1. What was the world population in 2014?
   a) 900 million  b) 2.5 billion  c) 7.2 billion  d) 8.5 billion  e) 12 billion

2. By how many people does the world population grow each year?
   a) 11 million  b) 25 million  c) 45 million  d) 85 million  e) 160 million

3. If the world’s population continues at its current rate of growth, approximately how long will it take to double?
   a) 9 years  b) 22 years  c) 58 years  d) 95 years  e) 148 years

4. According to the United Nations, at what number is the population expected to plateau?
   a) 5-7 billion  b) 9-11 billion  c) 13-15 billion  d) 20-25 billion  e) never

5. Which has NOT been a major cause of the population explosion?
   a) an increase in birth rates  b) modern preventive medicine  c) improved sanitation
   d) lower infant mortality  e) longer life expectancy

6. Which of the following is likely to be affected by a population of 7 billion?
   a) amount of land for agriculture  b) amount of clean water  c) amount of energy used daily
   d) number of people who are unemployed  e) all of the above

7. Which country was the most populous in 2014?
   a) India  b) China  c) United States  d) Mexico  e) Russia

8. Which country is projected to be the most populous in 2050?
   a) India  b) China  c) United States  d) Mexico  e) Pakistan

9. Which region has the population with the highest fertility rate and the lowest life expectancy?
   a) Southeast Asia  b) Eastern Europe  c) Latin America  d) Sub-Saharan Africa

10. What percentage of the world’s population lives on less than $2 per day?
    a) 26%  b) 15%  c) 48%  d) 35%

11. Which of the following correctly ranks the top five carbon dioxide emitting countries in the world?
    a) United States, China, Russia, India, Japan
    b) China, United States, India, Russia, Japan
    c) United States, China, India, Japan, United Kingdom
Answers to Pop Quiz

1. What was the world population in 2014?
c) 7.2 billion

Note that world population figures are the best estimates demographers can make but are not precise counts.

2. By how many people does the world population grow each year? d) 85 million

To calculate how many people are added to the world population each year, multiply the total world population (7.2 billion) by the current growth rate (1.2% or 0.012), also called the natural rate of increase. In terms of population, we are adding another Germany each year.

3. If the world’s population continues at its current rate of growth, approximately how long would it take to double? c) 58 years

The doubling time of any population can be calculated by dividing the “magic number” 70 by the annual percent of growth. The natural rate of increase is the growth rate excluding immigration or emigration. For the world, 70 divided by 1.2 equals approximately 58.

4. According to the United Nations, at what number is the population expected to plateau? b) 9-11 billion

There is a pretty large range, but the world population is expected to plateau somewhere between 9 and 11 billion people near the middle of this century. Of course, this depends on national policies and women’s access to education and family planning.

5. Which has NOT been a major cause of the population explosion? a) an increase in birth rates

A decrease in death rates, rather than an increase in birth rates, has been the main cause of rapid population growth over the past 200 years. Improved nutrition and sanitation, and advances in the areas of medicine and agriculture all contributed to this decline.

6. Which country was most populous in 2014?
b) China

In 2014, the five most populous countries are China (1.3 billion); India (1.2 billion); U.S. (316 million); Indonesia (249 million); and Brazil (196 million).

7. Which country is projected to be the most populous in 2050? a) India

In 2050, the five most populous countries are expected to be India (1.6 billion); China (1.3 billion); Nigeria (440 million), U.S. (400 million); Indonesia (366 million).

8. Which region has the highest fertility rate and the lowest life expectancy? d) Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa is the poorest part of the world. The total fertility rate is 5.2 children per woman. Because the infant mortality rate is high (1 in 12 babies don’t survive) and access to healthcare is limited, life expectancy is only 56 years old.

10. What percentage of the world’s population lives on less than $2 per day? c) 35%

While many countries have been developing steadily in recent years, there is still an enormous wealth gap between developed countries in the North and less developed countries in the South.

11. Which of the following correctly ranks the top five CO₂ emitting countries in the world? b) China, United States, India, Russia, Japan

While China recently became the largest total emitter of CO₂, the U.S. still has the distinction of emitting the most CO₂ per capita.

Sources: