

Climate Change

- suggestions for a theme at English B-level

A selection of articles/film/song / text that are all suitable for discussions about ethics and values.

Genre	Title/author	Comment/description
film	<p style="text-align: center;">The Age of Stupid (2009) See website: www.ageofstupid.net</p>	<p>Running time: 89 min. Can be bought at e.g. www.play.com</p>
article	<p style="text-align: center;">Los Angeles Times: Daniel Gilbert: <i>If only gay sex caused global warming</i> The article can be found at: http://www.danielgilbert.com</p>	<p>4, 0 ns. Daniel Gilbert, professor of psychology at Harvard, claims there are four reasons why we do nothing to prevent global warming. An example: "The second reason why global warming doesn't put our brains on orange alert is that it doesn't violate our moral sensibilities". Easily read.</p>
article	<p style="text-align: center;">the Observer (07/03/10) <i>How food and water are driving a 21st-century land grab</i> (Can be found at www.guardian.co.uk)</p>	<p>9, 3 ns. An Observer investigation has revealed a surprising (and scary) new kind of exploitation in Africa: "But Ethiopia is only one of 20 or more African countries where land is being bought or leased for intensive agriculture on an immense scale in what may be the greatest change of ownership since the colonial era".</p>

<p>article</p>	<p>economist.com (23/10/09): <i>Motoring ahead</i> (Can be found at www.economist.com)</p>	<p>0, 5 ns. About more cars now being sold in China than the US. <i>Discussion:</i> Can/should we prevent people in other parts of the world from achieving our own level of "material comfort" when we (and they?) know it will speed up global warming and climate changes?</p>
<p>song text + YouTube video</p>	<p>Grainger/Wetzel: Oceans Rising (2007) (Can be found at www.youtube.com + (text) Google)</p>	<p>1, 0 ns. A warning! "It will take all our courage, faith and time to redefine the American Dream" [i.e. change of values needed]</p>
<p>article</p>	<p>The Guardian (07/09/08) <i>Is our taste for Sunday roast killing the planet?</i> (Can be found at www.guardian.co.uk)</p>	<p>6, 6 ns. Pros and cons: should the world go on producing meat? One argument against, e.g.: "The average meat eater in the US produces about 1.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide more than a vegetarian every year". A fairly difficult article, which can, however, easily be abbreviated.</p>
<p>article</p>	<p>The Guardian (31/12/09) <i>Can I give up buying clothes for a year?</i> (Can be found at www.guardian.co.uk)</p>	<p>4, 4 ns. A Guardian journalist decides to challenge himself by not buying any clothes for a year. But this is perhaps not such an easy thing to do : "There is something hard-wired within us that makes us desire things even when we don't need them. The idea we have got to consume less is incompatible with the culture of the moment."</p>

short story	<p style="text-align: center;">Helen Simpson: <i>In-Flight Entertainment</i> (published in <i>Granta</i> no. 100 - 2007 [Can be bought at www.granta.com] and as the title story of a <i>Simpson short story anthology</i>)</p>	<p>16, 5 ns. An easily read short story in which one of the main characters, representing most of us, exhibits his lack of "climate change awareness".</p>
article	<p style="text-align: center;">Esquire (21/04/09) Bjørn Lomborg: <i>The Future of the World</i> (Can be found at www.esquire.com)</p>	<p>2, 6 ns. A short article by Bjørn Lomborg (written in English), claiming that we must tackle malnutrition before we worry about e.g. CO2 emissions. As usual Lomborg offers some provocative arguments - like claiming that "In the rich world, the environmental situation has improved dramatically". The way Lomborg argues his point is worth debating.</p>
article	<p style="text-align: center;">the Guardian (16/08/10):Stefan Rahmstorf: <i>Will this summer of extremes be a wake-up call?</i> (Can be found at www.guardian.co.uk)</p>	<p>4, 0 ns. A short article by S. Rahmstorf, a professor at Potsdam University, claiming that we are insane if we do not act immediately. One example: "We must face the facts: our emissions of greenhouse gases probably are at least partly to blame for this summer of extremes. Clinging to the hope that it is all chance, and all natural, seems naïve".</p>
article	<p style="text-align: center;">Supplementary material: the Guardian (21/09/08):<i>Isle of plenty</i> (Can be found at www.guardian.co.uk)</p>	<p>A long article about Samsø as an admirable example of a place reducing its CO2 emissions drastically.</p>