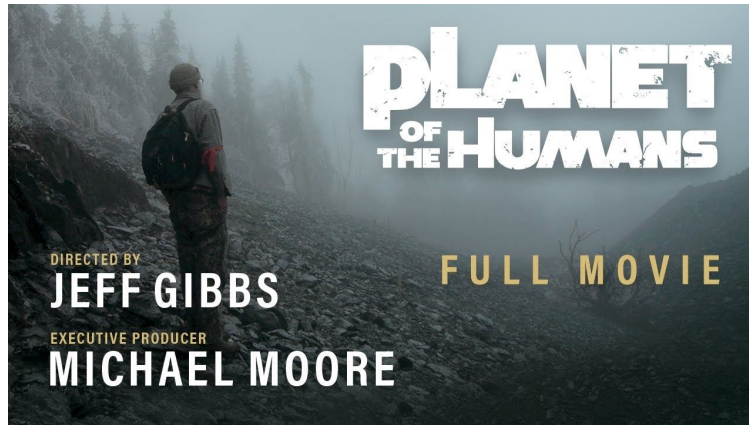


## **PLANET OF THE HUMANS TEACHER'S GUIDE**

for teachers and parents/students studying at home during the pandemic.

Appropriate for students 12-years old through college.  
*(Ages 10-11 as determined by parents)*

Provided as open source material by Rumble Media and [Planet of the Humans.com](https://www.planetofthehumans.com).



**Watch the film. Respond to prompts in written or discussion format.**

[Teachers: select from the various prompts below for your instruction. Have students review your selected prompts *before* watching the film.]

- Link to film: [Here](#)
- What do you think are the KEY ISSUES of this film? (Aim for a list of 3-5)
- Star \* the ones you would want to know more about.
- In a short paragraph, briefly describe this film as you would to a friend who rarely watches documentaries and has a basic knowledge of environmental issues.
- Why is the film titled “Planet of the Humans”?



**Ozzie Zehner**

The film’s producer, Ozzie Zehner (Green Illusions, 2012), stands in front of a large solar electric generating project in a California desert describing what goes into building, supporting and running that plant. He concludes we would be better off just using the fossil fuels in the first place.

- Explain what he means by this.
- The film interviews experts who highlight the inherent problem with solar and wind technologies: the intermittency of both (the sun is not always shining, e.g., at night and on cloudy days; the wind is not consistent).

If the “solution” is storing the energy for later use (aka batteries), why does the film say the “solution” is a problem?

**Watch the sequence [starting at 36:56] “How solar cells and wind turbines are made (and electric cars).”**

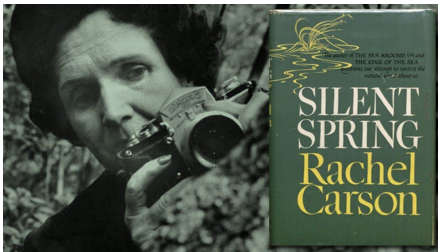
- Describe how this sequence impacts you.
- Why was it included in the film here?

**Select from Additional Questions:**

- Are electric cars a (partial) solution? The filmmaker shows up at General Motors' debut of their electric car for the media. What is ironic in that segment? What follows that scene?
- Tesla electric cars for all? Are they really “green”? What goes into making them? How do they run? What does the film highlight?
- Capitalism seems to be a love story for the few, but ultimate death for our livable planet. Elaborate on this theme.
- What is it about so-called “green renewable” energy that makes this notion so desirable and compatible with the capitalist economic system?
- The film explains that our planet has “limits.” What are those limits? Do you think we have reached those limits?
- If the film’s statement that there are too many people consuming too much too fast is at the core of the problem, what are some ideas to deal with that?
- What does the film mean by the “suicide of economic growth”?
- Who or what is behind the “waging of the permanent war on planet earth”?
- It is indisputable that all people on this planet do not have the same “standard of living.” We, in advanced industrialized economies, consume at much greater rates. If our planet is to remain habitable for humans and other life, what do we in the United States (Europe, Japan, Australia, Canada, China--developed nations) need to do?
- Do we have any special obligations to those who live in less developed or emerging-developing nations?
- What are three things you learned by watching this film?
- What is one thing you were very surprised to learn? Why?

