

Chapter Questions: Notes and Answers (p. 38)

Knowledge and Understanding

Question 1 a) Why did the leaders of Dubai decide they would use globalization as a tool to build future wealth in the emirate?

In one sense they had little choice. The emirate did not have rich oil reserves like their neighbours and had few other natural resources of note. They did have something of a history as traders and as an entrepôt between the Middle East and India. In a way, focusing their future on economic activities closely tied to globalization was building on this tradition. That having been said, the rulers of Dubai and their advisors deserve considerable credit for seeing the possibilities that existed when others did not.

Question 1 b) What advantages did Dubai possess that allowed it to pursue a global perspective in its development?

While Dubai lacked resources, it did have certain advantages that might be regarded more as regional in nature than local. One was its location as a crossroads between Europe, Africa, and Asia. Other places in the Middle East offered refuelling for flights between Europe and India (before later aircraft designs made this less important)—e.g., Sharjah, but Dubai was able to see the possibilities for future expansion of this idea. The other critical advantage was that the Persian Gulf region had immense amounts of petro-dollars looking for a home and Dubai offered the advantage of a secure, local environment in which to invest.

Question 1 c) What risks were there for the emirate in choosing this route?

It might have worked out that “they gave the party and no one showed up.” Petro-dollar investors might have decided to put their money elsewhere for example, or airlines might have found another hub that they preferred.

Question 1 d) What risks are there for the future of Dubai?

Security is likely the most significant risk for the future of Dubai. Even a few serious terrorist attacks on Dubai and the rest of the UAE could have a devastating impact on both the financial and tourist industries. Capital and tourists are fickle and the movement of either (or both) to any country can dry up if there is fear about the security of the environment. Another risk is a loss of business to competitors. Many cities and businesses in the Persian Gulf region and around the world are competing for exactly the same customers as Dubai. This is one reason why Dubai is doing its best to “get noticed.”

Question 2 a) In your own words, describe the meaning of each type of globalization.

Financial globalization: The interconnectedness of the world’s financial systems, which are located in large (world) cities that have significant financial markets.

Economic globalization: The trend toward a worldwide economic system that permits easy movement of goods, production, capital, and resources. It occurs as trade restrictions are removed in favour of freer trade.

Technological globalization: The growth of communications and computer technology of the last 50 years that has given rise to the global village in which communication with most of the world is possible by such means as phone, Internet, and television.

Political globalization: The trend toward less national sovereignty as countries adopt more uniform political policies and pursue greater international cooperation.

Cultural globalization: The harmonization of the world’s cultures as people around the world watch the same TV shows and movies, listen to the same music, eat the same food, and adopt the same values. This trend occurs at the expense of local cultures.

Sociological globalization: The belief that we are members of a single world society that has become more significant than distinct national societies. This view leads to the belief that certain common attitudes and standards of behaviour should exist in every country.

Ecological globalization: The trend toward seeing Earth as a single ecosystem rather than a collection of separate ecological systems because so many environmental problems are global in nature.

Geographical globalization: The increasing focus of geographic studies on a borderless world that is dominated more by worldwide ecological, economic, and security concerns than by the concerns of individual countries.

Question 2 b) For each type, give a specific way in which it might be a positive and negative development for the world. Choose any three negative aspects and explain how these disadvantages can be minimized.

Table 1 Positive and Negative Aspects of Globalization		
	Positive	Negative
Financial	Close financial ties may persuade countries to solve their problems without resorting to war.	A financial crisis in one country may ripple through the economies of the world (e.g., the subprime crisis in the US in 2008).
Economic	Trade promotes greater global wealth and higher standards of living.	The difference between the “have” and some “have not” countries may increase.
Technological	Communications technology allows people to communicate with people in many parts of the world.	The world’s poor cannot afford the equipment necessary to participate in this communications revolution.
Political	Countries may adopt similar policies to protect the environment and promote world peace.	Countries lose their sovereignty and therefore their ability to make decisions that are best for their citizens.
Cultural	With a more common culture, people will have a better understanding of one another, which may lead to fewer disputes.	The world’s cultural diversity will be lost as local cultures disappear into a “world culture.”
Sociological	Common attitudes and standards of behaviour may break down barriers between people and lead to more understanding and trust because there will be more similarities than differences.	Expectations that everyone should behave in the same manner may lead to intolerance of cultural differences.
Ecological	Environmental problems can be solved only if there are concerted efforts by all countries.	Some countries may not participate in corrective actions because they may feel that other countries are not “pulling their weight.”
Geographical	The world will be studied in a more holistic manner, which may lead to new ways of dealing with issues.	Relationships between and among countries may be neglected despite the fact that people still identify with their country and region.

