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## **The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

“1,000 Ideas & Activities For Language Teachers”

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## **The year 2007 to be the hottest ever**

URL: [http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0701/070106-climate\\_change.html](http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0701/070106-climate_change.html)

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**6 January, 2007**

## THE ARTICLE

### **The year 2007 to be the hottest ever**

Britain's Meteorological Office has predicted that 2007 could be the world's hottest since records began in 1850. It based its forecast on several key indicators including the rate of climate change and global warming. A factor adding to this year's heat is the El Nino effect, a phenomenon in which major fluctuations in ocean temperatures increase those on land. El Nino occurs roughly every four years in the southern hemisphere and is expected to be active again in 2007. The upshot of these climatic conditions colliding this year is a rise in the average temperature across the world of 0.54 degrees. This seemingly represents a small variation, but is one which will certainly bring adverse weather conditions to many parts of the world.

The world's leading climate scientists unanimously agree that human activity is accelerating global warming. It is a fact that the world's ten warmest years have all occurred in the last twelve years. A United Nations panel on climate change predicted that global temperatures could rise by as much as 5.8 degrees this century. This could have catastrophic consequences for vast areas of the globe. The panel warned that if there were not significant cuts in greenhouse gas emissions soon, especially from fossil fuels, there would be greater risks of more extreme weather. This includes more droughts, hurricanes, bushfires, shrinking polar ice and coastal flooding. It now seems it is more urgent than ever for coal and gas guzzling economies to curb consumption and seek more efficient energies.

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## WARM-UPS

**1. GLOBAL WARMING:** What do you know about global warming? Find out as much as you can from your partner. Change partners often to build up your information.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Weather predictions / heat / climate change / El Nino / southern hemisphere / scientists / temperatures / catastrophes / greenhouse gases / flooding / drought*

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

**3. THE CULPRITS:** Talk to your partner(s) about who the biggest culprits are – rank these countries in order. Together, decide on three (different) things each country must do to slow down global warming.

- USA
- Canada
- India
- Australia
- Japan
- China
- Saudi Arabia
- Russia

**4. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A believe the world will overheat because of human activity. Students B believe scientists and politicians can act together to reverse global warming. Debate this with your partners. Change partners often.

**5. MY EFFORTS:** In pairs / groups, decide on what you (would) do in your life to reduce the effects of global warming. Decide on how much impact each of your actions might have.

- a. Writing a letter to US President George W. Bush.
- b. Refusing plastic bags in stores and using your own paper bag.
- c. Walking up the stairs instead of using an elevator / escalator.
- d. Using fewer lights in your house.
- e. Buying a hybrid energy car instead of a regular car.
- f. Cycling, taking the train, etc. and not buying a car.
- g. Your idea (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Your idea (2) \_\_\_\_\_

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

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## 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 US Weather Office has predicted major global climate change. T / F
- b. Weather records began in the middle of the nineteenth century. T / F
- c. The weather phenomenon El Nino will be active in 2007. T / F
- d. Average temperatures are expected to rise by more than a degree. T / F
- e. Scientists unanimously agree that humans cause global warming. T / F
- f. The world's ten warmest years have been in the past four decades. T / F
- g. Shrinking polar ice is one example of the effects of climate change. T / F
- h. Gas guzzling economies need to curb energy consumption. T / F

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

- |                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| a. key          | result      |
| b. phenomenon   | calamitous  |
| c. fluctuations | commonly    |
| d. upshot       | changes     |
| e. adverse      | search for  |
| f. unanimously  | central     |
| g. catastrophic | limit       |
| h. vast         | unfavorable |
| i. curb         | occurrence  |
| j. seek         | extensive   |

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

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| a. the world's hottest since          | of these climatic conditions colliding |
| b. It based its forecast              | polar ice                              |
| c. major fluctuations in              | all occurred in the last twelve years  |
| d. The upshot                         | agree                                  |
| e. one which will certainly           | more efficient energies                |
| f. climate scientists unanimously     | records began                          |
| g. the world's ten warmest years have | on several key indicators              |
| h. This could have catastrophic       | ocean temperatures                     |
| i. shrinking                          | bring adverse weather conditions       |
| j. curb consumption and seek          | consequences for vast areas            |

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## WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

### The year 2007 to be the hottest ever

Britain's Meteorological Office has \_\_\_\_\_ that 2007 could be the world's hottest since records began in 1850. It \_\_\_\_\_ its forecast on several key indicators including the rate of climate change and global warming. A factor \_\_\_\_\_ to this year's heat is the El Nino effect, a phenomenon in which major fluctuations in ocean temperatures increase \_\_\_\_\_ on land. El Nino occurs roughly every four years in the southern hemisphere and is expected to be active again in 2007. The \_\_\_\_\_ of these climatic conditions \_\_\_\_\_ this year is a rise in the average temperature across the world of 0.54 degrees. This \_\_\_\_\_ represents a small variation, but is one which will certainly bring \_\_\_\_\_ weather conditions to many parts of the world.

