Section: The Importance of the Individual

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

One of the most important decisions you may make is in the act of voting. The people we elect will make decisions that affect our environmental future. You have the right to support the candidates and laws that you think are best in both local and national elections. You can easily find out what a candidate thinks about environmental issues before an election. You can find information about candidates through the media, voter organizations, and Web sites.

One way to take action on environmental problems is as part of a group of people who share your concerns and interests. You can find many groups in your community asking for volunteers for activities such as planting trees, picking up trash, or maintaining trails. Many large nonprofit organizations hold meetings, educational activities, and trips to natural areas all over the country.

IDENTIFYING MAIN IDEAS

One reading skill is the ability to identify the main idea of a passage. The main idea is the main focus or key idea. Frequently, a main idea is accompanied by supporting information that offers detailed facts about the main idea.

Read the following question and write the answer in the space provided.

1. Where can voters find information about candidates who are running for office?

In the space provided, write the letter of the phrase that best completes each statement or best answers each question.

2. One way for people to take action on environmental problems is to join groups that
   a. organize meetings.        c. ask for volunteers.
   b. are nonprofit.           d. share their concerns and interests.

3. What can individuals do to help influence what the environment will be like in the future?
   a. visit Web sites to learn about environmental issues
   b. travel to natural areas throughout the country
   c. vote in local and national elections
   d. none of the above
Active Reading continued

RECOGNIZING SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

One reading skill is the ability to recognize similarities and differences between two phrases, ideas, or things. This is sometimes known as comparing and contrasting.

Read each question and write the answer in the space provided.

4. Both community groups and large nonprofit organizations take action on environmental issues. Explain how the activities of the smaller local groups are different from those of the larger organization.

5. What do community groups and large environmental organizations have in common?

SEQUENCING INFORMATION

One reading skill is the ability to sequence information, or to logically place items or events in the order in which they occur.

In the space provided, write the letter of the phrase that best answers the question.

6. What action should individuals take before an election if they are concerned about environmental issues?
   a. volunteer in the community
   b. learn what candidates think about environmental issues
   c. attend a meeting sponsored by a large nonprofit organization
   d. vote for candidates who support environmental issues

RECOGNIZING CAUSE AND EFFECT

One reading skill is the ability to recognize cause and effect.

Read each question and write the answer in the space provided.

7. In what ways do elected officials affect the environment of the future?

8. How do many nonprofit organizations help to raise public awareness about environmental issues?
effective. The challenge is to overcome the problem of lack of coordination; this can be accomplished by approaching projects and programs with a spirit of cooperation.


### Active Reading

#### SECTION: ECONOMICS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

1. b  
2. a  
3. sells or trades the land  
4. c  
5. c  
6. b  
7. a  
8. Businesses donate land or money, or they recycle. Private organizations cooperate with each other and with governments to conduct research and create environmental plans.  
9. They can save money and improve their public image.  
10. They conduct research and create plans for environmental management.

#### SECTION: ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES IN THE UNITED STATES

1. d  
2. b  
3. c  
4. 2  
5. 4  
6. 3  
7. 1  
8. 5  
9. the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency and the celebration of the first Earth Day  
10. a  
11. Lawmakers have created policies, laws, and federal agencies.  
12. The EPA uses regulations and incentives to encourage individuals and businesses to meet standards for clean air and water.

### Map Skills

1. Costa Rica and Honduras/Nicaragua  
2. Guatemala, Nicaragua, Belize, and Costa Rica seem to have more parks in their interiors. Countries with a greater percentage of coastline seem to place more of their parks there.  
3. There is no relationship.  
4. Answers may vary but should mention aspects of economics and education about the environment.  
5. Answers may vary but should mention the possibility that park areas could become threatened by development or environmental degradation through overusage.

### Quiz

#### SECTION: ECONOMICS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matching</th>
<th>Multiple Choice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. c</td>
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