



A1

SEMINAR 9 Environment

Quotes on Environmental Ideas

- 1 When we heal the earth, we heal ourselves. ~ **David Orr**, contemporary American writer / educator
- 2 We never know the worth of water till the well is dry. ~ **Thomas Fuller** (1654–1734), English physician and writer
- 3 They kill good trees to put out bad newspapers. ~ **James G. Watt**, (1938 -), American Secretary of the Interior 1981-1983
- 4 It is a curious situation that the sea, from which life first arose, should now be threatened* by the activities of one form of that life. ~ **Rachel Carson** (1907-1964), American marine biologist, nature writer and author of *Silent Spring*
- 5 Humankind has not woven* the web of life. We are but one thread* within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect. ~ **Chief Seattle** (1786 - 1866), American Indian chief

Discussion Questions

Task 1 – Discuss and take notes on some of the following questions concerning environmental issues.

1. How hot will it get (as regards to global warming or climate change)?
2. Will we still eat meat?
3. Can we make garbage disappear?
4. What about the oceans and fish?
5. Will we run out of gas/petrol?
6. Will Malthus¹ be right about world over-population?
7. Will “Frankenfood”² feed the world?
8. What could a green future look like?
9. Will there be any wilderness left?

¹ Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834) was an English demographer and political economist best known for his pessimistic ideas on population growth.

² “Frankenfood” makes reference to the novel *Frankenstein* and GMOs (genetically modified organisms).



Reading – Visions of a Green Future

Task 2 – Compare the ideas you discussed to the following extracts.

1 How hot will it get? There's no doubt that the greenhouse effect is here to stay, but there is debate over how much it will affect the earth's climate. Even if it does get hotter and the polar ice caps melt (causing water levels to rise and many of our coastal cities to require water-proofing), it is probable that humans will adapt to these changes.

2 Will we still eat meat? Meat consumption will drop in the coming century, as we confront the impact of meat on the environment and our health. Faced with rising levels of disease caused by a fatty, cholesterol-rich diet and the environmental effect of farm waste run-off, we'll return to the age-old formula of grains, vegetables and beans.

3 Can we make garbage disappear? Sure, if we stop creating it, but if the rest of the world catches up to America's trash-production rate, it could be a real disaster. Still, there's hope, both in the form of smarter technologies that use one industry's waste as raw material for another, and in the emerging field of nanotechnology, which, in theory, can build smaller, better products less wastefully.

4 What about the oceans and fish? If we continue to strip the sea of its resources, 25 years from now there may be no fish left to eat. Every year since 1989, the worldwide catch of seafood has declined. The good news is that we are gradually starting to limit overfishing and are finding new possibilities in "aqua-culture" or fish farming.

5 Will we run out of gas/petrol? From an environmental point of view, the bad news is that there is enough oil left in the world to keep those highways jammed well into the 22nd century. The question is not so much whether we run out of gas, but whether the human species will be consumed by our own appetites. The good news is that we know how to change course, with the first step being to move away from those gigantic-SUVs³ for more practical car models.

6 Will Malthus be right about world over-population? Maybe, although the English political economist has so far been wrong: our rapidly expanding population has not surpassed the growth of our food supply. Poverty and famine, which Malthus said would become universal, instead remain more a problem of distribution. With an estimated 3 billion more people on the planet in the next 50 years, we might be nearing the limits of what our globe can support.

7 Will "Frankenfood" feed the world? Genetically modified (GM) crops may have the potential to end hunger (as 800 million people in the world are undernourished and the population is expected to rise by 50 percent in the next 50 years). Nevertheless, many risks and uncertainties remain and GM crops should be introduced only after rigorous long-term testing.

³ SUV – sports utility vehicles – such as Jeeps.



8 What could a green future look like? The possibilities are limitless: renewable energy – solar, wind, hydrogen, hydropower; telecommunications enabling us to work more from home; mass transit, (electric) bikes and electric cars; recycling of everything (waste and most consumer products); local organic food production (rooftop / backyard gardens); green communities, eco-friendly materials, energy-saving design; the list goes on.⁴

9 Will there be any wilderness left? If current trends continue, there may be none left within 50 years or so. One of the unfortunate facts of our rapidly populating planet is that there are fewer places where people don't have some sort of environmental impact. Those that still exist -- much of Antarctica, parts of central Brazil and Tibet -- face the same fate as previously remote areas such as the Grand Canyon: becoming carefully-managed areas overrun by well-meaning backpackers and tourists.

Ecotourism – Discussion Questions

1. Have you heard of ecotourism? How would you define it in your own words⁵?
2. In what ways is mass tourism a threat to the environment?
3. Could ecotourism serve as a meaningful alternative?
4. Is the travel industry a clean and positive form of development for poor countries?
5. What do you think of the following quote?

