Soil Contamination Pre-/Post-Evaluation Answer Key

For the following questions, write answers in complete sentences.

1. What are the three phases of soil?
   Soil consists of three phases: water, solid and air.

2. What are the types of soil?
   The four types of soil are: clay, silt, sand and gravel.

3. Why is soil contamination a problem for people and engineers?
   Soil contamination can leak into groundwater and surface water. U.S. citizens get 50% of their drinking water from groundwater. Soil contamination can also harm plants and animals.

4. How can soil become contaminated?
   Soil can be contaminated from any of the following reasons: unregulated industrial waste disposal; agricultural forms of soil pollution such as livestock, fertilizers and pesticides; leaking underground gasoline storage tanks; septic systems; landfills; and mining activities.

5. What is a calibration? Describe one example.
   A calibration is a way to find a known reference point, or set of points. For example, a smart board needs to be calibrated so your writing appears at the correct location. As another example, a scale needs to be calibrated to zero before weighing something. Also, most sensors need to be calibrated.

For the following questions, circle the best choice from the possible answers.

6. What do you call an underground location where waste is stored?
   a. Landfill
   b. Waste fill
   c. Dump site

7. What is pollution?
   a. Contamination is always pollution.
   b. Contamination that is not hazardous to human health.
   c. Contamination that is hazardous to human health.

8. What is a well?
   a. A pretty place for flowers to grow.
   b. A large, deep hole in the ground that can be used to pump water out, or observe the soil and groundwater below.
   c. A location where soil contamination always exists.