

Part 1-style questions

Examiner: **Are there any environmental problems in your country?**

Kelly: Yes ... we have a serious issue with **pollution levels** in some of our big cities ... **exhaust fumes** from cars and lorries are definitely one reason for the problem but we also have a lot of **heavy industry** in some areas and this also results in **poor air quality** ...

Examiner: **Do you take an interest in nature?**

Jenny: Well ... I'm a city person through and through and don't get back to nature very often I'm afraid ... but like everyone else I'm fascinated by the natural world and I like watching documentaries showing wild animals in their **natural habitat** ...

Examiner: **Do you or your family take steps to help the environment?**

Mira: My parents have always tried to make us **aware of our impact on the environment** ... they're really into energy **conservation** ... and always try to buy **environmentally friendly products** if they have the chance ...

Part 2-style task

Describe an environmental problem that has been in the news.

You should say

- when this was
- where the event happened
- what actually took place
- and say how you felt about this problem.

Martin: Well ... this is an interesting question ... there are so many issues I could think of ... **natural disasters** like **earthquakes** and **floods** seem to be in the news almost every year ... but there was one story recently about some **animals** that were **under threat** ... it wasn't focused on one place in particular ... it was looking at various animals that could actually **become extinct** in different African countries ... if we don't **take steps to protect** them ... these were really iconic animals like gorillas ... leopards ... rhinos ... and apparently they're now listed as **endangered species** ... what made it really depressing was they were in danger thanks to us ... in some cases it was due to **a loss of habitat** either because people need more agricultural production ... or even worse I think ... because of **hunting** and **poaching** ... I hate to think of future generations being robbed of the chance to see creatures like these in their natural environment ... it's lucky we have lots of organisations that focus on **wildlife conservation** ... hopefully with their help we can put pressure on those in power to do something to stop creatures like these dying out ...

Part 3-style questions

Examiner: **What do you think is the main danger the world faces in terms of the environment?**

Spencer: Well ... **climate change** is a real issue ... in my country we have **flash floods** and **heatwaves** on a yearly basis ... so yes ... I think **global warming** is the biggest issue.

Examiner: **What examples are there of how we damage the natural world?**

Stella: There are so many examples ... there are factories that release **toxic waste** into rivers and oceans ... **oil spills** that **damage the coastline** ... the way we destroy vast areas of land and **rain forests** in search of **fossil fuels** or to increase agricultural production ...

Examiner: **In which ways do we respond well to environmental problems?**

Mathius: Well ... on the one hand there are various **worldwide agencies** that are always the first on the scene with **humanitarian aid** after natural and **man-made disasters** ... and on the other hand we have

environmental pressure groups that are constantly **raising awareness on issues** and trying to stop disasters happening ...

Definitions

air quality: the cleanliness of the air we breathe

to become extinct: to no longer exist

to be under threat: to be in danger of becoming extinct

climate change: the change in worldwide weather patterns

to die out: see 'to become extinct'

endangered species: categories of animals or plants that are in danger of becoming extinct

energy conservation: the careful management of energy resources to ensure they last as long as possible

environmentally friendly: behaviour and products that do not harm the environment

exhaust fumes: the toxic gases given off by vehicles powered by petrol

flash floods: floods that happen quickly

fossil fuels: energy resources like gas and oil that are produced deep below the ground over millions of years

future generations: the people who live after us

to get back to nature: to live a life that is closer to nature

global warming: the increasing temperature of the world brought about by gases such as carbon dioxide

heavy industry: the manufacture of heavy articles and materials in large numbers

humanitarian aid: the act of showing support to people struggling to survive

impact on: the effect on

loss of habitat: the decline in areas of land where animals and plants would normally exist

man-made disaster: widespread damage or loss of life brought about by the action of humans

natural disaster: an event such as an earthquake, flood or hurricane which causes widespread damage or loss of life

natural environment: the place where animals and plants would normally be found in nature

the natural world: the world of nature

oil spill: waste usually deposited in the seas and oceans after an accident at sea

poaching: to hunt and kill wild animals illegally

pollution levels: the amount of toxic waste

pressure group: a group of people who try to raise awareness of issues and try to affect the views and actions of people and organisations

toxic waste: poisonous, unwanted rubbish often produced by industrial processes

wildlife conservation: to protect animals and plants and their habitat

additional vocabulary: