

APES- Excerpt from “Silent Spring” by Rachel Carson

Name: Brandon Tran

1: What observations did Rachel Carson make about her environment? Explain in detail.

-Rachel Carson vividly explains the possible outcome of our ecologically damaging actions, in which plants wilt along the streets, animals die from disease, birds emigrate away, pollination ceases, and animals seldom mate. Her observations resemble that of a wasteland.

2: How have chemicals changed the environment? What is DDT? What is it used for and what are the consequences of its use?

-Chemicals have changed the environment by poisoning organisms, killing vegetation, absorbing into the ground and rocks (which irradiates the area), and by poisoning water supplies. DDT is an insecticide, used for insect control. DDT, however, comes with a consequence: insects treated with DDT were found to become immune due to the process of natural selection.

3: Carson uses Robert Frost’s poem, The Road Less Traveled, as an analogy for making choices about our future- what does she say about what we must do?

-Carson references Frost’s poem by stating that our situation is a “superhighway”, and that we traverse with great speed. This trail, however, leads to ultimate disaster. Carson believes that we should take the slower, more peaceful approach; the road less travelled (to preserve our environment by refraining from using harmful chemicals that make our life “easier”).

4: This book was written in 1962 - have people heeded the warning about the toxins in our environment?

-Unfortunately, people have not heeded this warning, since industries continue to use harmful business practices that damage the environment.

5: What is your opinion of the book excerpt? Explain.

-I wholeheartedly agree with Carson on her “road less travelled” concept, and that an initial sacrifice (in this case, economic growth) must be made in order to ensure beneficial and constant growth in the future. Our fast development and “easy” methods have only guaranteed harm in the future.