*Planet of the Humans* - FILM Discussion GUIDE (April 2020); from Rumble Media offered as open-source material.

- What does this film motivate you to read or watch? Or do?
- This film critically evaluates the motivations and actions of several leading environmentalists and well-known environmental groups. List one person and one group criticized in the film. Why does the film ask, “Are they leading us off the cliff”?
- The film challenges you to “take control of OUR environmental movement and OUR future.” What are some ideas for you to do this—just to start with perhaps?
- The film ends with a scene of devastation through deforestation of the rainforest. Its impact is lasting. Why did the film end in this way?
- **Discuss:** Humankind is being challenged to master itself (as quoted by Rachel Carson at the end of the movie). What are the two key things we need to do as a society? How can we accomplish these goals?



"Humankind is challenged, as it has never been challenged before, to prove its maturity and its mastery — not of nature, but of itself."

- Rachel Carson 1962

*Planet of the Humans*, end credits: quote from Rachel Carson (1962)

### Other Activities

- Write a brief opinion piece (3-4 paragraphs) to submit to your local newspaper explaining the purpose of the film and why others should view it.
- Create a TWEET to post for this film (maximum 280 characters, include at least one #hashtag, e.g. #DocsROCK). It can be your own summary/opinion after watching, or more like an advertisement for the film.
- In this film, there are a number of people who present ideas and counter-ideas. Even though this is a nonfiction film, a documentary, these characters may be seen as protagonists or even heroes, others, antagonists, and even villains, or victims, opportunists, or wise people.

Focus on the following people or “characters” and entities [Teachers, you may create your own list e.g. Ozzie Zehner, Al Gore, Koch brothers, Richard Heinberg, Sierra Club, Vandana Shiva, David Blood, Richard Branson, Goldman Sachs, Michael Bloomberg, General Motors, etc.]

- ❑ Which descriptive noun do you think they most closely represent? Pick out two characters, explain the reason(s) for your label.

- If we are “being fed a lie,” what is behind this?
- What could be the motivation(s)?

**Be the activist:** If scientists are correct that we have less than a decade before it’s really too late to do anything to turn around the climate disaster, what must be done TODAY? If all options were available to us, what would be the most important first step toward acting on climate change?

**Extend the narrative.** If this film was the first of a three-part YouTube mini-series, what would you like to see in the next two episodes?

- Episode Two:
- Episode Three:

- **Be the filmmaker: (this suggestion is best for film-focused high school or college classes):** You are an intern given a grant to work on this hypothetical film. Create your Documentary Idea Board for "Planet of The Humans: The Sequel." *Get to work!*

A. First question: Who is your potential or targeted audience?

B. Next question: What would be the important message to have in a follow-up film? List three key messages you would want to get across.

C. Storyboard: develop a brief (bullet point) outline of a potential narrative that would tie together your three key messages in a compelling way

- Annotate your outline with a few ideas of sources that you would need to develop this storyline -- e.g., need to pull from archival footage, interview expert on X, etc.

D. Your pitch to a film director: Pull everything together to make a compelling pitch to a film director to convince them to take on your sequel to *Planet of the Humans*. Make sure to include the societal importance of the film and why you believe it needs to be made.

## **2020 Pandemic related questions**

- If you were doing a film on the current COVID-19 CRISIS, what issues and stories would you focus on?
- The 2020 COVID-19 crisis has been a rude wake-up call. What can we take from what we have learned through this horrific pandemic that would apply it to the climate and environment emergency?
- Use critical/scientific thinking to consider the institutional failings involved in the COVID-19 economic-health-social crisis. How are they similar/different from those involved in the planetary crisis discussed in the film?