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Global warming threatens Arctic

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29 September, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Global warming threatens Arctic

BNE: The Arctic ice is melting at a dangerous speed and may completely disappear by the end of this century. This is according to scientists at America's National Snow and Ice Data Centre* (NSIDC). Experts said recent satellite images showed the volume of sea ice was the lowest it has ever been. An area five times larger than the UK has disappeared since 1978 and the melting is getting faster. This year was the warmest Arctic summer in 400 years. Dr. Mark Serreze from the NSIDC said the worrying trend of melting ice caps is because of global warming.

The NSIDC's leader Dr. Ted Scambos said the Arctic Circle is melting so quickly that it may never recover. He said the Arctic is caught in a dangerous process that man cannot reverse. Less sea ice means the Earth cannot reflect the sun's rays and cool itself. Warmer seas then melt more ice. The loss of sea ice in one year increases the loss in the next year. Current ice loss is estimated at eight percent per decade. This means there may be no ice at all during the Arctic summer of 2060. Dr. Scambos warned: "It is pretty certain a long-term decline is underway."

*http://nsidc.org/news/press/20050928_trendscontinue.html

WARM-UPS

1. ARCTIC SEARCH: You must find out as much information as you can from other students about the Arctic Circle and the North Pole. After you have finished, sit down with your partner(s) and tell each other what you found out.

2. DISAPPEARING: Talk with your partner(s) about which of the following things you would worry about most if they started disappearing.

- Arctic ice
- Elephants
- Your country's land
- Your savings
- Your country's population
- The size of your stomach and bottom
- Rainforests
- Your hair

3. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

The Arctic / ice / satellite images / the UK / warm summers / worrying trends / global warming / temperatures / the sun's rays / long-term declines

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. ICE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "ice". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

5. IF: In pairs / groups, agree on the endings to the following "If" sentences. Talk about what you wrote. Change partners and share your sentences and ideas.

- a. If sea levels rise, _____.
- b. If governments don't act, _____.
- c. If polar bears disappear, _____.
- d. If temperatures continue to rise, _____.
- e. If summers get hotter, _____.
- f. If we keep creating greenhouse gases, _____.
- g. If the Arctic disappears, _____.
- h. If the world's weather changes, _____.

6. POLAR BEAR: You are a polar bear. Talk to the other "polar bears" in the classroom about life in the Arctic Circle. Talk also about the terrible rumors you are hearing that man is destroying your habitat.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. The Arctic Circle ice may disappear completely within a decade. | T / F |
| b. The volume of sea ice is at the lowest levels on record. | T / F |
| c. An area fifty times larger than the UK has already been lost. | T / F |
| d. The loss of ice has nothing to do with global warming. | T / F |
| e. The ice caps may never recover. | T / F |
| f. Less sea ice means the Earth cannot reflect the sun's rays. | T / F |
| g. Current ice loss is happening at a rate of eight percent a year. | T / F |
| h. There may be no ice in the Arctic summer of 2060. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| a. speed | vanished |
| b. completely | beginning |
| c. images | turn around |
| d. disappeared | pictures |
| e. worrying | present |
| f. recover | rate |
| g. reverse | disturbing |
| h. current | drop |
| i. decline | bounce back |
| j. underway | totally |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. The Arctic ice is melting | lowest it has ever been |
| b. by the end | the sun's rays |
| c. the volume of sea ice was the | of global warming |
| d. An area five times | it may never recover |
| e. melting ice caps is because | certain |
| f. is melting so quickly that | at a dangerous speed |
| g. in a dangerous process that man | eight percent per decade |
| h. Earth cannot reflect | of this century |
| i. Current ice loss is estimated at | larger than the UK |
| j. pretty | cannot reverse |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

Global warming threatens Arctic

BNE: The Arctic ice is _____ at a dangerous speed and may completely _____ by the end of this century. This is _____ to scientists at America's National Snow and Ice Data Centre (NSIDC). Experts said recent satellite images showed the _____ of sea ice was the lowest it has _____ been. An area five _____ larger than the UK has disappeared since 1978 and the melting is getting faster. This year was the warmest _____ summer in 400 years. Dr. Mark Serreze from the NSIDC said the worrying _____ of melting ice caps is because of global warming.

volume
according
disappear
trend
melting
ever
times
Arctic

The NSIDC's _____ Dr. Ted Scambos said the Arctic Circle is melting so quickly that it may never _____. He said the Arctic is caught in a dangerous _____ that man cannot reverse. Less sea ice means the Earth cannot reflect the sun's rays and _____ itself. Warmer seas then melt more ice. The _____ of sea ice in one year increases the loss in the next year. Current ice loss is _____ at eight percent per decade. This means there may be no ice at all _____ the Arctic summer of 2060. Dr. Scambos warned: "It is _____ certain a long-term decline is underway."

