

## New demand for TV presenters to include climate in forecasts

Level: Intermediate

### 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. The paragraph numbers are given to help you.

breakthrough  
magnitude

flood  
meteorology

forecast  
phenomenal

game-changer  
skilled

heatwave  
variations

1. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a continuous period of very hot weather, especially when this is unusual. (para 1)
2. A weather \_\_\_\_\_ is when a presenter tells you what the weather is going to be like. (para 1)
3. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a large number of people or things that arrive somewhere at the same time. (para 2)
4. A \_\_\_\_\_ person has the ability to do something well, usually as a result of experience and training. (para 3)
5. \_\_\_\_\_ is the scientific study of weather. (para 4)
6. A \_\_\_\_\_ is something that causes a very big change in the way people do something or think about something. (para 5)
7. The \_\_\_\_\_ of an earthquake or a weather event such as a hurricane is its size or strength. (para 7)
8. \_\_\_\_\_ are differences in amount, level etc. (para 7)
9. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a discovery or achievement that comes after a lot of hard work. (para 8)
10. If something is \_\_\_\_\_, it is extremely impressive or surprising. (para 8)

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**Graham Readfearn**

**4 December, 2020**

- 1 For the past 20 years, Graham Creed has been on television telling Australians 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 forecasts. He has started talking about climate change.
- 2 Australians have very different opinions about climate change, so you might think introducing climate change into weather forecasts would cause a flood of negative feedback. But Creed says, "I'm surprised by how little negative feedback there has been."
- 3 Creed uses information on climate from the climate research centre at Monash University. David Holmes, the centre's director, says most Australians are very worried about climate change but don't really understand it. He says people trust climate scientists most on climate change, 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 speak to large audiences."
- 4 The information given to weather presenters comes from the Bureau of Meteorology and focuses on rising temperatures over the past 50 years. Australia has warmed by 1.4C since 1910. The hottest year on record was 2019, and the number of days of extreme heat has risen sharply. The changes and their main cause – rising levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere – were presented in a Bureau of Meteorology report.
- 5 Using new research from the Bureau of Meteorology, weather presenters such as Creed could forecast hot months or seasons. And they could give the audience information about how climate change has influenced the weather they are 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.
- 6 Recently, scientists from the bureau published details of a new method. This method can calculate the influence of climate change on some extreme-weather events before they've even happened. This is possible by looking at two sets of results from a model used to forecast future months and seasons. One model starts with real-world conditions – including the extra CO<sup>2</sup> that is in the atmosphere because of human activity. The other model starts with conditions as they would be without that human activity. Scientists then compare the two results.
- 7 "From that comparison, you can see the influence of climate change on the magnitude of the event," says Monash University climate scientist Professor Julie Arblaster. "If you see a forecast 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 variations always happen together, but we can ask if climate change made an event more likely or warmer than it would have been."
- 8 Both Creed and Holmes say the bureau's work could be a breakthrough that allows them to communicate the effects of climate change to the general public. Holmes says: "We will be able to forecast how much of a weather event is due to greenhouse gases. It's phenomenal. We can now say, for example, 'This heatwave will be a degree warmer because of climate change.'"
- 9 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 hard to understand. But we can see the weather patterns changing. I think I should be talking about it."

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### 3 Comprehension check

Are these statements true (T) or false (F) according to the text? Correct the false statements.

1. Graham Creed has included information about climate change in his weather forecasts for the past 20 years.
2. There has been a lot of negative feedback since he started talking about climate change.
3. According to David Holmes, most Australians are worried about climate change but don't really understand what it is.
4. People trust weather presenters most on climate change.
5. Australia is 1.4 degrees Celsius warmer today than it was in 1910.
6. There is a new method that can calculate the influence of climate change on extreme weather before it happens.
7. Climate change and natural variations in weather never happen together.
8. Graham Creed believes that weather patterns are changing.

### 4 Using key language

Complete the questions with the correct form of the word in brackets at the end of each question. Then answer the questions.

1. If someone is a good \_\_\_\_\_, what kind of things can they do well? [COMMUNICATE]
2. What kind of human \_\_\_\_\_ produce extra CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere? [ACTIVE]
3. Can you think of a film or book that could be described as \_\_\_\_\_? [MAGIC]
4. What \_\_\_\_\_ in the weather have you noticed during the last few years? [VARY]
5. Who is the most famous weather or news \_\_\_\_\_ in your country? [PRESENT]
6. In your opinion, what has been the most \_\_\_\_\_ breakthrough in science in the last hundred years? [PHENOMENON]

### 5 Discussion

Answer the questions. Give reasons for your answers.

- Is the weather around the world getting more extreme?
- Would you like to see climate-change information in weather forecasts?
- How could we limit the effect of human activities on the climate?

### 6 In your own words

Find information online about extreme weather around the world. Find at least three extreme-weather events that caused major problems in different parts of the world. Write a short summary of what you find.