

**Directions:** Read the information below.

### A Growing Population

Over the past centuries, the population of Earth has continued to grow. In the United States alone, the population has risen above 300 million people, a number that has more than tripled since 1900. Population growth puts significant strains on our planet. As the number of people in the world increases, so does our consumption of natural resources.

In the U.S., we have seen increased consumption of food. That is a natural consequence of population growth, but it has some major implications. For example, as food consumption increases, it puts more of a strain on our agriculture. Growing food for more Americans takes more land and more water.

Water consumption from farming is only one aspect. We also must use more water for drinking and hygiene. Some areas of the country are experiencing water shortages. States like California have, at times, had to place restrictions on how much water residents should use.

Energy usage also increases with population. More people means more cars on the road, more lights to power buildings, and more factories to create products for people. Instead of having open land and fields, we see construction of buildings for people to live and work.

This pattern will continue. Scientists and concerned organizations are working to identify ways to conserve and manage resources.

**Directions:** Use the tables below to answer the questions.

### Population and Consumption Data

Data for the population of the United States

Year	Population
2010	308,745,538
2011	311,633,358
2012	313,998,379
2013	316,204,908
2014	318,563,456
2015	320,896,618
2016	323,127,513

\*Source: United States Census Bureau, years 2011-2016 are estimates

Year	Wheat Consumption (in barrels)
2010	925,661,000
2011	941,319,000
2012	950,815,000
2013	955,106,000
2014	958,308,000
2015	957,217,000
2016	319,572,000 (first 6 months of year)

\*Source: United States Department of Agriculture

Year	Water Consumption (in billions of gallons per day)
1975	216.4
1980	229.6
1985	242.4
1990	252.3
1995	267.1
2000	285.3
2005	300.7

\*Source: United States Geological Survey

- List at least three clues that let you know the increased population of Earth is having an impact on our natural resources. Use evidence to back up your claims.
- Write at least one idea you have for how to alleviate our dependence on some of these natural resources.