

Assessment

As you walk down the stairs to the basement that serves as your bedroom and a rec room, it strikes you that you're lucky the EPA has not declared it a Hazardous Waste Site. Your mom has been yelling about it for days, and you've advised her (under your breath, of course) to just close the door and ignore it. After all, the windows are dirty enough that, with the lights off, you can't see much of it anyway.

However, as you pick your way around the "pollution"—piles of dirty clothes, dust, the occasional piece of pizza crust, sports equipment, empty soft drink cans, half-finished homework papers, and random trash—to get to your unmade bed, even you have to admit that your mom just might have a point.

Also changing your perception of the room's pollution level is the fact that you have friends coming to spend the night before tomorrow's ski bus trip. Clearly, you have to clean up your act. But how much? How clean is clean enough?

1. Complete the chart and use marginal analysis to decide how much pollution clean-up to undertake in your room. Follow the steps used in the classroom swimming pond exercise:
 - Identify the steps or levels in the pollution clean-up process.
 - What percentage of visible pollution will be cleaned up in each stage of the project?
 - What is the "cost" of each stage of the project? (That is, to carry out each stage, what are you giving up? Time? Money? Hint: It might be easier if you define the stages of the project so that the cost—your time—is the same for each stage, as we did in the classroom activity.)
 - Define the benefits of each stage of the clean-up process—what do you get for your efforts at each stage?
 - Compare the costs and benefits at each level.
 - Remember to consider alternatives. If you don't do Level 3, what might you do instead? If you don't do Level 4, what benefits are you giving up?
2. How much room pollution did you decide to clean up? Why did you decide on this level of clean-up?

Project Stage	Description of "Pollution" Removed	Marginal Cost	Marginal Benefit

Continue on back if necessary