Skills Worksheet

Active Reading

Section: Studying Human Populations

Read the passage below and answer the questions that follow.

The average number of years a person is likely to live is that person's **life expectancy**. Life expectancy is most affected by *infant mortality*, the death rate of infants less than a year old. In 1900, worldwide life expectancy was about 40 years and the infant mortality rate was very high. By 2000, the rate of infant mortality was less than one-third of the rate in 1900. Average life expectancy has increased to more than 67 years worldwide. For people in many developed countries, life expectancy is almost 80 years.

Expensive medical care is not needed to prevent infant deaths. The infant mortality rate differs greatly among countries that have the same average income. Instead, infant health is more affected by the parents' access to education, food, fuel, and clean water. Even in poor areas, many people now know that babies simply need to be fed well and kept clean and warm. If these basic needs are met, most children will have a good chance of surviving.

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 main ideas.

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

_____ **1.** What was the worldwide average life expectancy in 2000?
   a. about 40   **c.** almost 80
   b. more than 67   **d.** none of the above

_____ **2.** What was the worldwide life expectancy in 1900?
   a. about 40   **c.** almost 80
   b. more than 67   **d.** It was not measured in 1900.

_____ **3.** What is the life expectancy for people in many developed countries today?
   a. almost 70 years   **c.** almost 95 years
   b. almost 80 years   **d.** almost 40 years

_____ **4.** What do most infants need in order to survive?
   a. to have expensive medical care
   b. to live in a developed country
   c. to have access to education
   d. to be fed well and kept clean and warm

VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

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

5. Unscramble the term below. What is the term's definition?

   FILE CATPYXNECE

   _____

   _____

6. Do most people want to have a low infant mortality rate or a high infant mortality rate? Explain your answer.

   _____

   _____

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 the question and write the answer in the space provided.

7. How did worldwide infant mortality and life expectancy change between 1900 and 2000?

   _____

   _____

RECOGNIZING CAUSE AND EFFECT

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

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

_____ 8. Which factor would be most likely to cause a low life expectancy for a country?
   a. high-tech medical care
   b. high average incomes
   c. low infant mortality rates
   d. diminished food supply

_____ 9. Which factors might have the greatest effect on infant mortality in a country?
   a. low life expectancy and women's fertility rates
   b. the country's average income and parents' access to good medical care
   c. burning of fossil fuels and population booms
   d. parents' access to education, food, fuel, and clean water