*those*  
*colliding*  
*adding*  
*based*  
*upshot*  
*adverse*  
*predicted*  
*seemingly*

The world's leading climate scientists \_\_\_\_\_ agree that human activity is \_\_\_\_\_ global warming. It is a fact that the world's ten warmest years have all occurred in the last twelve years. A United Nations \_\_\_\_\_ on climate change predicted that global temperatures could rise by as much as 5.8 degrees this century. This could have catastrophic consequences for \_\_\_\_\_ areas of the globe. The panel warned that if there were not \_\_\_\_\_ cuts in greenhouse gas emissions soon, especially from fossil fuels, there would be greater risks of more extreme weather. This includes more \_\_\_\_\_, hurricanes, bushfires, shrinking polar ice and coastal flooding. It now seems it is more urgent than ever for coal and gas \_\_\_\_\_ economies to curb consumption and seek more \_\_\_\_\_ energies.

*significant*  
*droughts*  
*panel*  
*unanimously*  
*efficient*  
*guzzling*  
*vast*  
*accelerating*

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## LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### The year 2007 to be the hottest ever

Britain's \_\_\_\_\_ Office has predicted that 2007 could be the world's hottest since records began in 1850. It \_\_\_\_\_ on several key indicators including the rate of climate change and global warming. A factor adding to this year's heat is the El Nino effect, \_\_\_\_\_ which major fluctuations in ocean temperatures increase those on land. El Nino occurs roughly every four years in the southern hemisphere and is expected to be active again in 2007. The upshot of these \_\_\_\_\_ this year is a rise in the average temperature across the world of 0.54 degrees. This \_\_\_\_\_ small variation, but is one which will certainly bring adverse weather conditions to many parts of the world.

The world's leading climate scientists \_\_\_\_\_ that human activity is accelerating global warming. It is a fact that the world's ten warmest years \_\_\_\_\_ the last twelve years. A United Nations panel on climate change predicted that global temperatures could rise by as much as 5.8 degrees this century. This could have \_\_\_\_\_ for vast areas of the globe. The panel warned that if there were not significant cuts in greenhouse gas emissions soon, especially \_\_\_\_\_, there would be greater risks of more extreme weather. This includes more droughts, hurricanes, bushfires, \_\_\_\_\_ and coastal flooding. It now seems it is more urgent than ever for coal and \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ and seek more efficient energies.

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 activity. 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:

- records
- adding
- land
- upshot
- 0.54
- adverse
- unanimously
- twelve
- 5.8
- panel
- shrinking
- guzzling

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## DISCUSSION

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

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. Did anything in the article surprise you?
- c. Do you think the Earth is becoming warmer?
- d. What are the dangers of global warming?
- e. Has there been an increase in adverse weather conditions in your country in recent years?
- f. What do you think the climate will be like in 50 years?
- g. Do you do anything to reduce global warming?
- h. What do you know about El Nino?
- i. Would you rather it be too hot or too cold?
- j. What single action do you think the world should take to curb climate change?

### 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. Do you always believe what scientists say about global warming?
- d. Would you like to work in Antarctica and study climate change?
- e. Is global warming the biggest current threat to our planet?
- f. Do you think a 0.54-degrees increase in temperature is significant?
- g. Have you experienced any catastrophes due to weather?
- h. Do you think rich nations are doing enough to slow down global warming?
- i. Do you think it's easy to replace our use of fossil fuels with cleaner alternatives?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

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

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?



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## **SPEAKING**

### **ROLE PLAY:**

A discussion between different parties interested in global warming.

Team up with classmates who have been assigned the same role to develop your roles and discuss ideas and “strategies” before the role play begins. Introduce yourself to the other role players. Discuss your roles after the role play ends.

#### Role A – Penguin leader

You live in Antarctica. You need global warming to stop. Temperatures must actually get cooler. Your species is at great risk of extinction. Your habitat, the ice, is melting and your sources of food are disappearing. The world must act to save you. The day the last penguin dies is the start of the end of the Earth.

#### Role B – Dessert dweller

You like the recent effects of global warming. It has brought a lot of unexpected rain to your land. For the first time you can grow things. You have bumper harvests. You have lots of water to drink. You think global warming is simply a matter of winners and losers. You think global warming or cooling has always happened.

#### Role C – Worried Martian

Billions of years ago, Mars, your planet, looked like Earth. Life was everywhere. However, greedy Martians controlled the energy sources and the Mars climate changed, killing all life – except you. The greedy Martians paid leaders to pretend nothing was happening and that alternative energies would arise. It was all too late. Advise the Earthlings and the penguins of the dangers of climate change.

#### Role D – U.S. President

You are terrified of taking measures to control global warming because you might lose your power. You believe scientists can build a huge machine to re-freeze the ice caps. You think keeping American jobs is more important than penguin food. You know better than the world’s climate experts. You don’t believe in aliens.

