

www.**Breaking News English**.com  
Ready-to-use ESL/EFL Lessons by Sean Banville

**"1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS"**

**The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/book.html>

## Arctic ice may disappear in a decade

[http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0910/091016-arctic\\_ice.html.html](http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0910/091016-arctic_ice.html.html)

### Contents

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading / Listening	7
Student Survey	8
Discussion	9
Language Work	10
Writing	11
Homework	12
Answers	13

# THE ARTICLE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic\\_ice.html.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic_ice.html.html)

A new report on global warming predicts the frozen Arctic Ocean will soon be like a normal sea in the summers. There are shocking changes happening in the polar environment and its fragile eco-systems. For millions of years, the sea around the North Pole has been frozen all year round. Recent research from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Catlin Atlantic Survey show things are changing fast. They predict that within a decade, the Arctic will be largely ice-free in the summer. They base their prediction on the rate at which the sea ice is currently thinning. The lead researcher, Professor Peter Wadhams, said: "The area is now more likely to become open water each summer, bringing forward the potential date when the summer sea ice will be completely gone."

An ice-free Arctic will have consequences for the whole world's weather patterns. The Arctic sea ice is a key part of the Earth's climate system. Experts call it Earth's "refrigerator". They said that as it disappears, the world will become a lot warmer. Scientists are still unclear exactly what changes there will be to our weather. Forecasters predict an increase in all kinds of disasters and extreme weather events. These include massive flooding, much more dangerous hurricanes and the spread of the world's deserts. These new findings provide an urgent call for world leaders to act. The timing of the WWF report is a reminder to those attending the UN climate summit in Copenhagen in December. Rich countries will face pressure to agree to reduce their carbon emissions by 40 per cent by 2020.

# WARM-UPS

**1. NORTH POLE:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about the North Pole. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*global warming / the Arctic Ocean / shocking changes / predictions / ice / summers / consequences / climate / refrigerators / flooding / world leaders / reminders / 2020*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. ENVIRONMENT:** How will it be different in 100 years? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share your ideas. Change and share again.

	Better / worse?	How?	What can we do?
The Arctic			
Amazon rainforests			
Tokyo			
The Mediterranean Sea			
The River Nile			
My town			

**4. THE FUTURE:** Students A **strongly** believe our environment will survive; Students B **strongly** believe we will totally destroy our environment. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. DISASTERS:** Rank these disasters. The scariest is at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- earthquake
- flood
- hurricane / typhoon
- twister / tornado
- tsunami
- avalanche
- bushfire
- drought

**6. ICE:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'ice'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic\\_ice.html.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic_ice.html.html)

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. Scientists say all the Arctic ice will all be gone within ten years.    | T / F |
| b. Parts of the Arctic Ocean have been frozen for millions of years.       | T / F |
| c. There will be free ice from the Arctic for everyone in the summer.      | T / F |
| d. Scientists based their predictions on how fast the ice is disappearing. | T / F |
| e. The disappearing Arctic ice will have little effect on our weather.     | T / F |
| f. Scientists are confident they know how our weather will change.         | T / F |
| g. Experts believe there'll be more floods and larger deserts.             | T / F |
| h. All countries face pressure to cut carbon emissions by 40% by 2020.     | T / F |

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article.

- |                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. predicts     | a. inside    |
| 2. normal       | b. precisely |
| 3. fragile      | c. results   |
| 4. within       | d. usual     |
| 5. potential    | e. cut       |
| 6. consequences | f. forecasts |
| 7. key          | g. huge      |
| 8. exactly      | h. possible  |
| 9. massive      | i. delicate  |
| 10. reduce      | j. important |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. A new report                   | a. ice-free in the summer   |
| 2. shocking changes happening     | b. world leaders to act     |
| 3. fragile                        | c. world's weather patterns |
| 4. the Arctic will be largely     | d. become open water        |
| 5. The area is now more likely to | e. an increase              |
| 6. consequences for the whole     | f. in the polar environment |
| 7. a key part of                  | g. on global warming        |
| 8. Forecasters predict            | h. by 40 per cent           |
| 9. an urgent call for             | i. eco-systems              |
| 10. reduce their carbon emissions | j. the Earth's climate      |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic\\_ice.html.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic_ice.html.html)

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

A new report on global warming \_\_\_\_\_ the frozen Arctic Ocean will soon be like a normal sea in the summers. There are \_\_\_\_\_ changes happening in the polar environment and its fragile eco-\_\_\_\_\_. For millions of years, the sea around the North Pole has been frozen all year \_\_\_\_\_. Recent research from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Catlin Atlantic Survey show things are changing fast. They predict that \_\_\_\_\_ a decade, the Arctic will be \_\_\_\_\_ ice-free in the summer. They base their prediction on the rate at which the sea ice is currently \_\_\_\_\_. The lead researcher, Professor Peter Wadhams, said: "The area is now more likely to become open water each summer, bringing \_\_\_\_\_ the potential date when the summer sea ice will be completely gone."

