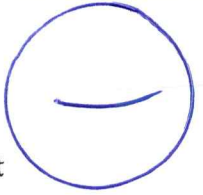


Name : _____

Why Care?

You will recall that the term "why care" is the last part of the definition of geography. This part of the definition refers to the reasons why geographic knowledge and skills are important for the geographer or for you as a student and a citizen of Manitoba, Canada, and the World. It also provides meaning for knowing where things are and why they are located there.



As the title suggests, this course deals with a number of important issues that Earth is facing in the twenty-first century. Some of these issues include global climate change, as well as pollution of the air, water, and soils. Other issues relate to the use and depletion of non-renewable natural resources and sustainable farming practices. Sustainable farming practices are farming methods that do not have a harmful impact on the environment and that can be used for a long time. Population growth, **urbanization**, and demands for food are also serious issues. Your community may be facing issues relating to recycling programs, the use of pesticides in farming or yard care, or public transportation and the reduction of fossil fuel use. You may be aware of other economic and environmental issues faced by your community or others in Canada.



Taking Action

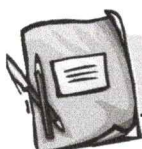
It would be easy to feel helpless and become discouraged about problems facing the world. After all, as a young person trying to finish school, what can you do to make a difference? Will anyone listen to your voice? Will your actions change anything? You may even wonder if taking action as an individual will affect anyone else. These are all good questions.

Most people agree that the actions of an individual do make a difference. If there are many individuals who take action or lobby for change, they are sure to make a difference. If a politician receives letters about an issue from dozens of individuals, he or she will know that people are concerned and that action should be taken. Studies show that for every person who feels strongly enough about issues to write or call their elected leaders, there are at least ten more people who also feel strongly about the issue. Individuals with the same interests often get together and join forces to work for change. Group action happens only if there are like-minded individuals who decide to work together.

Our actions toward the environment and use of resources today will affect people in the future just as past actions affect us today. We would not likely need to worry about the extinction of plant and animal species if previous generations had been more careful in protecting natural habitats. What kind of impact will our actions have on generations that come after us? What kinds of decisions do we make today that will affect the health of Earth tomorrow?



It is important for all of us as **global citizens** to ask how our actions today will impact Earth tomorrow. We should be willing to look at the successes and mistakes of the past and use that information to help us make good decisions for the future. This is what is meant by the term **stewardship**, which means to look after something or someone else. In this context, it means that we need to look after Earth and keep it in good shape for future generations. This is particularly important in the use of non-renewable resources, such as oil and gas. We need to develop more renewable sources of energy such as water, wind, and solar power. We also have to ensure that our use of resources and our agricultural and economic activities are **sustainable**. This means that our activities should have limited impact on the environment without long-term, negative consequences. As individuals, we all have responsibilities to ensure that our lifestyles are sustainable and that we are good stewards of Earth's resources.



Learning Activity 1.10

Environmental Responsibility



1. Brainstorm some environmental issues and concerns in your community or region. Use a variety of resources to collect a number of articles that deal with environmental concerns. Use the following table to summarize the issues reflected in at least three articles.

Write the headline and source of the article	Summarize the issue or problem discussed in the article	Summarize the suggested action that should be taken to solve the issue or problem. If no action is suggested, provide a recommendation for action.

continued

Learning Activity 1.10: Environmental Responsibility (continued)

2. Reflect upon actions that you, as an individual, and other groups such as businesses and corporations can take to demonstrate environmental responsibilities. Identify at least two recommendations for action that you and other groups can take. Record your recommendations in the following table. Examples are provided to help you get started.

Suggestions for individual action

Examples:

- riding a bicycle instead of driving a car to school or work
- participating in local recycling programs

Suggestions for business/corporate action

Examples:

- following suggested environmental guidelines that government has made into law
- enforcing the reduction of chemicals and pesticides in a corporation

