



HISTORIC DEAL TO MOVE AWAY FROM FOSSIL FUELS



Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:
1CI1-P1L8-ZK2V



1

Warm up

In pairs or small groups, complete the quiz below. No phones allowed!

1. What does the 'COP' stand for in 'COP28'?
 - a. Climate Organisation Policy
 - b. Conference of the Parties
 - c. Climate Organisation Party
 - d. Cooperation on Policies
2. COP has been an annual conference since 1992 except for one year. Which year was it not held?
 - a. 1999
 - b. 2021
 - c. 2020
 - d. 2001
3. In which South American country was the first COP meeting (known as the Earth Summit) held?
 - a. Brazil
 - b. Argentina
 - c. Chile
 - d. Colombia
4. The hottest European temperature so far (48.8°C) was recorded in 2021 in which country?
 - a. Spain
 - b. Greece
 - c. Germany
 - d. Italy
5. Which environmentalist group was founded in Canada in 1971?
 - a. Earthwatch
 - b. Greenpeace
 - c. Just Stop Oil
 - d. A Rocha
6. Climate activist, Greta Thunberg was born in which European country?
 - a. Sweden
 - b. Norway
 - c. Denmark
 - d. Germany



2 Pre-listening task: vocabulary focus

Match words with the correct definitions.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. net <u>zero</u> (n) | a. stop using something gradually in stages over a period of time |
| 2. <u>explicit</u> (adj.) | b. describe somebody/something as being very good or special, especially in newspapers, etc. |
| 3. <u>fierce</u> (adj.) | c. showing strong feelings or a lot of activity, often in a way that is violent |
| 4. phase out (phr. v) | d. clear and easy to understand, so that you have no doubt about what is meant |
| 5. hail (v) | e. stop something from having any effect |
| 6. <u>negate</u> (v) | f. the state in which the harmful gases produced by a country, company, etc. have no impact on the climate because they have been balanced by actions that protect the environment |

3 Listening for specific information



Listen to the news report about COP28. Match the numbers and dates with the things they relate to.

- _____ when the deal aims to achieve net zero by
- _____ when the Paris climate agreement took place
- _____ the number of weeks that the negotiations lasted for
- _____ the number of countries that form the Alliance of Small Island States
- _____ the percentage of cuts in emissions the deal states will be necessary by 2030

Now, look at the quotes from the recording. What do you think the underlined words mean in each sentence? Which two words could be synonyms for the adjective "fair"? In which profession would you be most likely to come across "loopholes"? Discuss in pairs.

- Countries were asked to contribute to a global plan to transition away from fossil fuels as a source of energy in a "just, orderly and equitable" manner.
- There have been concerns that the agreement includes "a litany of loopholes" and that it fails vulnerable nations.



4 Listening for comprehension

Listen to the report again. Answer the questions true (T) or false (F).

1. The deal insists on an explicit commitment to phase out or reduce fossil fuels. _____
2. As part of the deal, countries were asked to contribute to a global plan to transition away from fossil fuels as a source of energy. _____
3. The COP28 deal is the first time that the need to transition away from fossil fuels has been officially recognised. _____
4. Next year's climate talks will take place in November 2024 in the United Arab Emirates. _____

5 Pre-reading task: vocabulary focus

Read the following sentences in Groups 1 and 2. Then match the words and phrases in bold with the correct definitions.

Group 1:

1. Certain diseases are regarded as an **existential (adj.)** threat, should they begin to spread quickly.
2. I wish I had more time to **ponder (v)** life.
3. Chris said the worst part was that he felt completely **impotent (adj.)** when the bank decided to take his house. (adj.)
4. One of the biggest problems with plastic is its **permanence (n)**.
5. The judge ruled that, because of police **coercion (n)**, the trial could not be completed.
6. The **fragility (n)** of our bodies becomes evident as we grow older.
7. I had to remind my students that I'm **fallible (adj.)** – teachers can make mistakes too!
8. In the world of business, it is important to be **proactive (adj.)** rather than waiting for problems to occur.
9. I was horrified to discover that my editor had **excised (v)** most of the critical parts of my article.
 - a. remove something completely
 - b. connected with human existence
 - c. able to make mistakes or be wrong
 - d. having no power to change things or to influence a situation
 - e. the action of making somebody do something that they do not want to do, using force or threatening to use force
 - f. controlling a situation by making things happen rather than waiting for things to happen and then reacting to them
 - g. think about something carefully for a period of time
 - h. the fact of being weak and uncertain; the fact of being easy to destroy or harm
 - i. the state of lasting for a long time or for all time in the future

**Group 2:**

1. The government has been accused of being **reactive (adj.)** instead of following its own plan.
 2. If you pay your lawyer by the hour, he or she may have a **vested interest (n.)** in slowing the legal process down.
 3. I had an interview to work on a yacht owned by a famous **tycoon (n)** last week.
 4. The storm **wrought (v)** chaos across the country.
 5. I asked Amy to **intervene (v)** in the argument between John and Lisa, as she's a mutual friend.
 6. In order to **stay afloat (phrase)**, my company had to close branches in several cities.
 7. An economic disaster is **unfurling (v)** around the world.
 8. It feels like my kids are **holding me hostage (phrase)** by refusing to do their homework unless I get them a puppy.
 9. Our team became **complacent (adj.)** after we scored, and allowed the opposition to find a way back into the game.
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- a. reacting to events or situations rather than acting first to change or prevent something
 - b. a personal reason for wanting something to happen, especially because you get some advantage from it
 - c. keep somebody/a group of people as a prisoner, often demanding money in return for their release
 - d. too satisfied with yourself or with a situation, so that you do not feel that any change is necessary
 - e. (only in past tense) caused something to happen, especially a change
 - f. (of a business, etc.) having enough money to pay debts; being able to survive
 - g. become involved in a situation in order to improve or help it
 - h. a person who is successful in business or industry and has become rich and powerful
 - i. spread out, unfold, or open something





6 Reading for gist

You are going to read a text about our failure to address climate change (pages five and six). Scan the text quickly and match the headings with the correct paragraphs. One heading cannot be matched to any of the paragraphs in the text.

- A) A sense of powerlessness
- B) Our choice
- C) A collective failure
- D) Punishing the responsible for climate change
- E) Weak leaders and a flawed system
- F) A dependence on dirty energy

Compliance or defiance?

What can we do if our governments refuse to take action on climate change?

I. _____¹

We are being held hostage. Despite decades of scientific evidence illustrating the depths of the climate crisis, we have failed to tackle global warming. The failure is, for the most part, due to the fossil fuel industries that have a vested interest in our continuing reliance on coal, gas and petrol. Describing the current state of our world to a visitor from another planet would be difficult. The visitor might wonder why we are allowing a few rich individuals to endanger the future of our species, our planet and all living things we share our home with. The visitor might question our desire to truly save the world that nurtures us and might ponder whether we have become too complacent and compliant in our own destruction through silence and inaction.

II. _____²

What can we do? It's a question that many of us have been asking ourselves in the wake of repeated existential threats: the ghost of nuclear war, the horrors of the pandemic, the rise of artificial intelligence and, of course, global warming. As an individual, it's easy to feel impotent. Events can seem to develop of their own accord, with human beings reduced to the level of observers or passengers, unable to intervene or prevent disaster from unfurling. We have, we tell ourselves, set up systems that allow our voices to be heard on the world stage: elected officials who speak on our behalf, who attend climate discussions or war meetings and who have our best interests at heart.

III. _____³

These individuals, these politicians, prime ministers and presidents remain fallible human beings, vulnerable to manipulation, corruption and coercion. They are, after all, working within a system in which profits are valued above all. Money rules the world, rather than common sense or any collective ideal. If an oil company loses enough money to render it profitless, its leaders will do anything in order to stay afloat. The fossil fuel industry has been acutely aware of its own fragility since the mid-twentieth century and does not intend to vanish without a fight. From the perspective of the oil tycoons and the many corporations that rely on the continuance of traditional sources of energy, it is a matter of survival.



