

UNIT 12 TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE

UNIT OVERVIEW

In this unit, students will:

- 🎧 Read and listen to Joe’s history lesson from 100 years in the future.
- Answer open-ended comprehension questions to show understanding of the story.
- 🗣️ Consider four alternative opinions about what we can do about environmental problems, and decide who makes the strongest point.
- Study the Opinion Network to learn expressions for giving opinions about people’s arguments.
- Extend the Topic by talking about helping the environment with lifestyle changes.
- Read a Culture Corner extract about futuristic movies.
- Share ideas about a decision to help the environment.
- Watch a follow-up video extract from Stacy-Ann giving her views about environmental problems.
- Take the Unit Test.

Authors’ Introduction

Go to impactseries.com/issues to listen to Joseph’s unit introduction.

Questions Raised

- What will the environment be like in 100 years?
- Why do humans do so many things that destroy their environment?
- What can we do to solve environmental problems?

To Keep in Mind

- The topic “environmental problems” is quite abstract and can be hard for students to discuss. This unit is written as a letter from the future that doesn’t require high-level language.
- Although the letter in this unit deals with environmental problems in general, currently some countries use many more resources than others. For example, the United States consumes more energy than China, even though it has a much smaller population. One major problem is that if people in developing countries like China and India start to consume at the same rate as industrialized countries, the environment can be badly damaged. On the other hand, it seems unfair to tell newly industrialized countries that they must slow their growth or pay more for resources because of the consumption of countries that developed before they did. Don’t they have a right to enjoy a high quality of life too? In the end, of course, if the Earth’s environment is destroyed, it is destroyed for everyone.

TEACHING GUIDE

Getting Ready

→ Explain that the topic for today’s class is environmental problems. The questions in Getting Ready aren’t meant to be discussed, but rather are designed to help students start to think about environmental issues.

🎯 **Teaching tip:** The teacher can use the Getting Ready questions with the class as a kind of quiz game. Have students close their books. Read (and explain if necessary) the first of the Getting Ready questions. Tell students that they need to “vote” for the answer that they think is correct by holding up one finger for true, two fingers for false. The whole class should raise their hands to show their answers at the same time. The teacher can make a rough count and report the results to the class. For example: “Well, 60% think true, and 40% think false. Actually, the correct answer is...”

Situation

→ Have students read the passage twice. The first time, they should read quickly and not use the dictionary. Give a time limit after which they should close their books. Then have students open their books again and look at the Check Your Understanding questions on page 55. Have students answer the ones they can and leave blank the ones they can't. Have them close their books again, and give them time to read the passage again, but without looking at the comprehension questions. After finishing, they should try to answer the comprehension questions, going back to the passage to confirm information.

🕒 **Teaching tip:** It's often good to prevent students from looking at comprehension questions when doing a reading. Many students have been trained to look for correct answers rather than reading for overall meaning. This may help them pass tests, but is less useful in real life when the goal of reading is general understanding.

Check Your Understanding

Answer Key (sample answers)

1. They didn't take good enough care of the environment.
2. They were too busy fighting wars.
3. Yes, they did.
4. The environment is destroyed and there is little food or water.
5. It's hard.

What Do You Think?

→ After you check students' understanding of the story using the comprehension questions, students discuss their opinions about what we should do about environmental problems. Discussion should be done in pairs.

🕒 **Teaching tip:** Have students first listen to the four opinions in the What do you think? section with their books closed, then have them listen a second time, following along in their books. Give them enough time to think about their answers.

✂ **Culture point:** In many traditional cultures people did not make a clear distinction between people and nature—they were interrelated. With industrialization, “nature” came to exist more as an abstraction than a lived reality. (City dwellers often don't have much lived experience with natural processes, growing plants, etc.) This has meant that nature is sometimes seen as something that gets in the way or that must be dominated for the progress of humankind. At the same time, the increasing urban population and humankind's separation from nature has also generated the idea that humans are responsible for caring for nature.

Extending the Topic: It's not too late to change.

→ Have students work individually when filling out the chart, and in pairs (or threes) for the follow-up discussion.

Give students plenty of time to read the items on the chart. The more clearly they have understood these statements and thought of their own ideas, the easier it will be for them to do the following discussion activity.

Culture Corner

Have students work in pairs or groups of three. Students read through the list of “Futuristic Movies.” Ask them if they know any of these movies. If a student has seen one of the movies, ask him or her to summarize the story. Help them formulate the English they need to give a short summary to the class.

Extra Activity: Debate

If there is time, consider doing the Extra Activity, a debate. Set up the debate by dividing the class into groups of four. Two students (students A and B) think changing your lifestyle can help the environment. The other two students (students C and D) disagree. Note: even if students prefer the opposite position, assigning the positions—or beliefs—randomly can be good practice for developing critical thinking.

Give the groups time to prepare a list of reasons and examples. Have the first group present their reasons while the other group listens. The opposing group should take notes and prepare any questions they might have. Repeat the same method for the second group. You can allow the groups to exchange ideas a few times until they are finished, or you can set a time limit. At the end, ask students to decide which group had the better argument. You can ask a few groups for examples of what was said.

