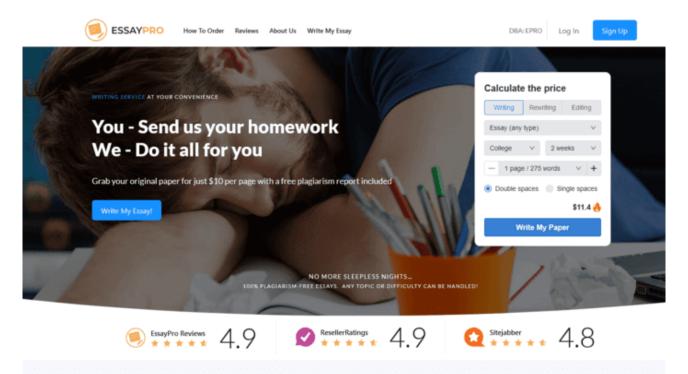
Population: The Growing Problem



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Population: The Growing Problem

History of Earth's Population

From the beginning of time until 1850, the world population had been steadily growing until it finally reached the point of one billion people. Hurray for our species, we are successful and have been able to make adaptations in order to survive! Then, only 80 years later, the world population doubled to a whopping 2 billion citizens. After that, the doubling time was sliced once again. By 1960, just thirty years later, three billion people called Earth "home." Seventeen year later, in 1977, the world population hit four billion people. In 1986, nine short years later, we reached a population of 5 billion inhabitants. Sometime in the next few years, we are looking at crossing the 6 billion mark (Davidson 1995).

The notion, debate, and warning behind overpopulation is nothing new. The theologian Tertullian, in 200 CE, wrote, "What most frequently meets out view (and occasions complaint) is our teeming population." He continued by exclaiming that "[the global population] numbers are burdensome to the world, which can hardly support us." At the time of this statement, the global population totaled a mere 190 million people (Lambert

1995).

In 1798, Thomas Robert Malthus, possibly one of the best-known writers and debaters of overpopulation, wrote an essay entitled "Principle of Population." In this composition, Malthus suggested that humankind was, currently and forever more, playing a hopeless game of population vs. natural resources. This game, he continued, would end with a vast number of humans losing the battle. Malthus presented this doomsday scenario of global overpopulation as closely connected with famine and starvation. His belief was that human po...

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