

CHAPTER - 11

THE AILING PLANET THE GREEN MOVEMENT'S ROLE

QUESTIONS FROM TEXTBOOK SOLVED

A. Understanding the Text

Question 1. Locate the lines in the text that support the title "The Ailing Planet".

Answer: The following lines in the text support the title "The Ailing Planet".

- "Are we to leave our successors a scorched planet of advancing deserts, impoverished landscapes and ailing environment.
- A three-year study using satellites and aerial photography conducted by the United Nations, warns that the environment has deteriorated so badly that it is 'critical' in many of the eighty-eight countries investigated.

Question 2. What does the notice "The world's most dangerous animals" at a cage in the zoo at Lusaka, Zambia, signify?

Answer: The notice "The world's most dangerous animals" at a cage in the zoo at Lusaka, Zambia signifies that man is solely responsible for all the deterioration in environment and depletion of natural resources. Thus man is the world's most dangerous animal.

Question 3. How are the earth's principal biological systems being depleted?

Answer: The earth's principal biological systems are being depleted by excessive use. Over fishing is quite common. Forests are being cut to obtain firewood for cooking. Grasslands are turning into barren wastelands and croplands are deteriorating as their productivity has been impaired.

Question 4. Why does the author agree that the growth of world population is one of the strongest factors distorting the future of human society?

Answer: The growth of world population puts a severe strain on the earth's principal biological systems. Due to excessive human claims these reach an unsustainable level where their

productivity is damaged. Development is not possible if world population continues to grow so rapidly. Increasing population brings hunger, poverty and unemployment.

B. Talking About the Text

Discuss in groups of four:

Question 1. Laws are neither respected nor enforced in India.

Answer: It is painful but true that laws are neither respected nor enforced in India. Let us take examples from everyday life. Almost everyone is conversant with the rule of the road. Still there are cases of wrong overtaking, lane jumping, signal jumping, over speeding and road rage. Our laws insist on compulsory elementary education up to the age of fourteen. Yet we find many illiterate teenager boys or girls of this age loitering around in lanes or employed in petty jobs in road side restaurants or as domestic servants. Our Constitution insists on the protection and improvement of the environment. The states have been given the responsibility of protecting forests and wildlife. Forests are being cut and illegal shooting of wildlife goes on. Similarly, there are laws regarding abolishing casteism, untouchability and bonded labour. But these remain on paper. In actual life, these are never put into practice. Hence, it can be concluded that laws are neither respected nor enforced in India.

Question 2. "Are we to leave our successors a scorched planet of advancing desert, impoverished landscapes and an ailing environment?"

Answer: I fully agree with the view contained in the statement. There is every likelihood of such an eventuality occurring in future. There are solid reasons behind this apprehension. Our resources are limited. They will not last indefinitely if we go on consuming them indiscriminately. Fisheries, forests, grasslands and croplands form the basis of the global economic system. They supply us food and raw materials for industry. Increasing population has put a severe pressure on them. Excessive use of these resources have impaired their productivity. In large areas of the world these systems have reached an unsustainable level. The results are awful and disastrous. The fisheries will collapse, forests disappear, grasslands will become barren wastelands and croplands will lose their fertility. Decimation of forests will increase dryness and heat and there will be less rainfall. Hence there is a possibility of the earth becoming an overheated place full of increasing deserts, poor landscapes and ailing environment in future.

Question 3. We have not inherited this earth from our forefathers; we have borrowed it from our children'.

Answer: This is a revolutionary statement by Mr. Lester Brown. It focuses attention on the position of man in this universe. People take it for granted that the earth is theirs as they have inherited it from their forefathers. They forget the fact that the real owners of the land are our children. We are only custodians or trustees and we must continue development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their needs. We must not strip the natural world' of the resources future generations would need. In our effort to feed the increasing millions, we are plundering the heritage of our children. We have open overusing natural resources for our present purposes. Destruction of natural resources will create an ailing environment. Our consumption of non-renewable resources should be checked. We must preserve natural resources and hand them over to children intact as they are the real owners.

Question 4. The problems of overpopulation that directly affect our everyday life.