Sharing My Ideas: My green resolution

→ Choose

Explain that a resolution is a promise to do something differently in the future. In this case, the resolution is related to what we can do to help the environment. The titles of the presentation are related to reducing, reusing, and recycling—all designed to decrease waste.

→ Prepare and Rehearse

Students may have trouble coming up with ideas for changes that they can make to help the environment. One option for dealing with this is to have the class brainstorm together. You could put the different options on the board for students to use in their presentations. It may be easier for students if the question being asked of them is very straightforward, such as: “What can we do differently to help the environment?” Remind students to use the Language Hints.

When students are ready to rehearse, point out the Listener task. The listener takes notes about the speaker’s resolutions. After the speaker practices once, ask the speaker to check the notes of the listener and add any that he or she missed. The listener can also give ideas for new items to put in the speaker’s presentation. Allow time for students to improve their notes.

Sample Presentation

I am going talk about how I can reduce the trash I create, and what I can do to improve the environment. Usually when I come home from school I buy a snack or a drink at the convenience store. Normally they put these things in a bag. But I eat or drink the things I buy immediately, so I don't need the bag. From now on, I'll tell the clerk that I don't need a bag. Also, I will be careful to turn out the lights when I don't need them.

→ Present

Have students change partners, or put them in small groups. Ask for a volunteer to read the Presentation Tip. If your students are particularly nervous about presenting, you could do the sample presentation above one time demonstrating a nervous presenter, and a second time demonstrating a more relaxed presenter. Encourage students to take notes, because the Listener task requires that they ask the presenter one question.

If you are using the assessment guide below, go over each point with the whole class before students begin their presentations. (This could also be done during the Rehearse step so that students have time to prepare for or practice each assessment point.) Be sure to remind your students that communicating their ideas is more important than using perfect English!

Assessing the Activity

Create a handout with a rating grid such as the one below, or simply write it on the board. (Note: For more information on student assessment and ways to modify the assessment system, see Assessing the Activity, Unit 1.)

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1 – The presentation was well organized. | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| 2 – The presenter used the Language Hints. | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| 3 – The presenter was easy to understand. | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| 4 – The presenter smiled at the audience. | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |
| 5 – The presenter looked relaxed. | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ |

When students are working in pairs, have each student evaluate the other. If a student presents in front of a small group or in front of the class, have each student evaluate him or her. A rater can give up to 5 stars for each category, so the maximum score for any presentation is 25 stars.

Of course, you can also give your own assessment, along with positive suggestions for how the presenter can improve next time.

PERSONAL OPINION

→ If you have downloaded the video clip or have access to the Internet in class, play the video clip. The first time, have the students watch with books closed. Ask questions to see if the students have understood the gist of Stacy-Ann's opinion. Then have them look at the summary. See if they can fill in the missing words. Play the extract once or twice more. Then check the answers.

Answer Key

Stacy-Ann

This is a complex situation. You have to look at it from many different angles. First of all, you have to think about the way we consume products, our modes of transportation, the way we consume energy, and the way we use our natural resources. If we were able to limit our uses of these elements, then we might have a responsible environment.

As for overpopulation, it's not necessarily a problem. It becomes a problem when we have this kind of consumerism, where people consume more than they need. And when we have an industry that wants to provide for these people. Personally, I think we should limit consumerism and give everybody an awareness of how to be responsible for the environment.

Video Script

Well, the situation has to be looked at in many different angles. Number one, um, the industrial revolution, the way we consume products, our modes of transportation, the way we consume energy, and the way we use our natural resources. And if we summed it up all together and found a way to limit our uses of these elements, then we may have a better environment, and the future may have a better environment to look at.

For overpopulation is not necessarily a problem, it's just when we have consumerism, and when we have an industry that wants to provide for these people, we have a whole population that depends on these industries and that consumes more than they need. Personally, I think we should limit consumerism and teach everybody an awareness of how to be responsible for the environment around them.

UNIT TEST

→ Make copies of the Unit Test for each student. Distribute the copies and allow about 15 minutes for the class to complete the test. Correct the test in class.

A. Understanding the Situation: The focus is on understanding the story in the Situation. Students answer five multiple-choice questions.

B. Vocabulary: The focus is on understanding vocabulary from the Situation or the Extending the Topic sections. Students match three words with their definitions.

C. Expressions: The focus is on checking students' understanding of expressions or phrases from the What Do You Think? and Opinion Network sections. Students answer two multiple-choice questions.

Answer Key

A. 1. c 2. b 3. d 4. d 5. a B. 1. a 2. d 3. c C. 1. c 2. b

LINKS

If you would like the class to do additional research on the unit topic, here are some useful links:

Facts about global warming:

http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/12/1206_041206_global_warming.html

Fifty things to do to stop global warming:

<http://globalwarming-facts.info/50-tips.html>

Ten audacious ideas to save the planet:

<http://www.popsi.com/environment/article/2008-06/10-audacious-ideas-save-planet>