

SC.912.L.17.20 – Human Impact – Example 5 Answer

The northern elephant seal was almost hunted to extinction in the 1800s. By the late 1890s, approximately one hundred seals were left, reducing the gene pool of the population. What will be the consequence of this reduction?

- A. Competition within the population will increase.**
- B. The surviving elephant seals will be better able to adapt.**
- C. Inbreeding will be less frequent among the remaining population.**
- D. The elephant seals will be more vulnerable to environmental change.**

Answer

- D. The elephant seals will be more vulnerable to environmental change.

The more genetic variation a population has, the more easily the population can deal with environmental change. If the gene pool decreases, genetic variation decreases.