

Global Diplomacy in the 21st Century

COMPREHENSION • VOCABULARY • DISCUSSION

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Reading Passage

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

- A** In the 21st century, global diplomacy has taken on new dimensions, characterized by both cooperation and conflict among nations. One of the most significant developments is the rise of multilateral organizations such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. These bodies facilitate dialogue and negotiation, allowing countries to address pressing issues like climate change, public health, and trade disputes collaboratively. For instance, the Paris Agreement on climate change, signed in 2015, represents a collective effort by nearly 200 nations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat global warming. This agreement highlights how diplomacy can lead to cooperative solutions for global challenges, fostering a sense of shared responsibility among nations and encouraging collaborative efforts to protect the environment and promote sustainable development.
- B** However, the landscape of global diplomacy is also marked by increasing tensions and rivalries that complicate these efforts. The ongoing conflicts in regions such as the Middle East and Eastern Europe illustrate how historical grievances and competing interests can hinder cooperation among nations. Countries like the United States and China have found themselves at odds over various issues, including trade practices and territorial claims in the South China Sea. Additionally, the resurgence of nationalism in various countries has led to a retreat from international agreements, as leaders prioritize domestic concerns over global collaboration. This duality of cooperation and conflict will likely continue to shape the future of global diplomacy, challenging leaders to find a balance between pursuing national interests and fostering meaningful international partnerships that can address the world's most pressing challenges.

Vocabulary Glossary

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

WORD / PHRASE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
dimensions	different aspects or features of something	<i>The problem has many dimensions that we need to understand.</i>
multilateral	involving more than two countries or groups	<i>A multilateral meeting was held to discuss the trade agreement.</i>
facilitate	to make something easier or help it happen	<i>The new software will facilitate communication between team members.</i>
pressing	very important and needing immediate attention	<i>Finding a solution to the water shortage is a pressing issue.</i>
emissions	gases or substances sent out into the air, often from cars or factories	<i>The city is trying to reduce car emissions to improve air quality.</i>
rivalries	situations in which people or groups compete against each other	<i>The two schools have a long history of rivalry in sports.</i>
grievances	complaints or feelings of being wronged	<i>Workers voiced their grievances about the new company policy.</i>
resurgence	a return or increase in activity after a period of little activity	<i>There is a resurgence of interest in traditional crafts.</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 project aims to _____ communication between different departments.
2. There has been a _____ in classic movie popularity recently.
3. The two companies have long-standing _____ in the market.
4. Reducing carbon _____ is crucial to fighting climate change.
5. The new law addresses several _____ issues that cannot be ignored.
6. There are _____ organizations involved in the peace talks.

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 role do multilateral organizations play in global diplomacy according to the passage?

- A. They enforce global laws.
- B. They facilitate dialogue and negotiation.
- C. They fund international projects.
- D. They create military alliances.

Question 2

What does the passage suggest about the impact of nationalism on global diplomacy?

- A. It encourages more countries to join international agreements.
- B. It has no effect on global diplomacy.
- C. It leads countries to focus more on their own concerns.
- D. It increases the number of countries in the United Nations.

Question 3

Why are regions like the Middle East and Eastern Europe mentioned?

- A. To highlight areas of successful cooperation.
- B. To show examples of ongoing conflicts.
- C. To discuss new trade agreements.
- D. To mention recent environmental initiatives.

Question 4

What is the Paris Agreement primarily focused on?

- A. Reducing trade barriers between countries.
- B. Increasing military cooperation.
- C. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- D. Improving global health standards.

Question 5

What challenge does the duality of cooperation and conflict present?

- A. It simplifies global negotiations.
- B. It creates a balance between domestic and international needs.
- C. It challenges leaders to balance national and international interests.
- D. It eliminates the need for multilateral organizations.

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. Paragraph 1 discusses the role of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization in global diplomacy. Do you think these organizations have been effective in dealing with recent global challenges?

2. The passage mentions tensions between the United States and China over trade and territorial claims. How do you think these tensions might impact global markets in the next decade?

3. According to the passage, nationalism is causing some countries to retreat from international agreements. Can you think of examples where this has happened, and what were the consequences?

Answer Key

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Q1 B

Q2 C

Q3 B

Q4 C

Q5 C

VOCABULARY EXERCISE

FIB1 facilitate

FIB2 resurgence

FIB3 rivalries

FIB4 emissions

FIB5 pressing

FIB6 multilateral

Comprehension Question Explanations

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

1. What role do multilateral organizations play in global diplomacy according to the passage?

✓ B — They facilitate dialogue and negotiation.

The passage states that multilateral organizations facilitate dialogue and negotiation.

✗ A — They enforce global laws.

The passage does not mention them enforcing laws.

✗ C — They fund international projects.

The passage does not discuss them funding projects.

✗ D — They create military alliances.

The passage does not mention creating military alliances.

2. What does the passage suggest about the impact of nationalism on global diplomacy?

✓ C — It leads countries to focus more on their own concerns.

The passage notes that nationalism leads to a retreat from international agreements as leaders prioritize domestic concerns.

✗ A — It encourages more countries to join international agreements.

Nationalism is said to cause a retreat, not encouragement.

✗ B — It has no effect on global diplomacy.

The passage indicates nationalism does have an effect.

✗ D — It increases the number of countries in the United Nations.

The passage does not mention the United Nations membership.

3. Why are regions like the Middle East and Eastern Europe mentioned?

✓ B — To show examples of ongoing conflicts.

The passage mentions these regions to illustrate ongoing conflicts.

✗ A — To highlight areas of successful cooperation.

The passage does not highlight successful cooperation there.

✗ C — To discuss new trade agreements.

The passage does not discuss trade agreements in these regions.

✗ D — To mention recent environmental initiatives.

The passage does not mention environmental initiatives there.

4. What is the Paris Agreement primarily focused on?

✓ C — Reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The passage states that the Paris Agreement aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

✗ A — Reducing trade barriers between countries.

The Paris Agreement is not about trade barriers.

✗ B — Increasing military cooperation.

Military cooperation is not its focus.

✗ D — Improving global health standards.

It does not specifically aim to improve health standards.

5. What challenge does the duality of cooperation and conflict present?

✓ C — It challenges leaders to balance national and international interests.

The passage suggests leaders need to balance national interests with international partnerships.

✗ A — It simplifies global negotiations.

It complicates, rather than simplifies, negotiations.

✗ B — It creates a balance between domestic and international needs.

The passage does not suggest an easy balance.

✗ D — It eliminates the need for multilateral organizations.

Multilateral organizations are still needed according to the passage.

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