

The environment

1.1 Choose the words that reflect your opinion of these three statements from the first column of the table below. Write the words you chose in the *My Opinion* column.

- 1 We should educate the public about our environment by handing out leaflets.
- 2 Within a few years we will have solved all of our pollution problems.
- 3 Within the next ten years the only chemicals we use will be environmentally friendly ones.



	<i>My opinion</i>	<i>Speaker A</i>	<i>Speaker B</i>
Statement 1—useful / useless?			
Statement 2—possible / impossible?			
Statement 3—likely / unlikely?			

1.2 15a Now listen to two people (speakers A and B) giving their opinions about the same ideas and choose the words that reflect their opinions. Write them in the appropriate columns of the table.

1.3 Listen again or look at the recording script at the back of the book and write the adjectives the speakers used to express their opinions. Put the adjectives into the correct column according to their meaning.

useful	useless	possible	impossible	likely	unlikely
beneficial					
.....					
.....					
.....					



Vocabulary note

The prefix *re-* often tells us that something is being done again: *reuse*, *revegetate*.

The prefix *de-* often tells us that something is being removed: *decaffeinated*, *deforestation*.

Climate change and pollution

2.1 Complete the text with words from the box.

acid biodiversity contaminated deforestation ecosystems emissions
environmental erosion exhaust drought fertilisers greenhouse waste

The advances made by humans have made us the dominant species on our planet. However, several eminent scientists are concerned that we have become too successful, that our way of life is putting an **unprecedented** strain on the Earth's (1)..... and threatening our future as a species. We are confronting (2)..... problems that are more **taxing** than ever before, some of them seemingly **insoluble**. Many of

the Earth's crises are **chronic** and **inexorably** linked. Pollution is an obvious example of this affecting our air, water and soil.

The air is polluted by (3)..... produced by cars and industry. Through (4)..... rain and (5)..... gases these same (6)..... fumes can have a **devastating** impact on our climate. Climate change is arguably the greatest environmental challenge facing our planet with increased storms, floods, (7)..... and species losses predicted. This will **inevitably** have a negative impact on (8)..... and thus our ecosystem.

The soil is (9)..... by factories and power stations which can leave heavy metals in the soil. Other human activities such as the overdevelopment of land and the clearing of trees also take their toll on the quality of our soil; (10)..... has been shown to cause soil (11)..... . Certain farming practices can also pollute the land though the use of chemical pesticides and (12)..... . This contamination in turn affects our rivers and waterways and damages life there. The chemicals enter our food chain, moving from fish to mammals to us. Our crops are also grown on land that is far from **pristine**. Affected species include the polar bear, so not even the Arctic is **immune**.

Reducing (13)..... and clearing up pollution costs money. Yet it is our quest for wealth that generates so much of the refuse. There is an urgent need to find a way of life that is less damaging to the Earth. This is not easy, but it is **vital**, because pollution is **pervasive** and often life-threatening.

2.2 Match the words in bold with these synonyms.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1 unspoiled <i>pristine</i> | 6 unaffected |
| 2 crucial | 7 omnipresent |
| 3 unparalleled | 8 unavoidably (x2) |
| 4 extremely harmful | 9 persistent |
| 5 insurmountable | 10 challenging |

3 Consider how you would answer these questions.

- 1 What do you think is the greatest environmental threat we face today?
- 2 What can the government do to help protect the environment?
- 3 What can we as individuals do?

4.1 Use a dictionary to check the different forms of the words in the box as well as the prepositions used with them. Then complete the answers to the questions in 3 using the correct form of the word in brackets. You will need to add prepositions to the words that are underlined.

contaminate danger dispose erode pollute recycle risk sustain threat

- 1 I think our environment is ¹ under threat from (*threat*) many different things. We have allowed too much ² (*pollute*) to enter our ecosystem and we are ³ (*danger*) poisoning ourselves as a result. I think soil ⁴ (*erode*) and water ⁵ (*contaminate*) are two of the most urgent problems that we need to deal with.
- 2 Clearly our current lifestyle is not ⁶ (*sustain*). The government should educate people about these problems and encourage us to change our habits. They need to show everyone that we are putting the very future of our planet ⁷ (*risk*).
- 3 We can make sure we don't throw ⁸ (*recycle*) items into our normal waste ⁹ (*dispose*) bins. We can also help protect our planet by not using phosphate-based detergents; this will help to keep ¹⁰ (*pollute*) out of our food chain.

4.2 Complete the sentences using the negative form of the words in brackets.

- 1 It is *unrealistic* (*realistic*) to expect everyone to change their buying habits overnight.
- 2 When it comes to protecting the environment, cost should be (*relevant*).
- 3 It is (*reasonable*) for rich countries to expect developing countries to reduce carbon emissions immediately.
- 4 People who dump chemical waste into our waterways are very (*responsible*) .
- 5 The oil spill has caused (*repairable*) damage to several marine species.
- 6 Scientists believe that the damage to this area is (*reversible*) .
- 7 These species are (*replaceable*) . Once they are lost our ecosystem will be changed.
- 8 It is a mistake to think that increased consumerism and environmental damage are (*related*) .



Vocabulary note

The prefix *ir-* is often used with adjectives beginning with *r* to form the opposite or to mean lacking something: *reversible*, *irreversible*, *regular*, *irregular*. Some words beginning with *r* form their opposite with *un-*: *realistic*, *unrealistic*.

5 PRONUNCIATION 15b

Some words have a different stress pattern and therefore a different pronunciation, depending on their meaning or part of speech. Circle the correct stress pattern for the words in *italics* in these sentences. Listen to the recording to check your answers and then practise saying the sentences.

- 1 I *refuse* to go. (refuse / refuse)
- 2 Disposing of *refuse* is a growing problem. (refuse / refuse)
- 3 There is a *conflict* here. (conflict / conflict)
- 4 The two reports *conflict* each other. (conflict / conflict)
- 5 We all need to be *present* at the meeting. (present / present)
- 6 This issue *presents* an enormous problem. (presents / presents)
- 7 We are making a lot of *progress*. (progress / progress)
- 8 We need to *progress* at a faster rate. (progress / progress)
- 9 There has been an *increase* in carbon emissions. (increase / increase)
- 10 Temperatures are expected to *increase*. (increase / increase)

Write a report for a university lecturer describing the information below.

Write at least 150 words.

The flowchart below shows the recycling process of aluminium cans.