Answer: Overpopulation causes many problems in every day life. The three basic human needs – food, cloth and shelter have assumed alarming prepositions. Fisheries, forests, grasslands and croplands are under severe strain. In many areas they have reached an unsustainable level. People resort to over fishing to obtain protein. Forests are being destroyed to obtain

firewood. Grasslands are becoming deserts. Artificial fertilizers have improved the productivity of croplands. Overpopulation hinders development and adversely affects the spread of education and health care among the masses. It is observed that the poor beget more children. It only leads them to unending poverty. More children does not mean more workers but merely more people without work. Thus over-population leads to unemployment. Public transport proves insufficient. We see long queues everywhere. In short, overpopulation leads to deterioration in environment and shortens our lives by causing many diseases.

C. Thinking About Language

The phrase 'inter alia' meaning 'among other things' is one of the many Latin expressions commonly used in English.

Find out what these Latin phrases mean:

1. prima facie' 2. ad hoc
3. ad infinitum 4. mutatis mutandis
5. caveat 6. tabula rasa

Answer:

1. **Prima facie:** on the first view
2. **Ad hoc:** for the special aim
3. **Ad infinitum:** up to infinit
4. **Mutatis mutandis:** with necessary changes
5. **caveat:** a warning that particular things needs to be considered before something can be done
6. **Tabula rasa:** a smooth tablet

D. Working with Words

I. Locate the following phrases in the text and study their connotation:

- (i) gripped the imagination of (ii) dawned upon
(iii) ushered in (iv) passed into current coin
(v) passport of the future

Answer: (i) gripped the imagination of: have powerful effect on imagination

(ii) dawned upon: became obvious; began to realize for the first time

(iii) ushered in: to make something new begin

(iv) passed into current coin: become a part of current usage

(v) passport of the future: a thing that enables us to achieve something '

II. The words grip, dawn, usher, coin, passport have a literal as well as a figurative meaning.

Write pairs of sentences using each word in its literal sense as well as the figurative sense .

Answer:

1. **Grip:** (i) She gripped on to the railing with both hands.
(ii) Terrorism has gripped the country for the past five years.
2. **Dawn:** (i) A new technological age has dawned.
(ii) It dawned on me that they couldn't possibly have met before.
3. **Usher:** (i) The Secretary ushered me into his office.
(ii) The change of management ushered in fresh ideas and policies.
4. **Coin:** (i) Every coin has two sides.
(ii) She coined a phrase to explain her meaning.
5. **Passport:** (i) I showed my passport to the security officer.
(ii) Hard work alone is the passport to success.

E. Notice these expressions in the text.

Question 1 . Guess their meaning from the context.

➤ <i>a holistic and ecological view</i>	➤ <i>sustainable development</i>
➤ <i>languish</i>	➤ <i>ignominious darkness</i>
➤ <i>inter alia</i>	➤ <i>decimated</i>
➤ <i>catastrophic depletion</i>	➤ <i>transcending concern.</i>

Answer:

- **A holistic and ecological view:** a complete view of the whole thing keeping in mind the inter relationship of constituents among themselves and to environment.
- **Sustainable development:** development that can be continued for a long time.
- **Languish :** forced to stay somewhere.
- **Ignominious darknes:** disgraceful/humiliating darkness.
- **Inter alia:** among other things.
- **Decimated:** destroyed.
- **Catastrophic depletion :** disastrous exhaustion.
- **Transcending concern :** surpassing concern.

F. Things to do

Question 1. Make posters to highlight the importance of the Green Movement.

Answer:

<i>Go Green</i>	SAVE ENVIRONMENT	<i>Act Now</i>
JOIN THE GREEN MOVEMENT		
IDEALS	IMPORTANCE	
◆ Healthy Environment	◆ Greens-Only Defence Against Pollution	
◆ Ecological Balance	◆ Plants and Animals - Living Beings	
◆ Conservation of Rare Species	◆ Cleaner Surroundings - Happier Lives	
PLANT TREES & CURB DISEASES		
GREEN: PASSPORT TO LONG AND HAPPY LIFE		
ATTEND		
THE FIRST MEETING OF		
GREEN GROUP		
On		
SUNDAY, 26 March 20xx		
at 4 p.m.		
GREEN PARK NEW CITY		
PARTICIPATE IN		
CONSERVATION MOVEMENT		
TELL ALL		
● Eat Green	● Live Green	● Live Longer

Question 2. Maintain a record of the trees cut down and the parks demolished in your area, or any other act that violates the environment. Write to newspapers reporting on any such acts that disturb you.

Answer: Maintaining a record: left for self attempt

Letter to Editor: See the specimen given below:

271 Green Road, Silver City 20 March 20 XX

The Editor

The National Herald

New City .