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## LANGUAGE

**CORRECT WORD:** Choose the correct words from a – d below and write them in the article.

Britain's Meteorological Office has (1) \_\_\_\_\_ that 2007 could be the world's hottest since records began in 1850. It based its forecast on several (2) \_\_\_\_\_ indicators including the (3) \_\_\_\_\_ of climate change and global warming. A factor adding to this year's heat is the El Nino effect, a phenomenon in which major (4) \_\_\_\_\_ in ocean temperatures increase those on land. El Nino occurs roughly every four years in the southern hemisphere and is expected to be active again in 2007. The (5) \_\_\_\_\_ of these climatic conditions colliding this year is a rise in the average temperature across the world of 0.54 degrees. This seemingly represents a small variation, but is one which will certainly bring (6) \_\_\_\_\_ weather conditions to many parts of the world.

The world's leading climate scientists (7) \_\_\_\_\_ agree that human activity is accelerating global warming. It is a fact that the world's ten warmest years have all occurred in the last twelve years. A United Nations (8) \_\_\_\_\_ on climate change predicted that global temperatures could rise by as much as 5.8 degrees this century. This could have catastrophic consequences for (9) \_\_\_\_\_ areas of the globe. The panel warned that if there were not significant cuts in greenhouse gas (10) \_\_\_\_\_ soon, especially from fossil fuels, there would be greater risks of more extreme weather. This includes more droughts, hurricanes, bushfires, (11) \_\_\_\_\_ polar ice and coastal flooding. It now seems it is more urgent than ever for coal and gas guzzling economies to (12) \_\_\_\_\_ consumption and seek more efficient energies.

1. (a) predicting (b) prediction (c) predicted (d) predict
2. (a) lock (b) chain (c) key (d) security
3. (a) rate (b) rating (c) ration (d) pro rata
4. (a) flatulence (b) fluctuations (c) flabbergast (d) flux
5. (a) offshoot (b) uproar (c) upside (d) upshot
6. (a) advocacy (b) advent (c) adverts (d) adverse
7. (a) unanimously (b) unanimity (c) unaware (d) unassisted
8. (a) frame (b) deck (c) panelist (d) panel
9. (a) vista (b) vast (c) vastness (d) vacuum
10. (a) emissions (b) commissions (c) emitters (d) emissaries
11. (a) shredding (b) shirking (c) shrinking (d) shrunk
12. (a) kerb (b) curb (c) club (d) clam

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## **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. CLIMATE CHANGE:** Search the Internet and find more information about climate change. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. CATASTROPHES:** Research two different climatic catastrophes that happened around the world. Find five differences and five similarities between them. Make a poster using your findings

**4. LETTER:** Write a letter to a US President George W. Bush. Tell him your thoughts on global warming and climate change. Ask him three questions. Read your letter to your classmates in the next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions. Which letter did you like best and why?

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## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

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

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. key	central
b. phenomenon	occurrence
c. fluctuations	changes
d. upshot	result
e. adverse	unfavorable
f. unanimously	commonly
g. catastrophic	calamitous
h. vast	extensive
i. curb	limit
j. seek	search for

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. the world's hottest since	records began
b. It based its forecast	on several key indicators
c. major fluctuations in	ocean temperatures
d. The upshot	of these climatic conditions colliding
e. one which will certainly	bring adverse weather conditions
f. climate scientists unanimously	agree
g. the world's ten warmest years have	all occurred in the last twelve years
h. This could have catastrophic	consequences for vast areas
i. shrinking	polar ice
j. curb consumption and seek	more efficient energies

### GAP FILL:

#### The year 2007 to be the hottest ever

Britain's Meteorological Office has **predicted** that 2007 could be the world's hottest since records began in 1850. It **based** its forecast on several key indicators including the rate of climate change and global warming. A factor **adding** to this year's heat is the El Nino effect, a phenomenon in which major fluctuations in ocean temperatures increase **those** on land. El Nino occurs roughly every four years in the southern hemisphere and is expected to be active again in 2007. The **upshot** of these climatic conditions **colliding** this year is a rise in the average temperature across the world of 0.54 degrees. This **seemingly** represents a small variation, but is one which will certainly bring **adverse** weather conditions to many parts of the world.

The world's leading climate scientists **unanimously** agree that human activity is **accelerating** global warming. It is a fact that the world's ten warmest years have all occurred in the last twelve years. A United Nations **panel** on climate change predicted that global temperatures could rise by as much as 5.8 degrees this century. This could have catastrophic consequences for **vast** areas of the globe. The panel warned that if there were not **significant** cuts in greenhouse gas emissions soon, especially from fossil fuels, there would be greater risks of more extreme weather. This includes more **droughts**, hurricanes, bushfires, shrinking polar ice and coastal flooding. It now seems it is more urgent than ever for coal and gas **guzzling** economies to curb consumption and seek more **efficient** energies.

### LANGUAGE WORK

1 - c    2 - c    3 - a    4 - b    5 - d    6 - d    7 - a    8 - d    9 - b    10 - a    11 - c    12 - b