“Travelling, like all forms of consumption*, is not a neutral activity. Everything we do affects other people; everything we own is taken from someone else. If you can't travel carefully, don't travel at all.”
– *George Monbiot* (1963 -), author and journalist at *The Guardian*

Brainstorming

Task 3 – *With a partner, brainstorm any negative or positive effects that tourism might have, giving specific examples from your region if possible.*

Reading for gist – Guidelines for Ecotourists

Read the text below and do the following activities.

⁴ See the following page for more information: http://www.time.com/time/reports/v21/health/green_future.html viewed on 17.8.2010.

⁵ International Ecotourism Society definition: “*Ecotourism is responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well being of local people*”.



Guidelines for Ecotourists

Before you go on your holiday, read about the places you are about to visit and choose your ecotour operator *after* asking the following questions:

- Does the operator comply with the EAA (Environmental Assessment Association) Ecotourism Code of Practice?
- Is there economic benefit going back to, or staying in, the local community?
- Does the operator use local tour guides, services and supplies where possible?

While you are on tour, minimize the negative social, environmental and economical impacts of your visit:

1. Remember you are a guest.
2. Be culturally sensitive and *respect* local customs.
3. Allow enough time in each place to *appreciate* it.
4. Travel by your own muscle power where possible.
5. Be careful not to *introduce* exotic plants or animals.
6. Stay on the track (trail).

7. Leave an area cleaner than when you found it.
8. Don't *exploit* an area when food gathering.
9. Don't *disturb* wildlife or wildlife habitats.
10. *Familiarize* yourself with local regulations.
11. Don't use soap or detergents in natural water bodies.
12. When travelling, spend money on local enterprises.
13. Consider the implications of buying plant and animal products. Find out if they're rare or endangered, taken from the wild, and if the trade is approved of by local authorities.
14. Don't encourage illegal trade by buying products made from endangered species.

When you return:

15. *Encourage* a natural and cultural understanding of the places you have visited.
16. Consider the environmental and cultural effects of your visit. Provide feedback to tour operators, your travel agent and government agencies (who manage the areas visited).

Guessing meaning from context

Task 4 – Look at these verbs from the text. Match them with the dictionary definitions. Use the context of the text to help you.

respect
appreciate

introduce
exploit

disturb
familiarize
encourage

- 1 to frighten animals or birds so that they run away.
- 2 to show that you understand the importance of something by not doing anything against it.
- 3 to learn or experience something so that you know about it.
- 4 to recognise the good or special qualities of a person, place or thing.
- 5 to use natural resources such as trees, water or oil so you gain as much as possible.
- 6 to provide conditions that help something to happen.
- 7 to bring something such as a plant or animal into a country or environment for the first time.

Summary Completion

Task 5 – Look at this summary of **Guidelines for Ecotourists** and complete it using some of the words below (not all of them will be needed).

guests
an ecotour
operator
respect

endangered
a holiday package
educate
local

positive
negative
soap

customers
rubbish
dangerous

Ecotourists must choose 1 _____ carefully. They must make sure that they follow the code of practice, use 2 _____ guides and services, and have a 3 _____ economic impact on the community. Certain guidelines should be followed. For example: tourists should not forget they are 4 _____ and should 5 _____ local habits and laws. When walking they should not leave the track and should avoid polluting water with 6 _____. They should never buy products made from plants or animals which are 7 _____.

Follow-up Questions

- 1 How has this article challenged the conventional ideas about travel?
- 2 If you were organising an ecotour of your region, where would you go and why?

Listening – The Story of Stuff – Introduction (video 2:37 minutes, 2007)

By Annie Leonard – author of **The Story of Stuff: How Our Obsession with Stuff is Trashing the Planet, Our Communities, and Our Health – and a Vision for Change**

Task 6 – Go to the video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqZMTY4V7Ts&feature=channel>, listen to the talk and fill in the gaps.

Do you have one of these? I got a little obsessed with mine. In fact, I got a little (1) _____ with all my stuff. Have you ever wondered where all the stuff we buy comes from and where it goes when we throw it out? I couldn't stop wondering about that. So I looked it up and what the textbooks said is that our stuff simply moves along these stages: extraction to production to distribution to (2) _____ to disposal. All together it's called the materials economy.

Well, I looked into it a little bit more. In fact, I spent ten years travelling the world tracking where our stuff comes from and where it goes. And do you know what I found out? That it's not the whole story. There's a lot missing from this explanation. For one thing, the system looks like it's fine – no problem, but the truth is that it's a system in crisis. The reason it is in (3) _____ is that it's a linear system and we live on a finite* planet; you cannot run a linear system on a (4) _____ planet indefinitely*.

Every step along the way this system is interacting with the real world. In real life, it's not happening on a blank white page. It's (5) _____ with societies, cultures, economies and the environment. All along the way, it's bumping up against limits*. Limits we don't see here because the diagram is incomplete. So, let's go back through, let's fill in some of the blanks and see what's (6) _____.



