Analysis Questions

1. Why do you think people use the standards of sustainability to assess human activities?   How and where could this process be useful?
2. If you were a business owner or a government decision-maker, what would you think about sustainability?
3. Whose needs should be met when there are trade-offs involved (e.g. between economic and environmental priorities) and how these contradictions can be resolved? This discussion will underscore the idea that working toward sustainability is a balancing act that requires long-term creative thinking and the ability to compromise and see through the eyes of others. Issues of choice and responsibility are also highlighted – students will learn that they have the ability to make choices that bring about positive change, and understand that their choices (e.g. whether or not to eat fast food or buy a brand of clothing that is manufactured in sweatshops) have concrete economic, environmental, and social impacts, even if these impacts are out of sight and felt far away.
4. Discuss the difference between “economic development” and “economic growth” and the relationship between economic growth and consumption. What is the role of economic growth in fostering sustainable development?