Introductory questions

1. How are science, technology, and society related?
2. What are the basic benefits of technology?
3. What are the basic threats of technology?
4. What is a postindustrial society?
5. Is our dependence on experts for policy decisions desirable? The technocrats claim that their judgments are value free; the technical elite is supposedly nonpolitical. Is this a true picture?
6. Technology and wind/hydropower.
7. How can experts and citizens contribute to technological policy decisions in a democracy?
8. What decision-making processes and what technological policies can contribute to human and environmental values?
9. Many of the social and environmental costs of industrial processes are not included in market prices. Should they be ignored in economic decisions?
10. What are the human costs of technology?
11. Technology leads to rational and efficient organisation, which requires fragmentation, specialization, speed, the maximisation of output. Should the efficiency be the only goal?
12. Is technology controllable?
13. What is a role of technology in the process of alienation of the worker?
14. Contemporary social critics of technology. Could technology be thought of as a source of salvation, an agent of secularised redemption?
15. What is the impact of technology on religious life?
16. What is the technological determinism?

GMO section

1. Why do you think GMO food provokes a strong social opposition movement?
2. Do you think the public fails to understand the risks associated with GMO food? Are there real problems with communicating such information to the public?
3. Do you think GMO crops should be banned completely or just subjected to regulations?
4. What kind of regulations should GMO crops require? Should it be the same level as clinical drug trials?
5. Should countries have the right to ban imports of GMOs?

Technology and daily life - cell phone

1. Are there any ways of designing the cell phones so that the risk related to their usage should be reduced?
2. Make an argument that a third factor accounts for the correlations between health risk and cell phone use in the studies discussed.
3. What is causality? What additional research would prove a causal link between the cell phone use and diseases?

Medicine and alternative medicine

1. What is your (or your family’s) personal experience with complementary or alternative medicine?
2. Do you think parents have the right to take their children out of chemotherapy (the autonomy principle), or do you think the state and medical profession have the right to force parents to put their children on chemotherapy (the beneficence principle)?
3. How would you design a randomized clinical trial to prove that an alternative therapy works better than a conventional therapy?

Technology, environment and justice

1. What is a just society? How are justice and equality related?
2. What is sustainable development?
3. Is it possible for a society to continue growing and being sustainable?
4. Are deliberative and inclusive institutions an adequate solution for environmental justice problems?
5. Given what you currently know from the reading and other sources, do you think there is evidence that greenhouse gases are causing global warming?
6. Do you agree that we should implement the Kyoto protocol (to reduce greenhouse gas emissions) or that we should let the market come up with innovations?
7. Do you agree that we need to wait for sufficient evidence before making dramatic changes?

Technology and daily life - electromobility

1. Would you be willing to spend $4.00 per gallon for gasoline/biofuels and double your electricity prices, if that is what it takes to stop global warming?
2. Would you pay $3000 more for a hybrid vehicle?
3. What are the basic technological and cultural factors that make the electric car more popular among the potential users?

Public vs private utilities

1. What is the difference between investor-owned utilities and public utilities?
2. Public utilities are owned by the government, so they are wasteful and bureaucratic. They should be sold to investor-owned utilities.” Do you agree or disagree?
3. What information would you need to evaluate the general benefit of publicly owned versus investor-owned utilities?
4. What is community choice aggregation and how might it affect the funding of renewable energy?
5. What stops any kind of utilities (investor-owned or publicly owned) from investing in more renewable energy?
6. What policies could be put in place to speed up the construction of more renewable energy?

Agriculture and technology

1. What would make people more willing to shop in farmers’ markets, join community gardens, or become a member of a CSA (community-supported agriculture) farm?
2. Do you personally notice a difference in taste between fresh, local produce and produce bought in the supermarket?
3. Is your family willing to spend extra money or time to buy fresh, local produce? What would motivate more families to do so?

