

Name: _____

Lesson 31

Period: _____

The Tragedy of the Commons

Directions. Read the *Handy Dandy Guide* and the mystery. Read the clues. Be careful.

While all the clues are correct, only some are *useful* in solving the mystery. Decide which clues are most relevant to solving the mystery. Use the clues and one or more of the ideas from the *Handy Dandy Guide* to figure out a solution to the mystery. Write your solution.

Handy Dandy Guide

1. People *choose*.
2. People's choices involve *costs*.
3. People respond to *incentives* in predictable ways.
4. People create *economic systems* that influence individual choices and incentives.
5. People gain when they *trade* voluntarily.
6. People's choices have consequences that lie in the *future*.

The Mystery

Wildlife is in danger in many parts of the world.

- Fishing fleets catch so many wild salmon that the species is threatened.
- In some parts of Africa, elephants and other animals are hunted by poachers, despite government bans on hunting.
- The world's population of whales is in danger.

Why are so many wild animals endangered?

The Clues

1. Each problem involves an environmental issue.
2. Each problem has frustrated efforts by governments to come up with practical and effective solutions.
3. Each problem involves a lack of incentives for conservation.
4. Each problem involves something not owned by individuals—fish and wildlife.
5. Each problem is very old—the subject of long struggles.
6. Each problem is often used as an example of how people are bad, so that their behavior must be curbed through regulation.

Record your solution and explain it briefly here:
