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## RW08. Environmental Issues

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Important Note: Sections 1-4 in the SDLA must be completed before meeting with a tutor and receiving a stamp. Write/type and record all your answers on this handout.**

**After completing this SDLA, you will be able to:**

- ✓ Identify causes and effects of environmental issues from a reading passage
- ✓ Develop possible solutions for environmental issues
- ✓ Use expressions of certainty to talk about environmental issues

**Sections 1-3 (approximately 45 minutes):** Read the information. Follow each step below to complete this SDLA. Be prepared to explain your answers when you meet with a tutor.

### Section 1: Thinking about the Environment

1. What environmental issues are you concerned about? Why? What do you think we can do to improve these issues?

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2. Look at the pictures. What is the environmental problem in each picture? Write your ideas below.



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## Section 2: Environmental Problems and Solutions

Read the descriptions of environmental problems below. Fill in the chart with information from the description. You will need to fill in “*Possible Solutions*” with your own ideas.

### Pollution

There are different types of pollution such as air, water, soil, noise, radioactive, and light pollution. The most common of these is air pollution which is the contamination of the atmosphere by carbon dioxide and other gases. Motor vehicles, factories, building construction, forest fires, and volcanic eruptions all negatively affect air quality and purity. There are several effects of air pollution that can be noticed such as increased smog, higher rates of asthma, fewer crops, global warming, and acid rain. Acid rain occurs when some poisonous gases dissolve into the atmosphere and then fall to the earth. It can damage trees and buildings, and can kill fish in lakes and rivers.

### Deforestation

Deforestation is the destruction and conversion of forests, and humans are largely responsible. Large forest areas have been destroyed for farming, housing, businesses, mining, and roads. The trees they cut down are used for building materials, fuel, medicine, food, and paper. According to some estimates, up to half of the world’s tropical rain forests have already been cleared for these purposes. The majority of earth’s plants and animals live in forests, and as we take away the forests, we are also taking away their home. Rainforests help to control global warming because they absorb carbon dioxide. When a tree falls, it releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, and this contributes to global warming. Based on the current rate of deforestation, the world’s rain forests could vanish within 100 years!

### Ozone Layer Depletion

One of the most important current environmental problems is the depletion of the ozone layer. The ozone layer is an invisible layer of protection around the planet that protects us from the sun’s harmful rays, which can damage our skin and cause cancer or eye problems. Scientists have recently discovered that toxic gases called chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) are used in refrigerators, aerosol cans and in the manufacturing of some plastic products. Once these CFCs reach the upper atmosphere, they cause a hole in the ozone layer. To prevent this issue from getting worse, CFCs are banned in many industries and consumer products. Additionally, some companies now make aerosols that do not contain CFCs, and these are often marked “Ozone Friendly”.



Adapted from:  
British Council 2010 [www.teachingenglish.org.uk](http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk)

| Problem:                     | Causes: | Environmental Damage: | Possible Solutions: |
|------------------------------|---------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Pollution</i>             |         |                       |                     |
| <i>Deforestation</i>         |         |                       |                     |
| <i>Ozone Layer Depletion</i> |         |                       |                     |

### Section 3: Expressing Certainty

**Part 1:** The expressions below express different degrees of certainty. Write the expressions below in the correct box in the chart. The first one has already been done as an example.

I'm certain that . . .      It's likely that. . .      I'm not sure if. . .      There's no doubt that  
 It's fairly certain that. . .      I'm absolutely sure . . .      Perhaps/Maybe . . .      To the best of my  
 Probably      Possibly      As far as I'm aware, . . .      knowledge, . . .

| Certain                       | 50% Certain | Uncertain |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| <i>I'm certain that . . .</i> |             |           |

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British Council 2010 [www.teachingenglish.org.uk](http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk)

**Part 2:** What do you think? Decide if you think the following sentences:

**A)** Will happen **in the next 50 years**. (Certain)

**B)** Might happen **in the next 50 years**. (50% Certain / Uncertain)

Mark the sentences **A** (Certain) or **B** (50% Certain / Uncertain)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1) All cars will be electric.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2) Much of the food and crops we have now will not be available.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3) People will continue to sunbathe.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4) People will recycle all their bags, cans and paper.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5) Almost all the rainforests will disappear.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6) The next generation will care more about the environment than the present generation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7) The climate will get worse (hotter and colder in different parts of the world).
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8) We will have more forests than we do now.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9) In presidential elections "Green Issues" will become more important than any other.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10) People will completely destroy the earth.

**\*\*Be prepared to talk about the sentences above with the tutor using the certainty expressions\*\***

#### Section 4: Student Self-Assessment

**A. Self-Assessment:** *Complete this self-assessment before meeting with a tutor.*

**Now that you've completed sections 1 to 3, check the things you can do:**

- ☐ Identify causes and effects of environmental issues from a reading passage
- ☐ Develop possible solutions for environmental issues
- ☐ Use expressions of certainty to talk about environmental issues

***Good Job!***

**Now make an appointment  
with a tutor on the LLC ESL Tutoring Website  
([www.mtsac.edu/llc/passportrewards/llctutoring](http://www.mtsac.edu/llc/passportrewards/llctutoring)).**

Adapted from:  
British Council 2010 [www.teachingenglish.org.uk](http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk)

### Section 5: Practice with a Tutor

After completing the self- assessment, meet with a tutor and give this completed SDLA to the tutor. You will have a discussion with the tutor about the future of our environment using expressions of certainty (Section 3).

| Area of Focus          | 1 Point   | 3 Points   | 5 Points   |
|------------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Content</b>         | Student does not provide enough accurate and relevant information in responses. | Student provides sufficient information in responses that is accurate and relevant some of the time. | Student answers all questions with accurate and relevant information most of the time.       |
| <b>Skill: Speaking</b> | Student's speech is unclear and requires frequent listener effort.              | Student's speech is generally clear but requires occasional listener effort.                         | Student's speech is clear and smooth and requires minimal listener effort.                   |
| <b>Oral Fluency</b>    | Speaks in incomplete sentences that do not flow.                                | Speaks in complete sentences using time order words some of the time with frequent pauses.           | Speaks in complete sentences using time order words most of the time with occasional pauses. |

**Total points: /15**

**\*Students must receive at least 10 points to move on.**

#### Tutor Recommendations:

☐ **Congratulations! Move on**

*Student has successfully completed this SDLA and is ready to continue to the next.*

☐ **Repeat**

*Student hasn't yet mastered this SDLA. It is recommended that the student complete it again.*

**Tutor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_