ISA, MYP Individuals & Societies, Grade 10, February 2015

**MYP YEAR 5 INDIVIDUALS & SOCIETIES:**

**ECONOMICS & GEOGRAPHY**

**Assessment Unit 1: Sustainable Use of Resources**

**TASK A**

We have now discussed what (economic) resources are, how they are used in production and why at times third parties may be negatively impacted by consumption or production. We have also investigated the meaning of the term ‘sustainability’ and looked at three main threats to sustainability: global climate change, soil degradation, and water scarcity. It is now time to use your new knowledge to show critical thinking in discussing a case study in which resources are being used unsustainably.

You are asked to complete an in-class (open-book) essay on the current unsustainable use of resources, see task B. To do this you need to find an example of a situation in a country of your choice where the current use of resources is a problem. We will narrow down this assignment in the next paragraphs (task A), so it is important to carefully read these instructions. They will help you to reach the highest possible attainment levels on the two assessment criteria.

In short, you need to focus on the following issue: “To what extent is it a problem that resources are used in an unsustainable way?” You need to answer this question using a case study which focuses on one of the three major problems recently discussed (global climate change, soil degradation and water scarcity). In your answer you need to present different perspectives such as different stakeholders, arguments for and against, different causes, and limitations of arguments.

First, you need to prepare the information which will help you write the essay. For this you need to demonstrate your investigation skills. Task A will be assessed on Criterion B and task B will be assessed on Criterion D. Please read the descriptors of the different attainment levels carefully as these have been adjusted for this assignment.

In order to show critical thinking well, you need to narrow down what you will discuss in your essay. You need to decide on a particular problem in a particular country which shows that (natural) resources are not used sustainably and that different stakeholders think differently about this problem or that there are different arguments which contribute to the unsustainable use. Once you have done some preliminary research, you need to formulate a thesis statement which needs to be supported by different arguments.

To trigger your memory, a thesis statement is an opinion sentence which summarises the content of the whole essay. You should be able to argue this statement. For an argumentative essay like this one, your statement makes a claim about the topic (your case-study) and justifies this claim with specific evidence. The claim is your considered opinion – based on your research. The goal of this argumentative paper is to convince the audience that your claim is true based on the evidence provided.

Your in-class essay (task B) not only needs a thesis statement, but also body paragraphs. Each body paragraph needs a topic sentence. A topic sentence should break down the thesis statement. The ideas in the body paragraphs support the thesis statement.

You provide the arguments and reasons for the opinion in the thesis statement. Each main argument or perspective deserves a full paragraph of explanation. You need descriptions and use geography & economics subject specific terminology to strengthen your arguments.

Your investigation plan (task A) will ask you to summarise the evidence you will use in each body paragraph. In short, task A will ask you to develop a plan for the in-class essay. You have to hand in this plan to your teacher on **Monday 16 February** (Mr Herbert and Ms Seghers class). This plan will be assessed using Criterion B.

Once you have formulated your thesis statement, you need to look at different perspectives. You need reliable sources to represent these. Your investigation should make sure that you use appropriate, varied and relevant information. The appropriate research methods to use for this task include:

* internet search using key terms for website ending on .edu, or .gov
* using the archives of reliant newspaper reports on the case study, such as BBC, guardian, New York Times, Washington post, Huffington post, Japantimes, ABC (Australian), The Star (Canadian), etc.
* online text-books relevant to in particular geography
* library resources put together by Ms Andis
* hand-outs relevant to Unit 1: Sustainable use of resources.

Your investigation plan needs to be structured in the following way:

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| Name:  Case study (problem & country):  Thesis statement (one or two sentences):  Relevance to sustainable use of resources (a short paragraph to explain how the case study shows that there is unsustainable use of resources):  Research methods used (select from the ones suggested, but be specific):  Summary of information collected (bullet points): |

When you are summarising the information you collected, you are more or less preparing your topic sentences and body paragraphs of your essay. It is important to group the information that you find according to the different perspectives / arguments to use. You need to include at least 3 and maximum 4 main bullet points (arguments).

For each bullet point, you need to make clear how reliable, appropriate, and relevant the information is that you have found so far and if you faced difficulties in finding the information. You need this evaluation to score well on criterion B.

The word count for this assignment is minimum 250 words and maximum 450 words. Please turn to page 4 to find an example of a good investigation plan.