Sub: Illegal felling of trees Sir

May I use the columns of your daily to draw the attention of the public and the authorities concerned towards an act that has caused severe violation of environment. The central park adjacent to Green Road had many tall and beautiful trees which added to its glory. Of late some people began to use it for hosting wedding parties or political functions. They caused much damage to the environment by damaging the plants, flowers, young trees and grass growing in the lawns as well as creating noise pollution through loudspeakers.

Yesterday, some enthusiastic members of the green club protested to the organiser of a political assembly against the misuse of the park and the untold harm to environment. To our surprise, we found that all the tall trees had been felled and cut down into logs overnight.

We have lodged a complaint with the local police station. We appeal to you to publish this letter of protest against the illegal felling of trees with your comments and remind the authorities that it is the responsibility of the state to preserve healthy environment.

I am confident that you will take up this cause.

Yours faithfully

Deepak/Deepika

MORE QUESTIONS SOLVED

A. Short Answer Type Questions

Question 1. Which movement does Nani Palkhivala refer to? How popular do you think it is?

Answer: The author, Nani Palkhivala, refers to the 'Green Movement'. It has become very 'popular among the people of all countries. It started nearly twenty five years ago but it has gripped the imagination of the entire human race completely and quite rapidly.

Question 2. How does the author point out the importance of Green Movement?

Answer: The author points out the importance of the Green Movement by comparing it to the revolutionary ideas of Copernicus. He had taught mankind in the 16th century that the earth and the other planets revolved round the sun.

Question 3. How have human beings shifted their perceptions?

Answer: We have shifted our perceptions from mechanistic view to a holistic and ecological view. Now we regard the earth as a living organism. It is an enormous being and we are its parts. It has its own metabolic needs and vital processes. We must respect and preserve them. *

Question 4. What is the state of earth today ? How should we act now?

Answer: The signs of the earth which are connected with life show that the earth is a patient in declining health. We must realize our moral obligations to be good stewards of the planet. We must act as responsible trustees of the legacy of future generations.

Question 5. How has the concept of sustainable development been defined?

Answer: Sustainable development has been defined as the development that meets the needs of the present without putting in danger the ability of future generations to meet their needs. In other words, the present generation would not deprive the natural world of the resources the future generations would need.

Question 6. Who is 'the world's most dangerous animal'? What has he learnt?

Answer: Man is the most dangerous animal of the world. He has learnt a new awareness. He has acted wisely. He has shifted from the system of domination to one based on partnership.

Question 7. What do you learn about the number of living species from this chapter?

Answer: Scientists have arranged a list of about 1.4 million living species. The number of unlisted species is much more. It varies from three to a hundred million according to various estimates. These still remain unknown and unidentified.

Question 8. What do you know about the earth's biological systems and their functions?

Answer: The earth has four principal biological systems. These are: fisheries, forests, grasslands and croplands. They form the basis of the world's economic system. They supply us food and raw materials for industry.

Question 9. What is the state of earth's biological systems now and why?

Answer: In many areas of the world, earth's biological systems have reached an unsustainable level. They have reached a point where their productivity has been damaged. This is because of the excessive pressure exerted by man on them.

Question 10. How do the earth's biological systems behave on reaching an unsustainable level?

Answer: The productivity of the earth's biological systems is impaired on reaching an unsustainable level. Fisheries collapse. Forests disappear. Grasslands turn into barren wastelands. Croplands become worse.

Question 11. How can over-fishing and decimation of forests prove harmful?

Answer: Over-fishing may lead to stripping the fisheries. Then man will lose a rich source of protein. The decimation of forests will harm ecology. Moreover, several species of life that live in forest will face extinction.

Question 12. How do Indians procure fuel for cooking? What is the result of their action?

Answer: Indians collect fire wood from forests. Sometimes even green trees are cut to obtain fuel. Destruction of forests is harmful to environment and wildlife. They also burn dung as fuel. Burning dung deprives the soil of an important natural fertiliser.

Question 13. Why do we need to plant more forests in India?

Answer: According to official data, India is losing its forests at the rate of 3.7 million acres a year. The actual loss of forests is estimated to be about eight times the rate indicated by government statistics. Large areas, officially named forest land are already treeless. Moreover a five-fold increase in the rate of forest planting is needed to cope with the expected fuel wood demand 5 years later.

Question 14. How is the world population increasing over the years?

Answer: The world population is increasing at a rapid rate now-a-days. Every four days the world population increases by one million. The world population was about one billion in 1800. By 1900 another billion was added. However in the next 100 years 3.7 billion more were added. This clearly indicates the pace of the growth of world population.

Question 15. Why is population control essential in India?

Answer: The population of India was estimated to be 920 million in 1994. Overpopulation upsets all plans of development and causes poverty and unemployment. So either population is controlled or people would remain poor forever. Voluntary family planning helps population control in India.

Question 16. What do you understand by the emerging new world vision?

Answer: The new world vision is a holistic view. It is also an ecological view. It considers the world as an integrated whole a global village, rather than a separated or isolated collection of

parts. This emerging new world vision has introduced the era of responsibility.

Question 17. How can industry play its role in the new 'era of responsibility'?

Answer: It is well known that industries are a main source of causing environmental pollution. There will be a great change in the preservation of environment if the industrialists become conscious-of their responsibilities and become environment friendly. Thus Industry has to play a very important role in the new era of responsibility.

Question 18. In what connection has the author mentioned Mr. Edgar S. Woolard?

Answer: Mr Edgar S. Woolard was the chairman of a famous industrial concern—Du Pont. Five years ago, he declared himself to be the company's 'Chief Environmental Officer'. He said that their continued existence as a leading manufacturer required that they excelled in environmental performance.

Question 19. Why does the author quote the words of Mrs. Margaret Thatcher and Mr. Lester Brown?

Answer: The two statements quoted by the author support his point of view about the need to protect environment. Both the statements lay stress on preservation of environment and holding it in trust for the coming generations.

B. Long Answer Type Questions

Question 1. Why does Nani Palkhivala call the earth 'The Ailing Planet'? How can the ailing planet survive?

Answer: The signs of the earth connected with life necessary for staying alive show that the earth is a patient in declining health. Its deserts are advancing, landscapes are being impoverished and environment is ailing. Aerial photography using satellites has revealed that the environment has deteriorated very badly in many parts of the world. In fact, it has become critical in many of the eighty eight countries investigated. The concept of sustainable development and green movement can help the ailing planet to survive. People must discharge their moral responsibility as stewards of the planet and trustees of the legacy of the future generations. The plundering of the natural resources should be controlled. These must be preserved for the future generations.

Question 2. What are the earth's principal biological systems? Why have they been depleted and how can they be preserved?

Answer: The earth has four principal biological systems. These are: fisheries, forests, grasslands and croplands. They form the basis of the world's economic system. They supply us food and raw materials for industry. These biological systems are being depleted by excessive use. Over fishing is quite common. Forests are being destroyed to obtain firewood for cooking. In many areas of the world, these biological systems have reached an unsustainable level. Grasslands are turning into deserts and produce from croplands is decreasing. It seems they have lost their productivity. The decimation of forests is likely to cause extinction of several species. We must change our outlook and stop overusing the natural resources. We have to hand them over to the coming generations in a healthy state so that they can meet their needs. Consciousness of our moral responsibility as caretakers of the legacy of our children can help to preserve these non-renewable resources.

Question 3. "Forests precede mankind; deserts follow", Examine the validity of this remark in the light of reading 'The Ailing Planet: The Green Movement's Role'.

Answer: Forests are one of the most important biological systems of the earth. They came into existence much before mankind. In this sense forests precede mankind. We have inherited large tracts of forests from our forefathers. Forests are the power house of evolution. Several

species of life exist in them. The world's ancient inheritance of tropical forests is now wearing away at the rate of forty to fifty million acres per year. In poor countries, local forests are being destroyed to procure fuel wood. It is estimated that a five fold increase in the rate of forest planting is needed to cope with the expected fuel wood demand in the year 2000. It is the responsibility of the state to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife. However, large areas named as the forest land are now treeless. As the forests disappear, deserts will follow. We must take timely steps to prevent this.

Question 4. "For the first time in human history we see a transcending concern—the survival not just of the people but of the planet". Elucidate.

Answer: In the twentieth century, there has been a revolutionary change in human perceptions. We have begun to take a holistic view of the very basis of our existence. The earth is now regarded as a living organism of which we are parts. It has its own metabolic needs and processes necessary for staying alive, which need to be respected and preserved. The environmental problem does not necessarily indicate our death, it is our passport for the future. A new world vision has emerged. It is a holistic view, an ecological view. This regards the world as a whole rather than a collection of isolated parts. This vision has ushered in the Era of Responsibility. Industrialists, politicians and writers have become environment friendly and realised their responsibility in preserving the non-renewable natural resources.