*largely*  
*round*  
*shocking*  
*forward*  
*thinning*  
*predicts*  
*within*  
*systems*

An ice-free Arctic will have consequences for the \_\_\_\_\_ world's weather patterns. The Arctic sea ice is a \_\_\_\_\_ part of the Earth's climate system. Experts call it Earth's "refrigerator". They said that as it \_\_\_\_\_, the world will become a lot warmer. Scientists are still unclear \_\_\_\_\_ what changes there will be to our weather. Forecasters predict an increase in all kinds of disasters and extreme weather events. These \_\_\_\_\_ massive flooding, much more dangerous hurricanes and the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world's deserts. These new findings provide an \_\_\_\_\_ call for world leaders to act. The timing of the WWF report is a reminder to those attending the UN climate summit in Copenhagen in December. Rich countries will \_\_\_\_\_ pressure to agree to reduce their carbon emissions by 40 per cent by 2020.

*spread*  
*key*  
*face*  
*exactly*  
*whole*  
*urgent*  
*disappears*  
*include*

## **LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps**

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic\\_ice.html.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic_ice.html.html)

A new report on global warming predicts the frozen Arctic Ocean will soon be like a normal sea in the summers. There are shocking changes happening in the polar environment and its fragile eco-systems. For millions of years, the sea around the North Pole has been frozen all year round. Recent research from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Catlin Atlantic Survey show things are changing fast. They predict that within a decade, the Arctic will be largely ice-free in the summer. They base their prediction on the rate at which the sea ice is currently thinning. The lead researcher, Professor Peter Wadhams, said: "The area is now more likely to become open water each summer, bringing forward the potential date when the summer sea ice will be completely gone."

An ice-free Arctic will have consequences for the whole world's weather patterns. The Arctic sea ice is a key part of the Earth's climate system. Experts call it Earth's "refrigerator". They said that as it disappears, the world will become a lot warmer. Scientists are still unclear exactly what changes there will be to our weather. Forecasters predict an increase in all kinds of disasters and extreme weather events. These include massive flooding, much more dangerous hurricanes and the spread of the world's deserts. These new findings provide an urgent call for world leaders to act. The timing of the WWF report is a reminder to those attending the UN climate summit in Copenhagen in December. Rich countries will face pressure to agree to reduce their carbon emissions by 40 per cent by 2020.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic\\_ice.html.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic_ice.html.html)

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'arctic' and 'ice'.

<b>arctic</b>	<b>ice</b>
---------------	------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• normal</li><li>• fragile</li><li>• round</li><li>• within</li><li>• base</li><li>• date</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• whole</li><li>• key</li><li>• increase</li><li>• spread</li><li>• call</li><li>• face</li></ul>
---	---

# STUDENT NORTH POLE SURVEY

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic\\_ice.html.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic_ice.html.html)

Write five GOOD questions about the North Pole in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.  
When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



# **NORTH POLE DISCUSSION**

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the term 'global warming'?
- c) How worried are you about the info in this article?
- d) How much of a greenie are you?
- e) What will the consequences be of the Arctic ice disappearing in the summers?
- f) What shocking changes can you see in our environment?
- g) Who or what is causing global warming?
- h) Why is the ice at the North and South Pole important?
- i) What kind of eco-systems are there in the Arctic?
- j) Can you think of any benefits to the Arctic Ocean becoming open sea?

*Arctic ice may disappear in a decade – 16th October, 2009*  
More free lessons at [www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com)

---

# **NORTH POLE DISCUSSION**

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Have you noticed changes in your weather?
- c) How is the Arctic a key part of the Earth's climate system?
- d) What will happen to the Earth if it becomes warmer?
- e) Would you be affected if weather events became more severe?
- f) What actions do you think world leaders will / need to take?
- g) What would you say to the leaders of the biggest polluters?
- h) Do you think we will ever reach the point of no return?
- i) What three things will you do today to help the environment?
- j) What questions would you like to ask your nation's leader about the environment?

# LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From [http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic\\_ice.html.html](http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0910/091016-arctic_ice.html.html)

A new report on global warming (1) \_\_\_\_ the frozen Arctic Ocean will soon be like a normal sea in the summers. There are (2) \_\_\_\_ changes happening in the polar environment and its fragile eco-systems. For millions of years, the sea around the North Pole has been frozen (3) \_\_\_\_ year round. Recent research from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Catlin Atlantic Survey show things are changing fast. They predict that within a decade, the Arctic will be (4) \_\_\_\_ ice-free in the summer. They base their prediction on the rate at which the sea ice is (5) \_\_\_\_ thinning. The lead researcher, Professor Peter Wadhams, said: "The area is now more likely to become open water each summer, bringing forward the potential date when the summer sea ice will be completely (6) \_\_\_\_."

