

## UNIT 11: READING

### TWO SIDES OF THE GLOBAL WARMING DEBATE

#### **A: Human action does not cause global warming**

Changes in global temperatures have occurred throughout the millions of years the Earth has existed. When the dinosaurs lived, the planet was three degrees warmer than it is now. During the ice age, the planet was seven degrees colder. Temperatures and weather conditions have been changing throughout the history of mankind.

The worried people who tell us that global warming is caused by humans, the ones who want us to believe that the end of the world is coming, say we need to change the way we live and find new types of fuel. What they don't talk about is the scale of human suffering that will result from these changes. The economic effect on developed countries will be huge, and the effects on the developing countries, who do not have enough money to make these changes, will be disastrous.

#### **B: Human action does cause global warming**

Scientists agree and all of the evidence shows that the temperature on our planet has increased more rapidly in the last 200 years than in all the rest of human history. There is little doubt that this is the direct effect of things that we humans have done – why else would the rise in temperature have happened? Ever since the 19th century, humans have been burning fossil fuels.

The worst thing we can do is nothing. If the human effect on global warming is true and we do nothing, the problems created will be too huge to think about. Millions if not billions of people will die, huge numbers of animal and plant species will be destroyed, and life as we know it on this planet will be completely changed. And if it's not true? Can we risk believing that it is not?

#### **1 According to writer A, are the following statements true or false?**

- |   |   |     |
|---|---|-----|
| 1 | The world was always colder than it is now.                         | T/F |
| 2 | People who believe in human effect are thinking positively.         | T/F |
| 3 | Making the changes to stop global warming will be bad for everyone. | T/F |

#### **2 According to writer B, are the following statements true or false?**

- |   |  |     |
|---|--|-----|
| 1 | Burning fossil fuels leads to an increase in global temperature.       | T/F |
| 2 | It is definitely true that there is a human effect on the environment. | T/F |
| 3 | Believing there is no human effect is dangerous.                       | T/F |

#### **3 Answer the following questions about the text.**

- 1 Are these two writers using scientific evidence or giving opinions?
- 2 How could they improve their arguments?
- 3 If you agree with one of these arguments, is it because of what they say, what you already know or both?

#### **4 Write a paragraph explaining which side you agree with and why, as well as what you think we can or should do about it.**