

Scientists say end of world is 30 seconds closer

30th January, 2017



Scientists from the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (BPA) have said the end of the world has come a little closer in the past year. BPA scientists are experts on nuclear weapons,

disarmament, the changing energy landscape, climate change, and emerging technologies. It is responsible for setting the Doomsday Clock, which was started in 1947 to symbolize how close the world is to catastrophe. The BPA has just moved the clock's minute hand from three minutes to midnight to two-and-a-half minutes to midnight. This is the closest it has been to midnight (the Apocalypse) since 1953. Then, the minute hand was moved to two minutes to midnight after hydrogen bomb tests by the USA and Russia.

The BPA's latest report said President Donald Trump's recent statements on climate change, building nuclear weapons, immigration and terrorism have added to the global risk. The BPA warned that: "The probability of global catastrophe is very high, and the actions needed to reduce the risks of disaster must be taken very soon." BPA chief Dr Rachel Bronson called on people around the world to make sure their leaders do the right things for the world. She said: "I hope the debate [created] by the 2017 setting of the Clock raises the level of conversation, promotes calls to action, and helps citizens around the world hold their leaders responsible for delivering a safer and healthier planet."

Sources: bbc.com / washingtonpost.com / thebulletin.org

Writing

The world is safer today than ever before. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

scientists / closer / the past year / nuclear weapons / climate change / midnight / report / immigration / terrorism / catastrophe / do the right things / conversation

True / False

- Scientists say the end of the world has come much closer. T / F
- The scientists are experts on nuclear weapons and climate change. T / F
- The Doomsday Clock first started in 1974. T / F
- The article said Russia and the USA tested hydrogen bombs in 1952. T / F
- The BPA said Donald Trump's statements have made the world safer. T / F
- The BPA said the chances of global catastrophe are high. T / F
- The head of the BPA asked people to make sure their leaders act. T / F
- The BPA head hopes the resetting of the clock will mean a safer planet. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. close | a. most recent |
| 2. experts | b. disaster |
| 3. responsible for | c. following |
| 4. catastrophe | d. likelihood |
| 5. after | e. nearer |
| 6. latest | f. lower |
| 7. probability | g. discussion |
| 8. reduce | h. specialists |
| 9. debate | i. bringing |
| 10. delivering | j. in charge of |

Discussion – Student A

- What are the biggest dangers to the world?
- Will President Donald Trump make the world a safer place?
- What would you do for the world if you were President?
- What can we do to make terrorism go away?
- How can social media help bring change to the world?
- What do you want your country's leader to do for the world?
- What can ordinary people do to make the world safer?
- What questions would you like to ask the scientists?

BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

1. the end of the world has come
 2. BPA scientists are
 3. emerging
 4. This is the closest it has been
 5. hydrogen bomb
 6. climate
 7. The probability of global catastrophe
 8. make sure their leaders
 9. raises the level
 10. hold their leaders
- a. change
 - b. tests
 - c. responsible
 - d. experts
 - e. do the right things
 - f. a little closer
 - g. of conversation
 - h. technologies
 - i. to midnight
 - j. is very high

Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) How dangerous do you think the world is?
- c) What does the leader of your country do to make the world safer?
- d) What do you think of countries having nuclear weapons?
- e) How dangerous is climate change?
- f) Do you think the world is heading for catastrophe?
- g) How worried are you about the future?
- h) What advice do you have for President Donald Trump?

Spelling

1. BPA scientists are perstex
2. elcanru weapons
3. the changing eegnry landscape
4. how close the world is to ctehpaators
5. three minutes to mtginhdi
6. hondreyg bomb tests
7. Donald Trump's ecnret statements
8. cmtaiel change
9. reduce the risks of irestdas
10. raises the level of rnteovnasico
11. helps sinctzie around the world
12. a safer and healthier nptale

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. h	3. j	4. b	5. c
6. a	7. d	8. f	9. g	10. i

Role Play

Role A – World Leaders

You think world leaders are the biggest danger to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as dangerous. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): global warming, terrorism or war.

Role B – Global Warming

You think global warming is the biggest danger to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as dangerous. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): world leaders, terrorism or war.

Role C – Terrorism

You think terrorism is the biggest danger to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as dangerous. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): global warming, world leaders or war.

Role D – War

You think war is the biggest danger to the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as dangerous. Also, tell the others which is the least dangerous of these (and why): global warming, terrorism or world leaders.

Speaking – Dangers

Rank these with your partner. Put the biggest dangers to the world at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- world leaders
- global warming
- nuclear weapons
- racism
- terrorism
- overpopulation
- war
- viruses

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.