An ice-free Arctic will have consequences for the (7) \_\_\_\_ world's weather patterns. The Arctic sea ice is a key part of the Earth's climate system. Experts call it Earth's "refrigerator". They said that (8) \_\_\_\_ it disappears, the world will become a lot warmer. Scientists are still unclear exactly what changes there will (9) \_\_\_\_ to our weather. Forecasters predict an increase in all kinds of disasters and extreme weather events. These include massive flooding, much more dangerous hurricanes and the (10) \_\_\_\_ of the world's deserts. These new findings provide an urgent call for world leaders to (11) \_\_\_\_\_. The timing of the WWF report is a reminder to those attending the UN climate summit in Copenhagen in December. Rich countries will (12) \_\_\_\_ pressure to agree to reduce their carbon emissions by 40 per cent by 2020.

## Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- |     |                 |                 |                 |              |
|-----|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1.  | (a) predictions | (b) predicting  | (c) prediction  | (d) predicts |
| 2.  | (a) shocked     | (b) shocker     | (c) shocking    | (d) shocks   |
| 3.  | (a) every       | (b) all         | (c) each        | (d) whole    |
| 4.  | (a) largely     | (b) largest     | (c) large       | (d) larger   |
| 5.  | (a) current     | (b) currents    | (c) currently   | (d) currant  |
| 6.  | (a) going       | (b) vanished    | (c) disappeared | (d) gone     |
| 7.  | (a) all         | (b) whole       | (c) every       | (d) both     |
| 8.  | (a) as          | (b) was         | (c) were        | (d) has      |
| 9.  | (a) being       | (b) be          | (c) become      | (d) been     |
| 10. | (a) spreads     | (b) spreadsheet | (c) spread      | (d) spreader |
| 11. | (a) act         | (b) acted       | (c) acting      | (d) action   |
| 12. | (a) head        | (b) skull       | (c) eye         | (d) face     |

Arctic ice may disappear in a decade – 16th October, 2009



# HOMework

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about the North Pole. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. NORTH POLE:** Make a poster about the North Pole. How is it important for wildlife and weather? Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. THE FUTURE:** Write a magazine article about the future of the Earth. Include imaginary interviews with someone who thinks we have no hope and someone who thinks the Earth will survive forever.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to your leader. Ask him/her three questions about global warming. Give him/her three ideas on what he/she should do to help save the Earth. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F      b. T      c. F      d. T      e. F      f. F      g. T      h. F

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. predicts     | a. forecasts |
| 2. normal       | b. usual     |
| 3. fragile      | c. delicate  |
| 4. within       | d. inside    |
| 5. potential    | e. possible  |
| 6. consequences | f. results   |
| 7. key          | g. important |
| 8. exactly      | h. precisely |
| 9. massive      | i. huge      |
| 10. reduce      | j. cut       |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. A new report                   | a. on global warming        |
| 2. shocking changes happening     | b. in the polar environment |
| 3. fragile                        | c. eco-systems              |
| 4. the Arctic will be largely     | d. ice-free in the summer   |
| 5. The area is now more likely to | e. become open water        |
| 6. consequences for the whole     | f. world's weather patterns |
| 7. a key part of                  | g. the Earth's climate      |
| 8. Forecasters predict            | h. an increase              |
| 9. an urgent call for             | i. world leaders to act     |
| 10. reduce their carbon emissions | j. by 40 per cent           |

## GAP FILL:

### Arctic ice may disappear in a decade

A new report on global warming **predicts** the frozen Arctic Ocean will soon be like a normal sea in the summers. There are **shocking** changes happening in the polar environment and its fragile **eco-systems**. For millions of years, the sea around the North Pole has been frozen all year **round**. Recent research from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Catlin Atlantic Survey show things are changing fast. They predict that **within** a decade, the Arctic will be **largely** ice-free in the summer. They base their prediction on the rate at which the sea ice is currently **thinning**. The lead researcher, Professor Peter Wadhams, said: "The area is now more likely to become open water each summer, bringing **forward** the potential date when the summer sea ice will be completely gone."

An ice-free Arctic will have consequences for the **whole** world's weather patterns. The Arctic sea ice is a **key** part of the Earth's climate system. Experts call it Earth's "refrigerator". They said that as it **disappears**, the world will become a lot warmer. Scientists are still unclear **exactly** what changes there will be to our weather. Forecasters predict an increase in all kinds of disasters and extreme weather events. These **include** massive flooding, much more dangerous hurricanes and the **spread** of the world's deserts. These new findings provide an **urgent** call for world leaders to act. The timing of the WWF report is a reminder to those attending the UN climate summit in Copenhagen in December. Rich countries will **face** pressure to agree to reduce their carbon emissions by 40 per cent by 2020.

## LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d    2 - c    3 - b    4 - a    5 - c    6 - d    7 - b    8 - a    9 - b    10 - c    11 - a    12 - d

Arctic ice may disappear in a decade – 16th October, 2009