

## Pollution is the world's biggest killer

23rd October, 2017



A new study has found that pollution is now the world's biggest killer. One in six deaths worldwide is because of pollution. This is 16 per cent of all global deaths. Most of these deaths were from non-infectious diseases caused by pollution. These include heart disease, lung cancer and stroke. The study was published in the medical journal 'The Lancet'. Researchers said most pollution-related deaths occurred in poorer countries. About 92 per cent of these deaths were in low-income nations, especially countries where there is a lot of economic development, such as India and China. Bangladesh and Somalia were the worst affected countries. Brunei and Sweden had the lowest numbers of pollution-related deaths.

Study co-author Karti Sandilya said: "Pollution, poverty, poor health, and social injustice are deeply intertwined." He added: "Pollution threatens fundamental human rights, such as the right to life, health, wellbeing, and safe work." He said air pollution was the biggest killer. Air pollution led to 6.5 million premature deaths. The second biggest killer was water pollution, which caused 1.8 million deaths. The next largest killer was pollution in the workplace, which was linked to 800,000 worldwide deaths. Scientist Dr Penny Woods said: "Air pollution is reaching crisis point." She said the people who pollution hit the hardest are those with breathing and lung problems, children and the elderly.

Sources: [bbc.com](http://bbc.com) / [usatoday.com](http://usatoday.com) / [sciencenews.org](http://sciencenews.org)

## Writing

Pollution will always be a huge danger to the world. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

study / pollution / killer / diseases / cancer / poorer countries / low-income / worst / poverty / poor health / human rights / wellbeing / premature / workplace / crisis point

## True / False

- One in six deaths worldwide is because of pollution. T / F
- Most deaths from pollution were because of infectious diseases. T / F
- Most pollution-related deaths were in richer countries. T / F
- Bangladesh and Sweden have the lowest pollution-related death rates. T / F
- A researcher said pollution and social injustice are strongly linked. T / F
- The researcher said pollution threatens human rights. T / F
- Water pollution was the biggest killer. T / F
- A scientist said pollution is so bad it is reaching crisis point. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| 1. <b>study</b>       | a. basic      |
| 2. <b>worldwide</b>   | b. countries  |
| 3. <b>occurred</b>    | c. like       |
| 4. <b>nations</b>     | d. connected  |
| 5. <b>such as</b>     | e. report     |
| 6. <b>injustice</b>   | f. untimely   |
| 7. <b>fundamental</b> | g. globally   |
| 8. <b>premature</b>   | h. unfairness |
| 9. <b>linked</b>      | i. emergency  |
| 10. <b>crisis</b>     | j. happened   |

## Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- Why is pollution called a silent killer?
- How can pollution affect human rights?
- What causes air and water pollution?
- What kind of pollution is there in the workplace?
- What is 'crisis point'?
- Do international agreements on pollution work?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

## Phrase Match

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. One in six                                  | a. point                       |
| 2. non-infectious                              | b. of pollution-related deaths |
| 3. in low-                                     | c. rights                      |
| 4. countries where there is a lot of           | d. diseases                    |
| 5. Sweden had the lowest numbers               | e. income nations              |
| 6. Pollution, poverty, poor health, and social | f. deaths                      |
| 7. Pollution threatens fundamental human       | g. problems                    |
| 8. 6.5 million premature                       | h. economic development        |
| 9. Air pollution is reaching crisis            | i. injustice                   |
| 10. those with breathing and lung              | j. deaths worldwide            |

## Discussion – Student B

- What is pollution like where you live?
- How affected are you by pollution?
- How did pollution get to be this bad?
- How much do you worry about pollution?
- How can we reduce the amount of pollution?
- Why are most deaths in poorer countries?
- What do you think when you see pollution?
- What will happen if pollution gets worse?

## Spelling

- non-uncistieof diseases
- lung anrcce
- medical auolrj
- oomeicnc development
- the worst deeacfft countries
- pollution-aterdle deaths
- social ijcnsitue
- Pollution tntehrsae fundamental human rights
- 6.5 million remuetapr deaths
- pollution in the lcowpaekr
- reaching iisrcs point
- children and the ldleeyr

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. g	3. j	4. b	5. c
6. h	7. a	8. f	9. d	10. i

## Role Play

### Role A – Poor Air

You think poor air is the worst effect of pollution. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their effects aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least problematic of these (and why): melting ice caps, skin cancer or acid rain.

### Role B – Melting Ice Caps

You think melting ice caps is the worst effect of pollution. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their effects aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least problematic of these (and why): poor air, skin cancer or acid rain.

### Role C – Skin Cancer

You think skin cancer is the worst effect of pollution. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their effects aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least problematic of these (and why): melting ice caps, poor air or acid rain.

### Role D – Acid Rain

You think acid rain is the worst effect of pollution. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their effects aren't as bad. Also, tell the others which is the least problematic of these (and why): melting ice caps, skin cancer or poor air.

## Speaking – Problems

Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| • global warming   | • poor air in cities |
| • melting ice caps | • acid rain          |
| • skin cancer      | • oil spills         |
| • smog             | • lung problems      |

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.