

What's Your A.Q.I.Q.? (Air Quality Intelligence Quotient): True or False

Student Worksheet:

Circle "true" or "false" as the correct answer for the statements below.

1. Air pollution is only a problem in big cities. True False
2. Dirty air is costly to every American. True False
3. When the air is polluted, you can always see and smell it. True False
4. Clean air is the responsibility of industry alone. True False
5. The only health effect of ozone pollution is coughing. True False
6. Cars contribute a lot to air pollution problems. True False
7. Air pollution is now under control and will not be a problem in the future. True False

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Answer Sheet:

1. **Air pollution is a problem only in big cities.** *False.* Everyone is affected by air pollution. The air we breathe does not usually stay in the same place, hovering over us. Oftentimes the air moves. Wind carries pollution to us from hundreds of miles away. Also, the pollution that we produce, no matter how small an amount it may seem, can be significant when combined with everyone else's "small amounts."
2. **Dirty air is costly to every American.** *True.* We pay in health problems caused by air pollution, and the cost of treating people with those health problems. Also, we pay hidden costs in the price of things we buy, for example, the cost of new technology to reduce air pollution. It is frequently less expensive to prevent pollution from occurring in the first place, rather than cleaning it up after it pollutes the air.
3. **When air is polluted, you can always see and smell it.** *False.* Some pollutants are odorless and colorless (such as ozone). That is why it is important to find the Air Quality Index (AQI) in the newspaper, on your favorite news station, or on the Internet (at: www.airnow.gov).
4. **Clean air is the responsibility of industry alone.** *False.* We all have an important role to play in improving our air quality. Choices you can make to improve air quality include turning off lights, TVs, and computers when not using them, and walking, bicycling, or taking a train, bus, or subway (with adult permission) instead of driving places in a car, when possible.
5. **The only health effect of ground-level ozone pollution is coughing.** *False.* Ozone pollution can cause people to cough, but it can also affect our lungs—it can make it harder to breathe, and make asthma worse.
6. **Cars contribute a lot to air pollution problems.** *True.* The automobile industry has made some improvements in equipment in cars that helps reduce pollution, and individual cars and buses release fewer pollutants into the air today than before. However, more people are driving today than ever, and that adds up to a lot of pollution.
7. **Air pollution is now under control and will not be a problem in the future.** *False.* Ozone and particle pollution are still serious problems in many locations in the United States. We all need to be aware of how our activities contribute to pollution and find ways to reduce air pollution and protect our health from the effects of air pollution.

(Source: Ozone Action! Let's Clear the Air. West Michigan Clean Air Coalition, Education, Educational Packet 6-8, www.wmcac.org)