Globalisation

1. What does globalisation mean to you? Why is there a corresponding movement toward localism?
2. “Small, local businesses are wasteful and inefficient, so it’s good that they get replaced by large corporations.” Do you agree or disagree? What benefits might local businesses have for the quality of life or economy of a region that large corporations do not offer?

Science as social practice

1. Can any discrimination be found in the field of science? If so, what should be done about it?
2. Can you think of other ways that the absence of historically excluded groups (e.g., women, underrepresented ethnic groups, the poor, people from postcolonial societies) shape the content of scientific knowledge?
3. What types of preferences should be given to women and minority students in college admissions?
4. How has the public mission of the university changed?
5. How should pipeline and climate issues be addressed in high schools and junior high schools?
6. What should that mission of the university be?
7. Do you agree with the ways in which universities have become more business oriented?

Media and society

1. How serious do you think the problem of consolidation and vertical integration of media is in terms of a threat to democracy?
2. Can we have a democracy without the free and independent media?
3. Can the Internet solve the problem or is it subject to the same consolidation process?
4. How would you restructure public broadcasting to make it more independent and vigorous?
5. How would you develop more vigorous local/community media?
6. What is the role of media in creating the public understanding of science?
7. What is the role of experts in presenting the technological / scientific issues?
8. What is the popular image of the scientist in contemporary cinema?

Intellectual property, free licences, ownership,

1. Should private software firms which use open source be allowed to maintain intellectual property rights over their new software?
2. What in your opinion is the ideal license?
3. If an operating system code were publicly available, would it not be more prone to terrorist attacks?
4. How does the incorporation and transformation process for open source differ from, and towhat extent is it similar to, the recycling processes?
5. Is this movement successful or coopted?
6. What are the criteria for determining the movement as successful or coopted?
7. Why was the “free software” original vision not successful?
8. If making music content available freely on the web actually increases sales, is the RIAA’s strategy not self-defeating?
9. What arguments can you come up with to support their policy?
10. What determines the “fair use” in the Internet environment?
11. What percentage of a given work (if any) should people have the right to quote?

Technology and privacy

1. How would you define privacy?
2. Which is a worse threat, a little brother (private sector databases on your personal information) or a big brother (government databases)?
3. What kind of regulation should imposed on private firms’ databases on persons?
4. What do you think of the argument that privacy in the sense of data gathered about you when you surf the Internet should be a commodity, not a right?
5. Where do you stand on the security vs. privacy issue for government-related privacy?
6. Should we have a system of national ID cards? What information (biometric, chip) should they include?

City and infrastructure

1. Highways should omit the cities and go around them.
2. Why build highways through the cities?
3. Would cities be different if the bus stations were at suburban locations, with rail links within the city?
4. What would make you or your parents (or any other particular set of people) use public transportation?
5. In your own home town, what would you consider as priorities for regional planning?
6. To the extent that mass transit is privatised, will this change the legal argument that such separation is unequal?
7. Is access to transit a basic citizen’s right, similar to health care?
8. How can the public transit be designed to be both more environmentally sustainable and less susceptible to terrorist attacks?
9. What reasons would there be (other than efficiency and cost) for moving more rapidly toward hydrogen vehicles or plug-in electric hybrids?
10. If plug-in electric hybrids are turning out to be more favourable on some grounds, why is the bulk of federal and state research funding going toward hydrogen?
11. Would hydrogen or plug-in electric vehicles be a more centralized or decentralized technology?

Test questions

1. The part of a computer that shows visual information on a screen?
2. What are the machines used to check the progress of unborn babies still in the mothers womb?   
   The process of killing diseases producing micro organism in food items by heat.
3. Which country in the world has maximum number of robots working?
4. A method of growing plants without soil?
5. Electricity produced from falling water?
6. The fear of being out of mobile phone contact is known as?
7. A new technology which provides the ability to create an artificial world and have people interact with it is called …
8. The device used for locating submerged object under sea is….