estimated
pretty
cool
recover
during
leader
loss
process

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'sea' and 'ice'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "GLOBAL WARMING" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about global warming.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| • dangerous | • recover |
| • NSIDC | • reverse |
| • volume | • reflect |
| • UK | • loss |
| • warmest | • decade |
| • trend | • decline |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What did you think when you first read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- c. Are you worried about the ice melting?
- d. Do you think melting ice caps will affect your life?
- e. Do you think the damage will repair itself?
- f. Do you think global warming is because of man's actions?
- g. What can we do everyday to reverse global warming?
- h. Who is responsible for reversing global warming, our governments or us?
- i. What do you think of the figures and statistics in the article?
- j. Is your country at risk from rising sea levels?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Are you surprised at anything you read in the article?
- d. Do you think governments are taking global warming seriously?
- e. Do you think a shrinkage of eight percent a decade is serious?
- f. Do you think the melting of the Arctic ice is the beginning of the end of the world?
- g. Do you think governments are prepared for the more violent weather created by global warming?
- h. Is the melting of Arctic ice the biggest problem facing the Earth?
- i. What things are you pretty certain will happen because of global warming?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

GLOBAL WARMING: In pairs / groups, discuss what we can do to reverse global warming. How good do you think the ideas in the left hand column are? How could they be made better?

IDEAS	GOOD?	BETTER?
Use lights less at home, school or in the office.		
Use bicycles instead of cars.		
Produce cars with engines that turn off each time the car stops.		
Write a letter to the leaders of major polluting countries.		
Plant more trees.		
Increase education in schools about global warming.		
Your idea		

Change partners and tell each other the good ideas you heard.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Global warming threatens Arctic

BNE: The Arctic ice is _____ at a dangerous speed and may completely disappear by the end of this century. This is _____ to scientists at America's National Snow and Ice Data Centre (NSIDC). Experts said recent satellite _____ showed the volume of sea ice was the lowest it has ever been. An area five times larger than the UK has disappeared since 1978 and the _____ is getting faster. This year was the warmest Arctic summer in 400 years. Dr. Mark Serreze from the NSIDC said the worrying trend of melting _____ is because of global warming.

The NSIDC's leader Dr. Ted Scambos said the Arctic Circle is melting so quickly that it may never _____. He said the Arctic is caught in a dangerous process that man cannot _____. Less sea ice means the Earth cannot _____ the sun's rays and cool itself. Warmer seas then melt more ice. The _____ of sea ice in one year _____ the loss in the next year. Current ice loss is estimated at eight percent _____ decade. This means there may be no ice at all during the Arctic summer of 2060. Dr. Scambos warned: "It is pretty certain a long-term _____ is underway."

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on the National Snow and Ice Data Centre (NSIDC). Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. GLOBAL WARMING: Make a poster about the causes and effects of global warming. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

4. LETTER: Write a letter to your government about global warming. Give your government advice on what it should do to try and reverse global warming. How can your government educate people about the danger of global warming. Read your letter to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. T c. F d. F e. F f. T g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| a. speed | rate |
| b. completely | totally |
| c. images | pictures |
| d. disappeared | vanished |
| e. worrying | disturbing |
| f. recover | bounce back |
| g. reverse | turn around |
| h. current | present |
| i. decline | drop |
| j. underway | beginning |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. The Arctic ice is melting | at a dangerous speed |
| b. by the end | of this century |
| c. the volume of sea ice was the | lowest it has ever been |
| d. An area five times | larger than the UK |
| e. melting ice caps is because | of global warming |
| f. is melting so quickly that | it may never recover |
| g. in a dangerous process that man | cannot reverse |
| h. Earth cannot reflect | the sun's rays |
| i. Current ice loss is estimated at | eight percent per decade |
| j. pretty | certain |

GAP FILL:

Global warming threatens Arctic

BNE: The Arctic ice is **melting** at a dangerous speed and may completely **disappear** by the end of this century. This is **according** to scientists at America's National Snow and Ice Data Centre (NSIDC). Experts said recent satellite images showed the **volume** of sea ice was the lowest it has **ever** been. An area five **times** larger than the UK has disappeared since 1978 and the melting is getting faster. This year was the warmest **Arctic** summer in 400 years. Dr. Mark Serreze from the NSIDC said the worrying **trend** of melting ice caps is because of global warming.

The NSIDC's **leader** Dr. Ted Scambos said the Arctic Circle is melting so quickly that it may never **recover**. He said the Arctic is caught in a dangerous **process** that man cannot reverse. Less sea ice means the Earth cannot reflect the sun's rays and **cool** itself. Warmer seas then melt more ice. The **loss** of sea ice in one year increases the loss in the next year. Current ice loss is **estimated** at eight percent per decade. This means there may be no ice at all **during** the Arctic summer of 2060. Dr. Scambos warned: "It is **pretty** certain a long-term decline is underway."