One of the most important things that is missing is people. Yes, people. People live and work all along this system and some people in this system (7) _____ a little more than others; some have a little more say. Who are they?

Let's start with the government. Now, my friends tell me I should use a tank to symbolize the government and that's true in many countries and increasingly in our own. After all, more than 50% of our federal (8) _____ money is now going to the military. But I'm using a person to symbolize the government, because I hold true to the vision and (9) _____ that governments should be "of the people, by the people, for the people". It's the government's job to watch out for us, to take care of us. That's their job.

Then along came the corporation. Now, the reason the corporation looks bigger than the government is that the corporation *is* bigger than the government. Of the 100 largest economies on (10) _____ now, 51 are corporations. As the corporations have grown in size and power, we've seen a little change in the government where they are a little more concerned in making sure everything is working out for those guys than for us.

Note-taking – The Story of Stuff – Full Version (video 21:16 minutes, 2007)

Task 7 – Go to the video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLBE5QAYXp8&NR=1&feature=fvwp> to see the full version and take notes on the main points of the talk. Here are some key points to listen for.

1 – Materials economy –

Role of government and corporations –

2 – Extraction –

Resource depletion –

3 – Production –

Toxins –

Products and by-products –

3 – Distribution –

Selling –

4 – Consumption –

Planned obsolescence –

Advertising –

5 – Disposal –

Recycling –

6 – Another way –

Some alternatives –

"Zero waste" –



Grammar – Word Formation – Suffixes and Prefixes

Task 8 – Complete the table.

Verb	Noun	Adjective	Adverb
Doubt	doubt		Doubtfully
Conserve		conserved, -ing	-
Destroy	destruction		destructively
	empowerment	empowered, -ing	-
Consume		consumable, -ed,	consumingly
Force	force	forcible, forcing, forced	
Subsidise	subsidy		-
Develop		developed, -ing	-
Benefit	benefit		beneficially

Prefixes:

in-	dis-	experienced	valuable
im-	mis-	perfect	mature
ir-	sub-	conscious	rational
il-	under-	judged	loaded
un-	over-	valued	honest
ab-	self-	normal	legible
re-	de-	stable	spoilt
		aware	

Many combinations are possible, though not all are commonly used. List the combinations that you know and compare your list with the rest of the class. Use these lists to expand your vocabulary.

Vocabulary

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. to threaten | ohrožovat |
| 2. to weave (past participle is woven) | tkát |
| 3. thread | nit, niť |
| 4. *sights | památky, pamětihodnosti |
| 5. *consumption | spotřeba |
| 6. *benefit | výhoda, prospěch |
| 7. *supplies | zásobování |
| 8. *impact | dopad |
| 9. *local customs | místní zvyky |
| 10. track | stezka |
| 11. *exploit | využít, zneužít |
| 12. familiarise | obeznámit se |
| 13. *endangered | ohrožený |
| 14. *approve (of) | schválit (co) |
| 15. *appreciate | ocenit, uznávat |
| 16. *natural resources | přírodní zdroje |



- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 17. *provide conditions | poskytnout podmínky |
| 18. *to account for | představovat |
| 19. finite | konečný |
| 20. indefinitely | nekonečně |
| 21. to bump up against limits | narážet na omezení |

Word bank

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. to go on a sightseeing tour | jet na okružní prohlídku pamětihodností |
| 2. to go on a guided tour | jít na prohlídku s průvodcem |
| 3. to go on a cruise | jet na okružní plavbu |
| 4. to book a trip with a travel agency | rezervovat si zájezd u cestovní kanceláře |
| 5. to seek something out of the ordinary | vyhledávat něco neobvyklého |
| 6. to get back to nature | vrátit se k přírodě |
| 7. to damage / trash the countryside | ničit přírodu |
| 8. tourist industry / sector | turistický průmysl |
| 9. tourist office | informační kancelář pro turisty |
| 10. damage done to the countryside | škody napáchané na přírodě |
| 11. itinerary | plán cesty |
| 12. hoards of people | davy lidí |
| 13. ecological awareness | ekologické povědomí |

Other sources consulted:

Quotations adapted from <http://www.quoteagarden.com/environment.html> viewed on 17.8.2010.

Visions of a Green Future adapted from <http://www.time.com/time/reports/v21/health/index.html> viewed on 17.8.2010.

The Story of Stuff viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqZMTY4V7Ts&feature=channel> on 15.8.2010.

The Story of Stuff transcript viewed at www.storyofstuff.com/pdfs/annie_leonard_footnoted_script.pdf on 15.8.2010.

<http://fulgeoq5.fullerton.edu/350/350students/dtollefson/ecotourism.html>

<http://www.planeta.com/ecotravel/tour/definitions.html>

Jones, Leo, Progress to Proficiency, CUP, 1994, section 6.10.