



Climate change in the news

Introduction

This is one of two introductory activities to start the study of climate change.

There are certain to be topical stories about climate change at the time of teaching this topic. Articles on political arguments about international agreements, a hurricane, a flood, a drought or a dire warning on future climate can all serve to engage students in the issues.

Commentary on the activity

Students should be able to tackle this exercise with some confidence if they have completed any of the news related activities in the AS course:

<http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/keeping-science-society-topical-some-ideas>.

You might ask students to find their story in advance of the first session. They can bring the stories to share with others in their group – or with the whole class.

Discussion of the stories covered by the students provide opportunities to examine the depth of their understanding of the issue of climate change at the start of the topic.

In the discussion encourage students to separate fact from conjecture and to examine the extent to which people in the media seek to manipulate public opinion.



How Science Works

Fb The popular media play a part in providing information, setting the agenda and influencing opinion on issues involving science and technology.



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The subject of climate change is so important that some aspect of the topic is for ever in the news. This activity gives you, and the rest of your class, the chance to discuss the main findings and issues being reported at the moment.

The activity

Find a topical news report, web page, podcast or video about some aspect of climate change. Choose an aspect of the subject that you find particularly interesting. The list of web sites suggested below offers a range of starting points. Read, watch or listen to the story.

Analyse the story:

- What does the story tell you?
- What is the source of the story and why is it being reported now?
- Does the story cover some new science or a new technological development?
- How much of the story is based on fact and how much is conjecture?
- What are the social, economic or political implications of the story?
- Is the person telling the story seeking to change public opinion?

Share the story and your analysis with others in your group or class – as suggested by your teacher.

Web sites dealing with the latest news and issues

Newspapers with sections bringing together news and comment about climate change (but there are lots of others, search on 'climate change' on any newspaper site):

- www.guardian.co.uk/environment/climatechange
- <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/environment/climatechange/>

A compilation of New Scientist news items and articles brought together in a special report:

- <http://www.newscientist.com/topic/climate-change>

News and opinion from the BBC about climate change:

- http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/portal/climate_change/default.stm

Scidev.net has a wide range of articles about climate change issues as they relate to developing countries.

- <http://www.scidev.net/en/climate-change-and-energy/>

A commentary on the news about climate change by WWF:

- http://www.wwf.org.uk/climatechange/climate_main.asp

Greenhouse Gas Online aims to provide free and up to date information on greenhouse gas news and scientific publications

- <http://www.ghgonline.org/>

The Met Office web site with news about climate change:

- <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climatechange/news/>

Nature reports: Climate change

- <http://www.nature.com/climate/index.html>