a. Nearly everyone would characterize this setting as beautiful. What does this fact mean for the common wisdom that beauty is in the eye of the beholder? Provide one theoretical and one practical reason, respectively, why this issue is important. 
Worth 4 points, 2 points per reason

The fact that most people consider this photo beautiful disproves this saying. Theoretically, this is important because it means we can make generalized theories/principles of aesthetics. Practically, this is important so we can influence policy to protect natural areas that are universally considered beautiful. Another policy/practice advantage is enabling decision makers to choose between different alternative development proposals. For example the siting of a road.

b. Describe four different physical characteristics of this setting that lead to its high beauty rating. 
Worth four points, one point per physical characteristic

- Presence of water
- Topography is varied
- Prospect/refuge
- Land-compatible use adjacencies

c. Describe two different theories of aesthetics and then apply them to this scene. Make sure you are thorough in discussing the link between the theory and this scene. Given each one of these two theories, describe one change in accord with each theory you could make to detract from this scene’s beauty and explain why/how this might work. 
Worth 12 points, three points per theory, three points per change in accord with the theory

Information theory: A medium amount of uncertainty in a scene is preferable, humans like to guess/make predictions. Too uncertain, and it is stressful, too clear/obvious and it is boring. The axiom: prediction should be possible but not trivial. To reduce the beauty of this image through information theory, you can take away the trees/shade and reveal everything in the image.

Proportions: Universally, proportions using the golden ratio are judged as beautiful. To reduce the beauty of this image via messing with the proportions, you could make the tall mountain super tall in comparison to the rest of the mountain range.
Complexity: Moderate degree of complexity is evaluated more positively. Reduce the amount of variety in texture or landforms, making the setting more homogeneous.

d. Imagine the following experiment: groups of 5 year old children and 25 year old adults are asked to evaluate this scene on a 1-10 scale, where 10 = exceptionally beautiful and 1 = extremely ugly. Do you think the inter-rater agreement would be higher, lower, or the same among the 5 year olds compared to the 25 year olds? Explain your answer utilizing one of the two theories of restoration.

*Worth 5 points, 2 points for discussing one of the theories of restoration, and three points for the explanation of inter-rater agreement*

According to the biophilia theory of restoration, the two groups would have very similar inter-rater agreement. This is because biophilia is an inherent affinity for nature and natural scenes because we evolved in nature. Evolutionary roots/preferences for nature should not differ with age.

On the other hand, attentional restoration theory would predict greater variability among the 25 year olds for two reasons: a. their attentional capacities are more likely to vary considerably interpersonally whereas young children have limited and rather similar attentional capacity; b. things like stress or cognitive fatigue diminish capacity. These type of experiences are more likely to vary among young adults than young children.