

МИНИСТЕРСТВО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И НАУКИ РФ  
ФЕДЕРАЛЬНОЕ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЕ  
БЮДЖЕТНОЕ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОЕ УЧРЕЖДЕНИЕ  
ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ  
«ВОРОНЕЖСКИЙ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ  
УНИВЕРСИТЕТ»

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES**

*Учебно-методическое пособие*

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## ПОЯСНИТЕЛЬНАЯ ЗАПИСКА

Целью пособия **Environmental Challenges** является развитие у студентов продуктивных и рецептивных видов речевой деятельности: говорения, чтения и аудирования в рамках профессиональной сферы общения. Тренируются различные стратегии чтения (просмотровое, поисковое, детальное), развиваются навыки диалогической и монологической речи. В качестве сопутствующей задачи предполагается развитие умений группового и парного взаимодействия.

Пособие рассчитано на 54 часа аудиторной и 58 часов самостоятельной работы.

Пособие состоит из 8 разделов (Units), охватывающих основную тематику общения в профессиональной сфере. В данном пособии рассматриваются основные проблемы, связанные с влиянием человека на окружающую среду. Раздел (Unit) содержит предтекстовые упражнения; аутентичные письменные тексты и тексты для аудирования; послетекстовые упражнения, направленные на проверку понимания; блок упражнений на обсуждение информации, полученной из текстов; а также упражнения, направленные на формирование и развитие навыков письменной речи.

- a) take a plastic carrier bag.
  - b) reuse an old plastic carrier bag.
  - c) use your own bag.
7. When you eat a chocolate bar in class, you
- a) drop the wrapper under your desk.
  - b) put the wrapper in the litter bin.
  - c) save the wrapper for recycling.
8. Which products do you keep in your bathroom?
- a) Biodegradable shampoo and cosmetics.
  - b) Aerosols.
  - c) Any kind of products from the supermarket.
9. In university, you use
- a) refillable pens.
  - b) throwaway plastic pens.
  - c) refillable pens and solar-powered calculators.
10. If you were asked to contribute money to a Save the Environment project, you would
- a) refuse to give.
  - b) give generously.
  - c) give a small amount.
11. Which of the following do you use?
- a) Only recycled materials.
  - b) Recycled materials if someone gives them to you.
  - c) The cheapest ones.
12. Tropical forests should be
- a) cut down so that we can profit from natural resources.
  - b) protected because they are beautiful.
  - c) protected because they produce oxygen.

**1b Now learn about your green profile by adding up your score.**

Answer quiz												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
a)	0	3	3	2	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0
b)	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	0	0	3	2	2
c)	3	0	0	0	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3

**31-36** You are not only green but also forest green. Keep up the good work!

**26-30** Your heart is green but your actions aren't always as efficient as they need to be to save the planet.

**20-25** You are pale green. There is some room for improvement. Change your habits and you will soon be green.

**0-20** You must be allergic to the colour green. Thank, to you, maybe there won't be any green in the future. Wise up.

**1c Work in pairs and consult your friend about what you can do to be greener.**

**Reading**

**2a Read the first paragraph of the text below. Predict what the rest of the text will be about, using the choices below. You can underline more than one answer.**

1. Mankind's disruptive influence on the environment;
2. Primitive people changed the face of the earth;
3. The threat of extinction affected many animal and plant species in the Cretaceous period;
4. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the European explorers killed all the buffalo in North America;
5. Modern man has damaged soil by intensive farming methods;
6. The destruction of forests caused environmental damage;
7. The problems of urban expansion are the problems of the 20<sup>th</sup> century;

8. The ancient Romans were pioneers of public health;  
9. The world now is an isolated community.

**2b Read the text up to the end to check if you were right.**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE THROUGH THE HISTORY**

(1) The world has reached a crisis point. Our modern lifestyle is destroying the fragile environment. Modern men tend to imagine that ancient people were “environmentally friendly” and lived in harmony with nature. Some people (such as the American Indians) did indeed respect and protect their environment. But there are many historical examples of ancient people who destroyed the land they inhabited. In doing this, some of them destroyed their own livelihoods.

