

POEMS FOR THE PLANET



We Don't Have to Give Up Hope

A National Poetry Day resource from Greenpeace

Key Stage 3-4

#NationalPoetryDay
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We Don't Have to Give Up Hope

from Greenpeace

We Don't Have to Give Up Hope

It isn't a done deal.
We don't have to give up hope.
We can change our own behaviour,
we can throw ourselves a rope.

The future doesn't have to be a
wasteland filled with sorrow.
Act today to change the way the world
will be tomorrow.

We've all to gain and much, much
more than everything to lose.
So look carefully in the mirror,
and tell yourself,
choose.

Copyright © by **Nicola Davies**,
from *This is How the Change Begins*, (Graffeg, 2021)



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Read and talk about the poem:

Read the poem out loud.

Read [Greenpeace's information sheet on the climate emergency](#). Focus particularly on the paragraph:

'Greenpeace calls this a climate emergency because it's a problem we need to solve now. We need to cut our global greenhouse gas emissions by 45% by 2030 to move us in the right direction. This may seem like a lot but don't worry, we have the answers. It's about working together to make change happen.'

What do you think is it about? How does it make you feel? What makes you feel this way?

How does this poem relate to this text? How do both the poem and the text from the information sheet offer hope and engage the reader in working towards change? Which language in the poem and on the Greenpeace resource is most effective in engaging your interest and provoking an emotional response in you as a reader?



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Reflect and discuss:

Consider the opening lines of the poem:

It isn't a done deal.
We don't have to give up hope

What is the impact of opening the poem in this way? How has the poet used language effectively to create this impact? Why do you think she chooses to start with these two ideas?

Now look at the closing lines of the poem:

We've all to gain and much, much
more than everything to lose.
So look carefully in the mirror,
and tell yourself,
choose.

What thoughts and feelings are you left with as you read these lines? What other words and phrases throughout the poem create effective imagery and/or encourage the reader to think about the impact of, or act on, the climate emergency? What ensures that the reader is left feeling hopeful, rather than hopeless?



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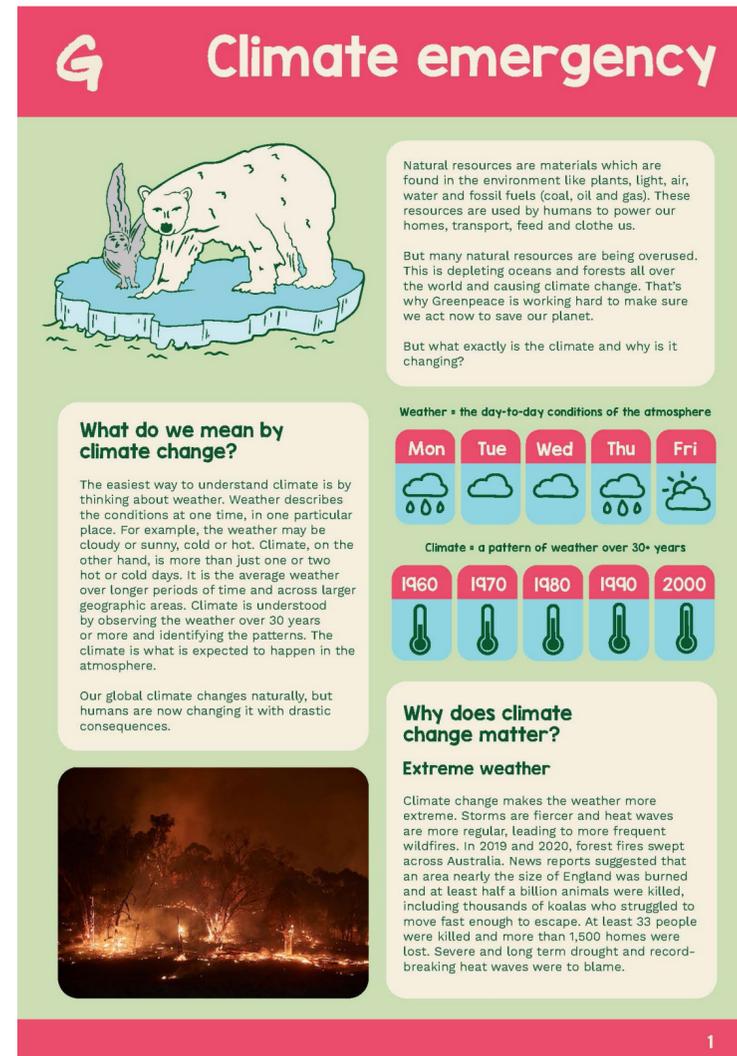
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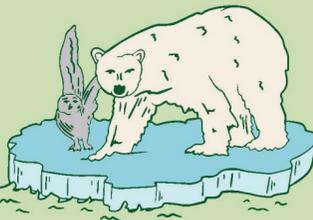
Reflect and discuss:

