



## **PROBLEM SOLVING ACTIVITY:**

### **People Are Part of the Environment, Too**

**BACKGROUND:** Environmental problems cannot be viewed as only scientific problems. Because they involve people and the way people live, they must be viewed as economic, social and political as well. Consider the following situation:



The city Pleasant Grove centers around a large factory that makes machine parts. About half of the families in town have at least one family member working at the factory. The factory contributes significantly to air pollution problems through smoke stack emissions of by-products of fossil fuels burning. The owners of the factory recently announced that the factory will increase operations by 35 percent during the next year. At the same time, they will be switching to a lower grade, lower energy coal to power their machinery. In addition, expansion will require the removal of 25 acres of wooded area to make room for additional manufacturing facilities and for a second parking lot.

**TASK:** Imagine that you are a magazine reporter who has been assigned to Pleasant Grove. Your assignment is to find out how the following people feel about the planned expansion of the factory and ask why:

- A scientist
- An environmentalist
- An economist
- An average citizen
- A local politician

Write an article describing the reactions of each person.

