the following exam practice question

Questions 5-7

Complete the sentences below. Choose NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from the text to for each answer

One of the main sources of air pollution mentioned in the text is industry. Electricity generation is a typical example as coal-burning power stations release gases which cause 5._____.
Burning rubbish is another source of pollution like 6._____ which can be harmful to health and the environment. However the cause of pollution which is increasing the most rapidly is 7. _____

5	
6	
7	

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Using the reading entitled "Stop the Smog" respond to the following questions

Questions 8-12

Do the following statements agree with the information given in the passage?

Write:

TRUE	if the statement agrees with the information
FALSE	if the statement contradicts with the information
Not Given	If there is no information on this

8. Pollution can make people less resistant to infection
9. Medical advice for people with asthma is to rest during periods of high pollution.
10. Cars produce the majority of worldwide greenhouse gases.
11. The USA has more cars than any other country in the world
12. Fewer children are admitted to hospital with asthma than in 1980

8	
9	
10	
11	
12	