

American Literature
Viewing Guide: Affluenza

Name _____

1. Define Affluenza:
2. What is the first symptom of Affluenza?
3. What period in American history is labeled "The Affluent Society"?
4. What percentage of Americans own a colored television?
5. What is the second symptom of Affluenza?
6. How many hours a week does the average person shop?
7. When did the percentage of Americans calling themselves "happy" reach its highest point?
8. Which countries have the most stress: poorer ones or more affluent ones?
9. How many commercial messages has the average American seen by the age of 20?
10. Which group is the fastest growing segment of the consumer market?
11. What caused the authors of "Barbie Get Real" to question the American way of life?
12. How much do companies pay to place a single ad on Channel One?
13. What are most of the ads at Wasson High School trying to sell?
14. How many Americans declared personal bankruptcy in 1996?
15. What is the third symptom of Affluenza?
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17. What is the fifth symptom of Affluenza?
18. What does the author of "Trends 2000" claim is responsible for crime in poor neighborhoods?
19. What percentage of the world's population lives in abject poverty?
20. What would happen if everyone in the world consumed as much as we (Americans) do?
21. How many cars do Americans throw away every year?
22. What is planned obsolescence?
23. What is an uncommercial?
24. What is "Buy Nothing Day?"
25. What is voluntary simplicity?
26. What does the group "Youth for Environmental Sanity" advocate?
27. What is the cure for Affluenza?

Answer on a separate piece of paper:

1. This video was made in 1997. How close is our society to achieving any of the goals of voluntary simplicity? Do we recycle more, live more simply, use less resources or do products last longer for us than they did twenty years ago? Or have we as a society failed miserably in achieving simplicity. State your case and prove it with examples.
2. What would Henry David Thoreau think about our society? Why?