Perhaps the evaluation in the investigation plan could be more thorough and the arguments found more varied, but the investigation plan is a good start for the in-class essay. This plan should score well on criterion B. Be aware that even when you scored highly on the plan, you should not stop further researching your case study. You can bring all your resources to class to write the in-class essay.

**Assessment Criterion Investigation Plan (task A)**

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| **Criterion B: Investigating (maximum 8)** | |
| Achievement level | Level descriptor |
| 0 | The student does not reach a standard described by any of the descriptors below. |
| 1 – 2 | The student:  i. formulates a thesis statement that is **clear or focused**  ii. **describes** the relevance of the thesis statement in the context of **sustainable use of resources**  iii. collects and records **limited arguments** for the body paragraphs of the in-class essay which are not always consistent with the thesis statement  iv. evaluates in a **limited** way the results of the investigated material. |
| 3 – 4 | The student:  i. formulates a thesis statement that is **clear** and **focused**  ii. **describes in detail** the relevance of the thesis statement in the context of **sustainable use of resources**  iii. uses the pre-described research method(s) to collect and record **mostly relevant** **arguments** for the body paragraphs of the in-class essay.  iv. **evaluates some** aspects of the results of the investigated material. |
| 5 – 6 | The student:  i. formulates a **clear** and **focused** thesis statement  ii. **explains** the relevance of the thesis statement in the context of **sustainable use of resources**  iii. uses the pre-described research method(s) to collect and record **appropriate and relevant arguments** for the body paragraphs of the in-class essay.  iv. **evaluates** the results of the investigated material. |
| 7 – 8 | The student:  i. formulates a **clear** and **focused** thesis statement  ii. **justifies** the relevance of the thesis statement in the contextof **sustainable use of resources**  iii. uses the pre-described research method(s) to collect and record **appropriate, varied and relevant arguments** for the body paragraphs of the in-class essay.  iv. **thoroughly** evaluates the results of the investigated material. |

**Example Investigation Plan:**

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| **Name:**  Ms Seghers  **Case study:**  water crisis in Sao Paolo (in 2014)  **Thesis statement:**  Deforestation is not solely responsible for the Sao Paulo water crisis in 2014.  **Relevance to sustainable use of resources:**  Water is a need for humans to meet their basic needs. Without water, there is no survival. When water is overused, wasted, polluted and or conserved in a poor manner, the basic needs of residents of a particular city are not met. When water continues to be overused, future generations will not be able to maintain the same standard of living as the current generation and water as a resource has been used in an unsustainable way. This represents a major problem, but is difficult to solve as there are several major causes of this problem. Conservation and better infrastructure could reduce the problem, but not solve it.  **Research methods used**:   * Internet research using the search terms water crisis Sao Paolo and only using well-known newspapers and news agencies such as the BBC, Reuters and the Economist. * Use of the library page made by Ms Andis * Re-reading of the class hand-outs on water scarcity, soil degradation (deforestation) and resources.   **Summary of information collected**:   * deforestation (and so climate change) as potential cause: the deterioration of the rainforest through logging, fires and land clearance has resulted in a decrease in forest transpiration and a lengthening of dry seasons (Guardian article) * local residents use more water than they should and government reacted to late with conservation strategies: As reservoirs dried up Geraldo Alckmin, took half-hearted measures to promote conservation. The average resident of the city of São Paulo still consumes roughly 200 litres of water a day, well above the 150 litres in much of Europe.(The Economist article) * poor infrastructure makes it difficult to store water: Sabesp, the water utility majority-owned by the state government, invested 9.3 billion reais ($4 billion) in infrastructure in 1995-2013. Investment has lagged behind the region’s needs. (The Economist article).   **Evaluation:**  It was not difficult to find relevant information on this topic. Many well-known and reliable newspapers reported on this problem. The articles clearly described different arguments which included the overuse of water, deforestation, global climate change and insufficient water reservoirs which made it possible to look at different arguments. However, it was difficult to be able to weigh the different arguments. I was able to say that deforestation was not the only factor in the unsustainable use of water, but I was not able to conclude to what extent it contributed to the problem.  Wordcount: 420 words |

**TASK B**

You will be returned your investigation plan before the Crocus break. This will allow you time to further research your case study and develop varied and convincing arguments.

You do not need to memorise the information from your sources as you are allowed to bring notes to class, but you should already have made an outline for your essay at home. You are not allowed to bring a ready-made essay to class.

Mr Herbert and Ms Seghers’ class will write their in-class, timed essay on **Thursday 5 March** (A-day).

There is no maximum or minimum word count for the essay. You write as much as the time limit allows you (1 hour). Do make sure to allocate time fairly between introduction (including thesis statement), body paragraphs (including topic sentences) and the conclusion. The better structured your essay is, the more likely it is that you will be able to show critical thinking.

You should aim to use at 4-6 different sources. These sources need to be included as in-text citations when you cite information from these. Bring a bibliography (typed or hand-written) of the sources which you will include in your essay to class. You need to staple this bibliography to the essay which you write in class.

You must hand-write your essay (using black or blue pen) during the limit of the lesson time. You will NOT be allowed to use or consult any kind of computer, laptop, smartphone or any other electronic device during the test. You must have printed out ahead of time all the information you will consult during the test, and you will be required to submit a bibliography along with your (hand)written essay at the end of the test.

In summary, you bring the following to class:

• black and/or blue pen(s)

• your collected information – PRINTED OUT ON PAPER!

Find on the next page an example of an essay outline which you could bring to class.

For the investigation plan (task A) and the essay plan (needed to complete task B), different sources were used. Please find below the URL of these sources if you want to have a closer look at these. Note that you need to show your sources using the appropriate A-Z MLA style bibliography:

* <http://www.economist.com/news/americas/21636782-government-responded-late-drought-brazils-industrial-heartland-reservoir-hogs>
* <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-29947965>
* <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/01/09/us-brazil-rain-idUSKBN0KI1EJ20150109>
* <http://www.citymetric.com/politics/sao-paulo-combats-crippling-water-shortage-500>
* <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/oct/31/amazon-rainforest-deforestation-weather-droughts-report>

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| Thesis statement:  Deforestation is not solely responsible for the Sao Paulo water crisis in 2014, but water is used in an unsustainable way in the city.  Introduction paragraph:   * Explain the meaning of sustainable use of resources * Describe water scarcity and deforestation. * State which other factors could be responsible for the water shortage in the year 2014. * Explain how water is used in an unsustainable way and that this means that basic needs cannot be met in the city of Sao Paulo.   Body paragraph 1:  Explain how poor infrastructure and the use of dams reduce how much water is available for residents in the Sao Paulo region.  Body paragraph 2:  Explain that demand for water increased over the years. The use of water is above what water reservoirs can handle especially as droughts are more likely to occur.  Body paragraph 3:  Explain how an exceptional drought reduced the water reservoirs of the city. Perhaps link with global climate change, but more likely Amazon deforestation. Although government cannot control weather, it is possible to implement conservation strategies which were not used here.  Conclusion:  Although deforestation plays a major role in the water crisis, there are several other factors which worsened the crisis. Residents are using increasingly more water per capita and so are not using water in a sustainable way. The heavy rainfalls followed by dry periods may be contributed to global climate change, but the poor infrastructure to conserve potable water and the increasing use of dams to generate electricity for a growing population using more energy per capita all contributed to the water crisis.  It is difficult to pinpoint which factor is the most important one, but it is clear that deforestation is not the only contributor. It is also clear that unless conservation strategies are improved and water is better managed, water will continue to be used in an unsustainable way. |

**Assessment Criterion In-class Essay (task B):**

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| **Criterion D: Thinking critically (maximum 8)** | |
| Achievement level | Level descriptor |
| 0 | The student does not reach a standard described by any of the descriptors below. |
| 1 – 2 | The student:  i. analyses concepts, subject-specific terms, issues, and theories to a **limited extent**  ii. **summarises** information to a **limited extent** to make arguments  iii. **identifies** different perspectives and **minimal** implications on the (un)sustainable use of resources. |
| 3 – 4 | The student:  i. **analyses** concepts, subject-specific terms, issues, and theories  ii. **summarises** information from somewhat appropriate sources to make arguments  iii. **interprets** different perspectives and **some** of their implications in the context of the (un)sustainable use of resources. |
| 5 – 6 | The student:  i. **discusses** concepts, subject-specific terms, issues, and theories  ii. **synthesizes** information from **appropriate sources** to make **valid** arguments  iii. **interprets** **different perspectives and their** implications in the context of the (un)sustainable use of resources. |
| 7 – 8 | The student:  i. completes **a detailed discussion** of concepts, subject-specific terms, issues, and theories  ii. **synthesizes** information from **varied and highly appropriate sources** to make **valid, well-supported** arguments  iii. **thoroughly interprets a range of different perspectives and their implications** in the context of the (un)sustainable use of resources. |