

Food Security and Global Agriculture

COMPREHENSION • VOCABULARY • DISCUSSION

INTERACTIVE ONLINE TEST

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Reading Passage

Read the passage carefully. Each paragraph is labelled with a letter for easy reference.

- A** As the global population continues to rise, food security has become an increasingly pressing concern. According to the United Nations, the world is expected to reach nearly 10 billion people by 2050. This growth presents significant challenges for agriculture, as farmers must produce more food than ever before to meet the needs of this expanding population. In many regions, climate change exacerbates these challenges, leading to unpredictable weather patterns that can destroy crops and disrupt food supply chains. For instance, in parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, prolonged droughts have severely affected harvests, leaving millions at risk of hunger and malnutrition. To combat these issues, innovative agricultural practices, such as precision farming and genetically modified organisms (GMOs), are being explored to increase yield and sustainability, ensuring that food production can keep pace with demand.
- B** In addition to technological advancements, it is crucial to address the socio-economic factors that contribute to food insecurity. Many communities lack access to nutritious food due to poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and limited market access. For example, in rural India, farmers often struggle to transport their goods to markets because of poor road conditions and insufficient storage facilities. Governments and organizations are actively working to improve these systems by investing in better transportation networks and storage facilities to reduce food waste. Moreover, educational programs focused on sustainable farming techniques can empower local farmers, helping them to adapt to changing climates and market demands. By combining innovation with community support and infrastructure improvements, the global agricultural sector can make significant strides toward achieving food security for all, ensuring that everyone has access to the food they need.

Vocabulary Glossary

Key words and phrases from the passage. Study them before attempting the exercise below.

| WORD / PHRASE | DEFINITION | EXAMPLE SENTENCE |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| exacerbates | makes a problem or bad situation worse | <i>The lack of rain exacerbates the dry conditions in the region.</i> |
| malnutrition | the condition when a person does not get enough healthy food | <i>Children in the village suffer from malnutrition due to food shortages.</i> |
| precision | the quality of being exact and accurate | <i>Precision in farming helps grow crops more efficiently.</i> |
| infrastructure | basic physical systems and structures needed for a society | <i>The city needs to improve its infrastructure to handle more traffic.</i> |
| sustainability | the ability to keep something going in the long term without harming the environment | <i>Farmers are looking for sustainability in their farming practices.</i> |
| harvests | the gathering of ripe crops from the fields | <i>The farmers were busy with the wheat harvests in summer.</i> |
| innovative | introducing new ideas or methods | <i>The company is known for its innovative technology.</i> |
| yield | the amount of crops produced on a piece of land | <i>They hope to increase the yield by using better seeds.</i> |

Vocabulary Exercise — Fill in the Blank

Use one word or phrase from the glossary above to complete each sentence. Each item is used only once. Answers are on the final page.

1. The drought has _____ the problems for farmers, making it harder to grow crops.
2. Many children in poor areas suffer from _____ because they don't get enough healthy food.
3. New farming techniques aim for more _____ to improve crop production.
4. Improving the _____ in rural areas can help farmers get their products to market.
5. Farmers are adopting _____ methods to ensure long-term food production without harming the environment.
6. The early _____ this year brought a lot of fresh produce to the markets.

Comprehension Questions

These questions are different from the online practice test. Choose the best answer (A, B, C, or D). Answers and explanations are on the final page.

Question 1

What is the primary focus of the passage?

- A. The challenges and solutions for achieving global food security.
- B. The history of agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- C. The benefits of GMOs in modern farming.
- D. The role of governments in economic development.

Question 2

Why is poor infrastructure a problem for food security in rural India?

- A. It limits farmers' ability to reach markets.
- B. It increases the cost of farming equipment.
- C. It reduces the availability of fertilizers.
- D. It causes a lack of skilled labor.

Question 3

What is the author's purpose in mentioning educational programs for farmers?

- A. To highlight the importance of financial aid.
- B. To suggest new farming techniques to reduce labor costs.
- C. To show how farmers can adapt to climate changes.
- D. To argue for more government regulation.

Question 4

What does 'precision farming' mean in the context of the passage?

- A. Farming with minimal labor costs.
- B. Using precise measurements to improve crop production.
- C. Growing only genetically modified crops.
- D. Farming in small, controlled environments.

Question 5

How does climate change impact food production in Sub-Saharan Africa?

- A. It leads to more fertile soil.
- B. It causes longer growing seasons.
- C. It results in unpredictable weather patterns.
- D. It increases the amount of rainfall year-round.

Discussion & Writing Prompts

Each prompt references a specific detail from the passage above. Use for classroom discussion or a short written response (150–200 words).

1. The passage mentions precision farming as an innovative agricultural practice. What other new technologies could help increase food production while ensuring sustainability?

2. The passage notes that poor infrastructure in rural India affects farmers' ability to access markets. How could similar infrastructure challenges impact food security in your country?

3. According to the passage, governments are investing in transportation and storage facilities to reduce food waste. What other actions could governments take to support food security in areas affected by climate change?

Answer Key

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Q1 A

Q2 A

Q3 C

Q4 B

Q5 C

VOCABULARY EXERCISE

FIB1 exacerbates

FIB2 malnutrition

FIB3 precision

FIB4 infrastructure

FIB5 sustainability

FIB6 harvests

Comprehension Question Explanations

Why the correct answer is right — and why each wrong option is incorrect.

1. What is the primary focus of the passage?

✓ A — The challenges and solutions for achieving global food security.

The passage discusses challenges and solutions related to global food security.

✗ B — The history of agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The passage does not focus on the history of agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa.

✗ C — The benefits of GMOs in modern farming.

While GMOs are mentioned, they are not the main focus of the passage.

✗ D — The role of governments in economic development.

Government roles are mentioned but are not the primary focus of the passage.

2. Why is poor infrastructure a problem for food security in rural India?

✓ A — It limits farmers' ability to reach markets.

The passage states that poor infrastructure makes it hard for farmers to transport goods to markets.

✗ B — It increases the cost of farming equipment.

The passage does not mention the cost of farming equipment as a main issue.

✗ C — It reduces the availability of fertilizers.

There is no mention of fertilizer availability related to infrastructure.

✗ D — It causes a lack of skilled labor.

The passage does not discuss a lack of skilled labor due to poor infrastructure.

3. What is the author's purpose in mentioning educational programs for farmers?

✓ C — To show how farmers can adapt to climate changes.

Educational programs are mentioned as a way to help farmers adapt to changing climates.

✗ A — To highlight the importance of financial aid.

Financial aid is not the focus when discussing educational programs.

✗ B — To suggest new farming techniques to reduce labor costs.

Labor cost reduction is not mentioned in relation to educational programs.

✗ D — To argue for more government regulation.

Government regulation is not discussed in the context of educational programs.

4. What does 'precision farming' mean in the context of the passage?

✓ B — Using precise measurements to improve crop production.

Precision farming refers to using precise measurements to increase yield and sustainability.

✗ A — Farming with minimal labor costs.

The passage does not associate precision farming with reducing labor costs.

✗ C — Growing only genetically modified crops.

Precision farming is not limited to GMOs.

✗ D — Farming in small, controlled environments.

The passage does not describe precision farming as occurring in small environments.

5. How does climate change impact food production in Sub-Saharan Africa?

✓ C — It results in unpredictable weather patterns.

Climate change causes unpredictable weather patterns that disrupt agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa.

✗ A — It leads to more fertile soil.

The passage does not mention climate change leading to more fertile soil.

✗ B — It causes longer growing seasons.

Longer growing seasons are not mentioned as an effect of climate change.

✗ D — It increases the amount of rainfall year-round.

The passage does not state that rainfall increases year-round due to climate change.

MORE B2 LEVEL READING PRACTICE

Letters Refugee Camp Family Story Hope — <https://www.esl-tests.com/reading/b2/letters-refugee-camp-family-story-hope>

Global Health Preparedness Lessons Recent Pandemics — <https://www.esl-tests.com/reading/b2/global-health-preparedness-lessons-recent-pandemics>

Climate Migration Communities Move — <https://www.esl-tests.com/reading/b2/climate-migration-communities-move>