Question 2 c) Using examples from at least three types of globalization, identify ways in which countries or regions are becoming interdependent.

Financial: Common currencies such as the Euro or the ubiquity of the US dollar.

Economic: It is often difficult to tell the country of origin of vehicles, since they may be owned by a company located in one country and built in another, with parts from many other countries.

Technological: Credit cards and bank machines can be used by travellers all over the world.

Political: Countries are increasingly acting together, e.g., coordinating policies to fight terrorism.

Cultural: Only four transnational companies (AOL Time-Warner, USA; Sony, Japan; Vivendi S.A., France; and Bertelsmann BMG, Germany) control about 80 percent of the global trade in music.

Ecological: Success of international agreements, like the Montreal Protocol, to deal with transboundary environmental problems.

Question 3 In your own words, compare the expansionist world view with the ecological world view. Use examples from the text.

Expansionist World View:

- The value of the world's resources lies in their importance to society in the creation of wealth and other benefits for humankind.
- Science and technology can control and tame nature for the benefit of humankind.
- Nature is a resource to be used, not preserved.

Ecological World View:

- Humans have a spiritual relationship with nature (which has intrinsic value) that can be preserved only if nature is protected against exploitation.
- All parts of the natural world are interrelated; thus, humans must work within the limitations of the planet's ecosystem because damage to one part will have a ripple effect, ultimately damaging humanity.
- How people treat nature is a reflection of the state of human society.

Question 4 a) Explain the Gaia hypothesis.

James Lovelock developed the Gaia hypothesis in 1972. It stated that Earth's climate is regulated by its living organisms. For example, organisms regulate substances such as carbon dioxide to keep temperature and precipitation at levels suitable for their survival. In 1988, Lovelock restated his hypothesis by equating Earth to a single, living, self-regulating organism. Earth is made up of living organisms, from bacteria to humans, that interact with one another and with non-living matter to modify the environment in order to maintain an equilibrium that ensures their survival.

Question 4 b) What is your opinion about this hypothesis?

Answers will vary. Regardless of the point of view chosen, you should be able to support your position with effective arguments.

Question 5 Compare the limits-to-growth and cornucopian theses.

Limits-to-Growth Thesis:

- There are limits to population growth because finite resources will be used up, and renewable resources can be overused or damaged.
- Computer models have predicted that if trends in population growth, economic development, resource use, and consumption continue, within 100 years Earth's carrying capacity will be exceeded.

Cornucopian Thesis:

- Earth's resources are not really finite because science and technology will continue to find new resources that will replace old, depleted resources.
- There need not be limits to growth as long as technological development continues.

Question 6 a) What three conditions must exist within a society for it to turn something in the total stock into a resource? Use examples in your explanation.

1. The technology to exploit an item and make it a resource must be available, e.g., uranium became a resource only when the technology to extract its energy was developed.
2. Development of the resource must be economically feasible (the return on the investment must be greater than the cost of developing the resource), e.g., the development of the Athabasca tar sands expands as the price of oil increases and production costs decrease.
3. Development of the resource must be culturally acceptable, e.g., the importance of the Newfoundland seal hunt as a resource has decreased because of opposition from animal rights groups.

Question 6 b) Explain why the following situation exists: Seal hunting is seen by many people in Canada as a part of the cultural traditions of some rural communities in Atlantic Canada and Inuit communities in the North. It is also seen as a useful way of increasing the incomes of some of our poorest people. In contrast, many people in Europe see the hunt as barbaric and organize boycotts of not only seal products, but many other Canadian exports as well.

This is a complex question because it is likely that many of those in Europe who fight so vigorously against the seal hunt would be very supportive of the need to protect and encourage traditional societies and cultures. It is likely that ignorance is part of the problem—for example, many people think that baby seals are still killed or that seal populations are threatened when neither is true.

Thinking

Question 7 “Resources are not: they become.” Explain this statement, using specific examples.

This statement means that something in the total stock becomes a resource only when humans need it and can make use of it. Something may be considered a resource at one time in history and not at another. The examples used in the text are:

- *flint* became a resource because it was used by early hunting and gathering societies to make fire.
- *uranium* became valuable only when the technology to harness its energy was developed.
- *Pacific yew tree* has become a resource because it contains a substance, taxol, that has cancer fighting properties.

