

Global Warming

Fact and Discussion Cards



Global Warming Fact and Discussion Cards

1. The average global temperature has increased faster than ever before, with an increase of 1°C over the past 100 years. This doesn't seem like a lot but it is in terms of climate and the different it makes.

Discuss: What sort of things in cold climates and warm climates will be affected if the temperature continues to get warmer?

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2. The climate of a place is the average weather, rainfall and temperature over a long period of time – usually measured over a year. The global climate is an average of this taken from all the different climates all over the planet.

Discuss: What is the climate like in your country? How many seasons do you have? What sort of things can grow in your country's climate? What things can't grow?

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3. A greenhouse works to keep plants warm inside as the Sun's rays enter the greenhouse through the glass but can't get back out, causing the air inside to get warmer. This is what is happening in Earth's atmosphere, with the 'greenhouse gases' making a gassy layer that acts like the glass in a greenhouse. However, without the greenhouse effect, Earth would be too cold to live on, with an average of -18°C !

Discuss: Do you know the names of any gases that are in the air? Do you know which gases are causing this greenhouse effect?

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4. The most common greenhouse gases are water vapour, carbon dioxide and methane.

Farming has caused an increase in methane in the atmosphere because the world's 1.5 billion cows release (via burping and their bottom!) methane and this goes into the atmosphere.

Discuss: What ideas do you have to reduce methane?

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5. There is too much carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and this is what plants helpfully take in. However, mainly down to the production of palm oil, vital forests are being cut down and this is having a negative effect on the carbon dioxide in the air.

Discuss: What ideas do you have to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere?

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6. The warming of Earth's climate is melting sea ice in the Arctic by 9% per decade (10 years). This is evidence that scientists have been able to track and it's already having a negative effect on the wildlife there.

Not only that, melting sea ice will cause sea level to rise and even affect global weather and how the seas and oceans move.

Discuss: What does rising sea levels mean for people and animals? Find out how far above sea level your town is.

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7. The habitats of some animals are already being affected by global warming; orangutans are losing their forests which are being chopped down, polar bears and penguins are both in danger from melting sea ice and fish and bird species are moving habitats as places are changing.

Discuss the knock-on effect of species of fish, such as salmon and cod, moving areas. How would it affect humans and other animals?

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8. Pollution from human activity is also causing greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming. Things that produce carbon dioxide create what we call a 'carbon footprint' because carbon dioxide is left behind. Some things, such as vehicle fumes, are an obvious example but there are many less obvious examples, such as the carbon dioxide created to make a new plastic bottles, packaging or even a piece of paper.

Discuss: How can we reduce our carbon footprints?

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9. Palm oil is one contributor to global warming because growing it causes huge deforestation. However, palm oil is used in close to half of the products in supermarkets from chocolate and pizzas, to soap and shampoos. This makes it almost impossible for people to just stop buying it, even if they wanted to.

Discuss why some companies have changed to use sustainable palm oil where the production process is a lot less damaging. You might want to look up how some companies are dealing with the palm oil problem.

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10. Using fossil fuels, such as oil, gas and coal, also contributes to greenhouse gases as they produce carbon dioxide when they burn.

Discuss how many renewable energy forms you can think of. Discuss the different ways there are of getting energy without using fossil fuels.

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11. Almost every country in the world signed the 'Paris Agreement' which came into force at the end of 2016 and this is a promise to do something to stop global warming. Countries are trying to lower harmful emissions into the atmosphere, reduce the use of fossil fuels and reduce energy use.

Discuss: What can you do in your home to help reduce global warming. Do you think one person can really make a difference? What if that one person was joined by another and another and another?