

## Unit L4 • Natural Selection

### Air Improves, So What Happens to the Moths?

In 1952, a thick blanket of dark pollution, mostly from the use of coal, covered the London area for five days. At the time, it was estimated that about 4,000 people died as a direct result of the terrible pollution. More recently, researchers believe that the number of people who died was closer to 12,000.

As a response to the Great London Smog of 1952, people became increasingly concerned about the quality of air. In 1956, the British Parliament passed the Clean Air Act, with a goal of reducing air pollution. Over time, the quality of air improved.



As England's air quality improved, what do you think happened to the population of peppered moths. Read the captions to the right of each illustration. Fill in the blank spaces with appropriate words. Also shade in some of the moths on the trees to help show the story.



Efforts to clean up the polluted air have just begun. The tree trunks are still \_\_\_\_\_-colored. There are more \_\_\_\_\_ moths than \_\_\_\_\_ moths. The birds have an easier time seeing (and eating!) the \_\_\_\_\_ moths. More \_\_\_\_\_ moths are able to live and reproduce and pass their traits on to the next generation.



The air is getting cleaner! There is less dark soot on the tree trunks. Light-colored lichen is beginning to grow back. There is a mix of both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ moths on the tree trunks.



The air is much cleaner! The tree trunks are now light-colored and the light-colored lichen has grown back. The \_\_\_\_\_ moths are well-protected from birds since they're hard for the birds to see. The occasional \_\_\_\_\_ moth is usually snatched away and eaten by a bird. More \_\_\_\_\_ moths have been able to live and reproduce. There are mostly \_\_\_\_\_ moths on the tree trunks once again.