Tragedy of the Commons Worksheet

Directions: For each problem identify the commons and identify how people are acting in their own self-interest to destroy the commons. Write in **COMPLETE** sentences.

1. There are 3 factories in the town of Chesterville. Each factory emits a certain amount of toxic chemicals into the air. Eventually the air quality of Chesterville deteriorates and there is an increase in the amount of asthma.
2. The residents of Divatown take on average 20 minute showers. Each 20 minutes shower uses approximately 50 gallons of water. After two months, the local well runs completely dry.

3) The teachers at UASCJ use about 1 ream of paper a week. They decide to increase this amount by another ream of paper in order to give more exams to students. This causes their paper supplier to cut down more trees in Brazil, contributing to deforestation.

**Analysis questions:**

1. How does the tragedy of the commons relate to carrying capacity?
2. Do you believe the tragedy of the commons is inevitable? Why or why not?
3. How could you stop people from destroying the commons?