Question 8 Examine Figure 2–16 and answer the following questions:

Question 8 a) Explain the difference between a stock resource and a flow resource, using an example of each.

A stock resource is non-renewable, at least in practical terms. Oil is an excellent example in the sense that new oil is developing but so slowly that it is irrelevant to human needs. Solar radiation is a good example of a flow resource. The resource is constantly being replaced.

Question 8 b) Give an example of a nonrenewable resource that can be recycled and one that cannot.

Most metals like iron, copper, and aluminum are easily recycled. In fact, metals like copper have proven so valuable that thefts of copper pipe, wiring, and even statuary are a problem. Obviously, nonrenewable energy resources cannot be recycled if they have been consumed. This can be seen with petroleum products—lubricating oils are easily recycled while gasoline is consumed in its use.

Question 8 c) Explain the difference between direct and indirect solar energy. Give at least two examples of each.

Direct solar energy is used in fields like photovoltaics and solar space heating—i.e., the energy is used as it comes from the sun. Indirect solar energy uses solar energy in a transformed way, e.g., as wind power or biomass.

Question 8 d) What is geothermal energy? Is geothermal energy a resource where you live? Explain.

Geothermal energy comes from the interior of Earth and originates from radioactive decay and remnant heat from Earth's beginnings. Often when we talk about geothermal energy we tend to focus on "high-grade" sources, such as those found in Iceland and New Zealand where active tectonic zones provide high temperatures at or near the surface. With almost no exceptions, this type of geothermal energy is not available in Canada. In contrast, low-grade geothermal energy is readily available. Homeowners in Canada can buy geothermal heating/AC systems from a number of suppliers. These systems circulate water through pipes well below the house where temperatures are constant all year. A heat pump uses this water to heat or cool the house as needed. These systems are still not common because they are costly to install.

Question 8 e) How can scenery be seen as a resource? Give a second example of a resource in the "Others" category (for other categories of resources).

Scenery is a resource in the sense that it can attract people to a particular area and support tourism. Tourism is also supported by resources like pleasant climates (Florida or Arizona in the winter) and landscapes suited to various activities (e.g., lakes or slopes suitable for skiing).

Question 9 Using Figure 2–17, explain in your own words how human interaction with the environment can bring about sustainable development.

Answers will vary. You should describe a situation where human use of Earth became symbiotic rather than parasitic (although you may or may not use those terms). This can be achieved only if a couple of trends are pursued. One is that people must decide, individually and in national and international groups, that consumption must be reduced. The other is that technological advances are achieved that reduce the impact of human activities, e.g., if a cheap way were to be found to produce photo-voltaic electricity.

Question 10 Examine the newspaper headlines in Figure 2–18. Determine whether each one relates to or demonstrates globalization, sustainability, or both. Briefly explain the relationship between the headline and the theme(s).

Almost all of these can be tied, to a greater or lesser extent, to both themes—although in many cases one theme is considerably more important.

- *"Loonie reaches highest value in over 30 years"*— globalization: the value of the Canadian dollar is determined by the demand for it, based on international trade patterns and investment patterns.
- *"Dangerous new forms of HIV emerge in southern Africa"*— both: from a globalization perspective, new forms of HIV in Africa threaten the entire world; from a sustainability perspective, the loss of so many people in Africa has implications for economic development and ultimately sustainability there.

- *“City’s organics composting program starts this week”*—mainly sustainability as governments seek to minimize the impact of their waste.
- *“Scientist sees no recovery of Atlantic ground fishery”*—both, although mostly sustainability. Overfishing is an example of a renewable resource being used in a nonrenewable way. It is occurring because the global demand for fish is far exceeding the supply. In fact, virtually every major fishery in the world is in decline because of overuse.
- *“Ozone hole is getting smaller!”*—both: the problem of ozone depletion is clearly tied to sustainability, but the successful, international effort to reduce the emission of ozone damaging chemicals (Montreal Protocol) reflects globalization.
- *“Russians claim ocean bottom to North Pole”*—both: concerns over Russian claims are tied to globalization, while there would be significant sustainability concerns tied to any efforts to recover oil in this fragile ecosystem.
- *“Groundwater levels in northeastern China drop dramatically”*—primarily sustainability as growing population levels and economic development are putting unsustainable demands on groundwater resources. Can be related to globalization, as much of this growth could be seen as tied to China’s explosive economic expansion as the world’s factory.
- *“Sales of hybrid vehicles increase 76%”*—both: the demand for hybrids reflects a consumer concern about sustainability. The availability of hybrids is tied to the functioning of the global economic system.