

# Global Warming Vocabulary Practice

Instructions: Choose the best word from the list above each section to fill in each blank (complete the gaps). The first is done as an example.

## 1. The Idea of Global Warming

assembled, contradictory, converted, convinced, definite, minority, statistics

Although scientists have assembled data on climatic conditions for well over a century, most research showing effects of human activity is more recent. By the early 1970s, some scientists were predicting a warming of the earth's climate that they attributed to the burning of fossil fuels. (Coal, petroleum, & other carbon-based fuels are \_\_\_\_\_ by combustion into "greenhouse gases" that over time cause increases in global temperatures.)

Since the late 1970s, increasing numbers of scientists have found \_\_\_\_\_ evidence of global warming. At first evidence was inconclusive and sometimes \_\_\_\_\_. There have been claims that some \_\_\_\_\_ have been misinterpreted or even distorted.

However, in the last two decades a large majority of climatologists in all parts of the world have been \_\_\_\_\_ that such warming is real. Public opinion among non-scientists has been slower to change. Global warming is still controversial among some groups in the U.S. and elsewhere. A vocal \_\_\_\_\_ still questions whether carbon emissions are really a threat to earth's climate and coastlines.

## 2. Possible Effects of Global Warming

approximate, considerably, diminish, finite, predict, sustainable

Although there is broad consensus among scientists about the problem, there is much less agreement about the how severe its effects will be and the best ways to deal with them. Scientists believe sea levels will rise \_\_\_\_\_ as arctic ice melts. However, their climate models vary in the amount and timing of that rise and cannot \_\_\_\_\_ how many areas would be flooded.

They expect weather patterns to become more extreme and fresh water supplies in many areas to \_\_\_\_\_ but they can only guess at the damage to agriculture in various areas. They believe there will be more frequent droughts in semi-arid areas of the tropics, but do not know how severe they will be, or even the \_\_\_\_\_ costs to convert to more \_\_\_\_\_ methods of farming. Certain methods of irrigation, like overhead sprinkling, would probably need to be completely abandoned in those areas to conserve the \_\_\_\_\_ available water supplies.

### 3. Looking for Solutions: International Discussions

advocates, conferences, contradiction, controversy, enforceable, neutral

There have been international \_\_\_\_\_ almost every year in different parts of the world since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 (when the United Nations Framework for Climate Change-- the UNFCCC-- was adopted), but progress has been slow.

Almost everyone agrees that it is vital to reduce carbon emissions. The more developed nations (most responsible for current carbon emissions) have also accepted their responsibility-- in theory-- to help developing nations grow without increasing carbon emissions too much.

Their \_\_\_\_\_ have argued convincingly on behalf of support for the countries that will be most hurt by global warming: island nations, countries with large populations in low-lying coastal areas, and semi-arid areas likely to face more frequent droughts due to climate change. Most nations have agreed on the need to provide aid to those countries.

The conflict comes in trying to allocate national responsibilities for emission reduction and financial aid.

Most countries are not ready to reduce their own use of carbon fuels as much as panels of climate experts say is necessary to reach a carbon- \_\_\_\_\_ state.

The second source of \_\_\_\_\_ is the amount each developed nation should pay to help the developing world deal with climate change and with clean-energy development. Very few nations have made the financial commitments necessary to meet the goals that all have agreed are important. This \_\_\_\_\_ between words and actions makes effective action much more difficult.

Despite past failures to get an \_\_\_\_\_ climate treaty, climate negotiations continue. Negotiators look for ways to accommodate the most important needs and priorities of the different nations, so that they will be willing to cooperate on the overall plan.

# Global Warming Gap-fill Answers

## 1. The Idea of Global Warming

assembled, contradictory, converted, convinced, definite, minority, statistics

Although scientists have assembled data on climatic conditions for well over a century, most research showing effects of human activity is more recent. By the early 1970s, some scientists were predicting a warming of the earth's climate that they attributed to the burning of fossil fuels. (Coal, petroleum, & other carbon-based fuels are converted by combustion into "greenhouse gases" that over time cause increases in global temperatures.)

Since the late 1970s, increasing numbers of scientists have found definite evidence of global warming. At first evidence was inconclusive and sometimes contradictory. There have been claims that some statistics have been misinterpreted or even distorted.

However, in the last two decades a large majority of climatologists in all parts of the world have been convinced that such warming is real. Public opinion among non-scientists has been slower to change. Global warming is still controversial among some groups in the U.S. and elsewhere. A vocal minority still questions whether carbon emissions are really a threat to earth's climate and coastlines.

## 2. Possible Effects of Global Warming

approximate, considerably, diminish, finite, predict, sustainable

Although there is broad consensus among scientists about the problem, there is much less agreement about the how severe its effects will be and the best ways to deal with them. Scientists believe sea levels will rise considerably as arctic ice melts. However, their climate models vary in the amount and timing of that rise and cannot predict how many areas would be flooded.

They expect weather patterns to become more extreme and fresh water supplies in many areas to diminish, but they can only guess at the damage to agriculture in various areas. They believe there will be more frequent droughts in semi-arid areas of the tropics, but do not know how severe they will be, or even the approximate costs to convert to more sustainable methods of farming. Certain methods of irrigation, like overhead sprinkling, would probably need to be completely abandoned in those areas to conserve the finite available water supplies.

### 3. Looking for Solutions: International Discussions

advocates, conferences, contradiction, controversy, enforceable, neutral

There have been international conferences almost every year in different parts of the world since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 (when the United Nations Framework for Climate Change-- the UNFCCC-- was adopted), but progress has been slow.

Almost everyone agrees that it is vital to reduce carbon emissions. The more developed nations (most responsible for current carbon emissions) have also accepted their responsibility-- in theory-- to help developing nations grow without increasing carbon emissions too much.

Their advocates have argued convincingly on behalf of support for the countries that will be most hurt by global warming: island nations, countries with large populations in low-lying coastal areas, and semi-arid areas likely to face more frequent droughts due to climate change. Most nations have agreed on the need to provide aid to those countries.

The conflict comes in trying to allocate national responsibilities for emission reduction and financial aid.

Most countries are not ready to reduce their own use of carbon fuels as much as panels of climate experts say is necessary to reach a carbon- neutral state.

The second source of controversy is the amount each developed nation should pay to help the developing world deal with climate change and with clean-energy development. Very few nations have made the financial commitments necessary to meet the goals that all have agreed are important. This contradiction between words and actions makes effective action much more difficult.

Despite past failures to get an enforceable climate treaty, climate negotiations continue. Negotiators look for ways to accommodate the most important needs and priorities of the different nations, so that they will be willing to cooperate on the overall plan.

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