(2) Many communities today burn down trees to clear land for growing crops. Some of the earliest human communities also burned large areas of woodland for this purpose. Human societies evolved from small groups of hunter-gatherers to larger societies based around agriculture and domestic animals. According to many anthropologists, this was the beginning of “civilization”. But it was also the beginning of mankind’s disruptive influence on the environment.

(3) Until that time, most of the earth’s land surface was covered in thick forests. Large forests fires, probably started deliberately by humans, created a new type of landscape in many parts of the world – the savannah or scrubland. The world’s population then was only five or ten million. But these people literally changed the face of the earth. Several centuries later, the inhabitants of Easter Island in the Pacific Ocean cut down all their trees in order to erect huge religious statues. The islanders apparently forgot that the trees were their major source of food, fuel and shelter. Within a few years, the rich and sophisticated society on Easter Island was reduced to destitution and starvation.

(4) The threat of extinction affects many animal and plant species in the world today. Thousands of years ago, elephants walked freely over much of the

earth. Elephant hunting by humans, mainly for the ivory trade, eliminated the elephant population from the Middle East and North Africa several centuries ago. The great explorer Marco Polo discovered a lucrative market for ivory in China because the Chinese had already killed all their own elephants. The European explorers who settled in the Americas spent several centuries trying to eradicate the native American Indian population. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they deliberately set out to kill all the buffalo in North America, because the Indians ate buffalo meat and used the hide of the buffalo for making clothes and shelters. Today the buffalo remains an endangered species.

(5) Modern man has damaged soil by intensive farming methods. One problem is salinization from excessive irrigation. But salinization is not entirely a problem of modern, high-technology agriculture. Our ancestors probably discovered irrigation about 5,500 years ago. The ancient Mesopotamians, who lived about 4,500 years ago, were enthusiastic farmers. They built extensive irrigation channels in river valleys to try to increase their crop yields. Unfortunately, this led to water logging and salinization of the soil. The yield of the staple crop, barley, fell dramatically and a prolonged famine occurred. The people who survived the famine had to change their staple crop from barley to wheat, which tolerated the salty soil better. The problem of soil erosion has occurred ever since man began to destroy forests. There is geological evidence that a rapid increase in the rate of soil erosion occurred about 4,000 years ago in the northern European countries, particularly Britain, France and Germany. There was also an increase in silt deposits in rivers. The time of this change corresponds to the introduction of agriculture to Europe. The destruction of forests, together with ancient man's agricultural methods, almost certainly caused this environmental damage.

(6) The problem of urban expansion, industrial pollution and waste disposal are largely the problems of an overpopulated world in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

But ever since humans first tried to live together in towns, there have been problems providing food, fuel, water and sanitation for urban communities. The great city of Ur (the biblical home of Abraham) was partially destroyed by floods after the inhabitants removed the trees around the headwaters of the river Euphrates to use as fuel for their fires. With very few exceptions, urban communities used rivers and lakes as lavatories and garbage dumps. The ancient Romans, who understood the connection between sewage and disease, built their famous aqueducts to take the waste out of the city center. But the aqueducts simply transported raw sewage to the countryside and dumped it there! The ancient Romans were pioneers of public health but they were very short-sighted about the health of the environment.

(7) There were two important differences between ancient civilizations and the world today. We no longer live in isolated communities many hundreds of miles from our neighbors. The world now is a global village. World population is reaching critical levels. During the past 200 years, humankind has invented powerful technology that multiplies each individual's destructive impact on the environment. Population growth and modern technology mean that we cannot afford to repeat the mistakes of our ancestors. The environmental crisis we are facing today will not just destroy a tiny corner of the earth. If we do not take action soon, it may cause irreversible damage to the entire planet.

**2c Say whether the following statements are true or false.**

1. Human societies evolved from large groups of hunter-gatherers to societies based around agriculture and domestic animals.
2. The world's population then was only 5 or 10 million.
3. The great explorer Marco Polo discovered a lucrative market for ivory in China and India.
4. One problem is salinization from intensive farming methods.
5. The ancient Mesopotamians were enthusiastic farmers.