Consider what you already know about the climate crisis.

What do you think are the kinds of behaviours we need to change, as referenced by Nicola Davies in the poem? What actions could we take to change the way the world will be tomorrow?



G Climate emergency



Natural resources are materials which are found in the environment like plants, light, air, water and fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas). These resources are used by humans to power our homes, transport, feed and clothe us.

But many natural resources are being overused. This is depleting oceans and forests all over the world and causing climate change. That's why Greenpeace is working hard to make sure we act now to save our planet.

But what exactly is the climate and why is it changing?

What do we mean by climate change?

The easiest way to understand climate is by thinking about weather. Weather describes the conditions at one time, in one particular place. For example, the weather may be cloudy or sunny, cold or hot. Climate, on the other hand, is more than just one or two hot or cold days. It is the average weather over longer periods of time and across larger geographic areas. Climate is understood by observing the weather over 30 years or more and identifying the patterns. The climate is what is expected to happen in the atmosphere.

Our global climate changes naturally, but humans are now changing it with drastic consequences.

Weather = the day-to-day conditions of the atmosphere

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri

Climate = a pattern of weather over 30+ years

1960	1970	1980	1990	2000

Why does climate change matter?

Extreme weather

Climate change makes the weather more extreme. Storms are fiercer and heat waves are more regular, leading to more frequent wildfires. In 2019 and 2020, forest fires swept across Australia. News reports suggested that an area nearly the size of England was burned and at least half a billion animals were killed, including thousands of koalas who struggled to move fast enough to escape. At least 33 people were killed and more than 1,500 homes were lost. Severe and long term drought and record-breaking heat waves were to blame.



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Re-read the [Greenpeace Climate Emergency resource](#) to find out more about the Climate Emergency and things you can do to help. As you read, note down or highlight any points of interest or key words and phrases that really make you think about the impact of climate change, or motivate you to act.



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Write your own poem:

Come back together to think about how you might write your own poem to engage others to act on the climate emergency.

Take a piece of paper and a pen. Remind yourself of the issues you read about in the Greenpeace resource and what you think or how you feel about these things. When you have some ideas written down, see if you can use these to write your own poem. If you struggle to get going, think of describing the issue more broadly, as Nicola Davies did in her poem.

How will you engage your audience from the very start of your poem? How will you create imagery to provoke the reader's interest? What thought would you want to leave your reader with, so that they are motivated to take action?

Consider how you'll arrange your poem on the page, where you'll break lines, whether you'll have multiple verses and whether it will rhyme or be in free verse. What's most important is that it engages the reader in the issue of the climate emergency, maintains a sense of hope for them and leaves them motivated to act. Read your poem when it's finished and check that it does these things effectively.



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Share your poem:

Share your poem with your family or a friend.

What does it make them think about? How does it make them feel? Does it inspire them to find out more or to take action, however small?

Explore the environment further:

- Explore Greenpeace Youth Resources for 7-18 year olds: greenpeace.org.uk/all-resources/education-resources/
- Invite a Greenpeace Speaker for a free talk or workshop: greenpeace.org.uk/greenpeace-speakers



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