The Guardian

one stop english

New demand for TV presenters to include climate in forecasts

Level: Advanced

1 Warmer

Choose the correct answers.

1. The highest temperature ever recorded on Earth is **56.7** / **65.7** degrees Celsius.
2. It was recorded in **Saudi Arabia** / **California**.
3. The coldest temperature ever recorded on Earth is **-79.2** / **-89.2** degrees Celsius.
4. It was recorded in **Antarctica** / **Canada**.
5. The sunniest place on Earth is in **Australia** / **the USA**.
6. The wettest place on Earth is in **India** / **Brazil**.

2 Key words

Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text.

breakthrough	bulletin	compile	ethereal	game-changer
heatwave	magnitude	meteorology	phenomenal	polarized

1. A _____ is a continuous period of very hot weather, especially when this is unusual.
2. If people have _____ opinions, they have opposing views about a particular subject.
3. A _____ is a short news broadcast.
4. When people _____ a report, they bring together information from a number of different places.
5. _____ is the scientific study of weather.
6. A _____ is something that causes a major change in the way people do something or think about something.
7. The _____ of a natural event such as an earthquake or a weather event such as a hurricane is its size or strength.
8. A _____ is a discovery or achievement that comes after a lot of hard work.
9. If something is described as _____, it is extremely impressive or surprising.
10. If something is described as _____, it does not seem to be part of the real world.

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The ABC's Graham Creed says new climate-change research could 'fill a big gap' in public understanding

Graham Readfearn

4 December, 2020

1 For the past 20 years, Graham Creed has been on television letting Australians know if it's going to be hot, cold, wet or dry. But since 2018, usually at the end of months with heatwaves and extreme temperatures, Creed has been adding extra information to his weather segments. He's started talking about climate change. "I'll look at what's been happening particularly with temperature and the general trends in a warming climate," says Creed.

2 Given the often polarized nature of Australia's national conversation on climate change, you might think introducing climate change into weather bulletins would see a flood of negative feedback. "I'm surprised by how little there's been," says Creed, who says some people tell him on social media that it's "about time" they heard about the changing climate from a weather presenter.

3 Creed is one of 17 Australian weather presenters using data and graphics on climate compiled by the Climate Communication Research Hub at Monash University. Associate Prof David Holmes, the hub's director, says an overwhelming majority of Australians are very concerned about climate change. "But when you examine people's understanding of what climate change is, we find people's knowledge doesn't match their concern."

4 When it comes to who people trust on climate change, he says research has found that climate scientists are highest on the list, followed by farmers and firefighters. Fourth are weather presenters. "They have a magical combination," says Holmes. "They are trusted, but they're also skilled communicators and they have access to large audiences."

5 So far, the information being given to weather presenters comes from the Bureau of Meteorology's public data and has focused on rising temperature trends over the past 50 years. Australia has warmed by 1.4C since reliable records started in 1910. The hottest year on record was 2019, and the number of days of extreme heat has risen sharply. The trends and their chief cause – rising levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere – were laid out in a Bureau of Meteorology report.

6 New research from the Bureau of Meteorology could give weather presenters such as Creed the ability to point to forecasted hot months or seasons and give the audience information about how human-caused climate change has influenced what they're about to experience. Holmes and Creed say it could be a game-changer in how the public understands the effects of climate change on their lives.

7 In a new article, scientists from the bureau published details of a new method that has the ability to calculate the influence of climate change on some extreme weather events before they've even happened. The article explained this was possible by looking at two sets of results from a model used to forecast coming months and seasons. One model is allowed to run starting with real-world conditions – including the extra CO_2 that is in the atmosphere because of human activity. Another model runs parallel but starts with conditions as they would have been without that human influence. Scientists then compare the two results.

8 "From that comparison, you can see the influence of climate change on the magnitude of the event," says Monash University climate scientist Prof Julie Arblaster, a co-author on the paper. "If you see a forecast that's heading for a warm month, you could run the forecast before it even happens and get that information before the event is happening. Climate change and natural variability are always happening together, but we can ask if climate change made an event more likely or warmer than it would have been otherwise."

9 In the research, the approach was used to look at the daily temperature extremes in a heatwave in Australia in October, 2015, which remains that hottest October on record for the country. According to the research, climate change was directly responsible for about half of the above average heat that month – or about 0.9C.

10 Both Creed and Holmes say the bureau's work could represent a major breakthrough in the ability to communicate the effects of climate change to the general public. Holmes says: "What this is doing is saying we can forecast

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Level: Advanced

how much of an upcoming event was due to greenhouse gases."

11 So the potential to be able to refer to reliable information about the contribution of climate change to events as they happen "fills a big gap." "It's phenomenal. The missing link has been us being able to say that this coming heatwave will be a degree warmer because of climate change."

12 Has Creed seen the climate change since he started presenting the weather 20 years ago? "Yes, the weather is changing," he says. "Climate change used to be this big ethereal thing that was hard to understand. But we are now looking at the weather patterns changing. I think I should be talking about it."

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3 Comprehension check

Choose the best answers according to the text.

1. How have people reacted to Graham Creed's inclusion of climate-change information in his weather bulletins?
   a. There has been a flood of negative criticism.
   b. Some people have reacted negatively but not many.
   c. There has been no negative feedback at all.

2. Which of these best sums up most Australians' reaction to climate change?
   a. They are not particularly worried about it.
   b. They don't understand it at all so they are not worried about it.
   c. They are worried about it but don't really understand it.

3. According to research, which group of people are most trusted on climate change?
   a. weather presenters
   b. farmers
   c. climate scientists

4. When did reliable meteorological records start in Australia?
   a. October, 2015
   b. 1910
   c. fifty years ago

5. How does the new method of calculating the influence of climate change work?
   a. It compares two sets of results, one with CO^2 from human activity and one without.
   b. It calculates the amount of CO^2 in the atmosphere each month.
   c. It predicts which months of the year will be the warmest.

6. In what sense is the latest research a breakthrough?
   a. It will be able to predict heatwaves many months in advance.
   b. It will give the public reliable information about the influence of climate change on weather events.
   c. It will show changing weather patterns.

4 Using key language

a. Match the words in the left-hand column with those in the right-hand column.

1.	climate	a. gases
2.	overwhelming	b. extremes
3.	skilled	c. majority
4.	greenhouse	d. communicator
5.	temperature	e. change

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b. Now answer the questions using the two-word expressions from task a.

1. What are the effects of _____ that you can see in your country?
2. Do the _____ of people in your country support action on climate change?
3. Can you think of someone who is a _____? Why are they so good?
4. What are _____ and how are they produced?
5. What are some examples of _____ in your country?

5 Discussion

Discuss these statements.

- There is no such thing as man-made climate change. It's completely natural for the climate to change over time.
- We have to change the way we live and we should start by banning the use of fossil fuels.
- By the middle of the next century, large parts of the world will be uninhabitable.

6 In your own words

2020 was a difficult year for Australia, with terrible bushfires affecting large parts of the country. Find out more about the fires online, including the following:

- When and where did the fires start?
- Which parts of Australia were affected?
- How many hectares of forest were destroyed?
- What was the effect on wildlife?
- How many homes were destroyed?
- How many people died?

Now use this information to write a short report of up to 250 words.