IV. _____ 4

Our capitalist world was built on oil and coal. Since the Industrial Revolution, we have been dependent on fossil fuels, to power our homes, our vehicles, our offices and lifestyles. Excising them from our lives seems a feat beyond us. How do we preserve our creature comforts? How do we get to work, unwind after a long day, keep warm or cool or heat our food? There are, of course, much-publicised alternatives; renewable sources such as wind, solar and hydro power. Changing our grids to rely on clean energy would require a monumental effort and a colossal amount of money. Why would we spend excessive amounts on switching to potentially less efficient means of energy generation when we have a working system?

V. _____ 5

We are, perhaps, guilty of believing in our own permanence – and that of our creations. The Industrial Age began approximately two hundred and fifty years ago. Modern capitalism has been with us for a little over a hundred years and computers for a handful of decades. Yet – for many – a life without the internet would be impossible to imagine. Our world has changed extraordinarily quickly, and we have been forced to adapt, time and time again. Adaptation is one of humanity's greatest strengths. We can, and must, adapt to the changes we have wrought upon our home. This time, however, if we want to survive, we will have to be proactive rather than reactive. We have the facts in front of us. More than half of the world's population has internet access at their fingertips. All of our knowledge, our scientific advances, our failures and our successes are readily available. We know what the world will look like in the future if we fail to change our ways if we fail to hold our leaders to account, and, if we fail to replace individuals and systems that directly threaten our survival. Our future remains in our hands. Will we choose defiance or compliance?

Sources: BBC, The New York Times, The Guardian

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Reading comprehension

Read the article again. Complete the sentences with between ONE to THREE words from the article.

1. In a time when we are facing a variety of existential threats, it's _____ a sense of impotence.
2. Presidents, prime ministers and other powerful individuals are no less fallible than the rest of us, remaining _____ to manipulation, corruption and coercion.
3. The fossil fuel industry has no intention of disappearing _____.
4. Despite the availability of renewable options, switching to _____ rather than traditional sources of power would require vast amounts of money.
5. With access to all of human knowledge at our _____, we know what will happen if we fail to make the necessary changes.



8 Talking point

In pairs or small groups, discuss the following questions.

1. Do you think the COP28 summit was a success? Why/why not?
2. Why do you think the COP28 summit was held in the United Arab Emirates? Was this a good choice of venue for the event?
3. Should wealthy nations do more to help poorer countries that are likely to feel the effects of global warming first, such as island nations?
4. Why do you think oil industry representatives are allowed to influence discussions on climate change? How can we prevent this from happening in the future?
5. Which lifestyle changes would you be willing to make in order to help tackle climate change?
6. How can political leaders with an interest in reversing progress on climate change be prevented from doing so?

9 Optional extension

Task A: Write an opinion essay on ONE of the topics below. Your essay should agree with or disagree with the statement and should be between 260 – 320 words.

Topic 1

COP28 represents a success. Although we need to transition away from fossil fuels, this should be gradual rather than sudden.

Topic 2

We need to consider alternative approaches to tackling climate change, as the COP28 summit has shown that discussions can never lead to real change.



Topic 3

As the most advanced species on the planet, with a deep understanding of ecosystems and biodiversity, it is our duty to protect all other forms of life.

Task B: Look at the box below and have a discussion.

Split into two groups. Each group is attending a summit on climate change.

- **Group A** represents environmentalists and wants to phase out fossil fuels completely.
- **Group B** represents the oil industry and wants to keep fossil fuels in use for as long as possible.

Each group should think of seven key points for their argument, and then present their reasons to the class. After both groups have presented their arguments, the class should vote on the best course of action.

- Should the climate summit favour one side, or should a compromise be reached?

