

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Which Footprint Will You Leave? Freshmen Sustainability Quiz

Examine how global consumption habits and manufacturing decisions impact Earth's finite resources through the lens of a future-focused environmental advisor.

1. The concept of 'The Triple Bottom Line' suggests that sustainable businesses should measure success by its impact on people, the planet, and what third factor?

Answer: C) Profit

Sustainability involves economic viability (profit) alongside social and environmental health to ensure long-term stability.

2. True or False: Intergenerational equity is the principle that the current generation should not use resources in a way that leaves future generations worse off.

Answer: A) True

Intergenerational equity is a core pillar of sustainability, ensuring fairness between those living today and those born in the future.

3. The practice of _____ involves designing products so they can be fully recycled or composted at the end of their life, mimicking natural cycles.

Answer: B) Cradle-to-Cradle design

Cradle-to-Cradle (C2C) is a sustainable framework where materials are viewed as nutrients circulating in healthy, safe metabolisms.

4. Which of the following is an example of a 'Tragedy of the Commons' scenario regarding shared environmental resources?

Answer: C) Overfishing in international waters where no single country has control

The Tragedy of the Commons occurs when individuals act in their own self-interest to deplete a shared resource, such as fish stocks in the open ocean.

5. True or False: A 'Carbon Footprint' measures only the direct carbon dioxide emissions from breathing.

Answer: B) False

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A carbon footprint includes all greenhouse gas emissions caused by an individual, event, organization, or product, including energy use and transportation.

6. When a city implements _____, it creates urban areas where people can meet all their basic needs within a short walk or bike ride from home.

Answer: C) Smart growth

Smart growth focuses on walkability and mixed land use to reduce reliance on cars and lower environmental impacts.

7. Which term describes the maximum population size of a species that a specific environment can sustain indefinitely without degrading the ecosystem?

Answer: C) Carrying capacity

Carrying capacity is the limit of how many individuals an ecosystem's resources (like food and water) can support.

8. True or False: Biomimicry is the practice of looking to nature's models and strategies to solve human design challenges sustainably.

Answer: A) True

Biomimicry, such as designing wind turbines based on whale fins, helps create highly efficient and sustainable technologies.

9. The 'Precautionary Principle' suggests that if an action or policy has a suspected risk of causing harm to the public or environment, the burden of proof that it is _____ falls on those taking the action.

Answer: B) Safe

The Precautionary Principle encourages caution when scientific certainty is lacking, prioritizing safety and environmental health.

10. Which of these is a 'renewable' resource, meaning it can be replenished naturally over short periods of time?

Answer: B) Geothermal energy

Geothermal energy uses heat from the Earth's interior, which is a constant and virtually inexhaustible supply compared to fossil fuels.