

Unit 7 Climate Change and Natural Disasters

■ Weather vocabulary

rain	drizzle shower downpour flood	cold	hail sleet snow snowflake blizzard
clouds	cloudy clear overcast gloomy foggy	wind	breeze blustery windy gale hurricane
temperature	hot warm cool cold freezing	other vocabulary	forecast drought lightning thunder rainbow

■ Wet and dry weather

In my country, the **weather** in spring is very changeable. It can be pleasant and dry, but we often have showers. It can get hot in the summer for two or three months, and in the cities it is often **humid**, especially before a **storm**. It's cooler on the coast, where there is usually a sea breeze. In autumn, we get some heavy rain, perhaps with thunder and lightning. In winter, it can be dry, sunny and **freezing** or grey and **damp**.

■ Weather-related idioms/phrases:

1. Every cloud has a silver lining.

ex. I'm sorry your business is going badly, but don't despair. Every cloud has a silver lining.

2. under a cloud

ex. Someone stole my money at work and now everyone is under a cloud of suspicion.

3. in a fog

ex. My mind is in a complete fog.

4. take a rain check

ex. I can't make it to dinner tonight, but can I take a rain check?

5. rain on one's parade

ex. I'm sorry to rain on your parade, but you're not allowed to have food or drinks in the theater.

6. It never rains but it pours.

ex. First of all, it was the car breaking down, then fire in the kitchen and now Ken's accident. It never rains but it pours.

7. snowed under with

ex. We're snowed under with the applications for the job.

8. Lightning never strikes twice.

ex. It's strange, but I feel safer since my apartment was robbed. I figure lightning never strikes the same place twice.

9. get wind of sth

ex. I don't want my colleagues to get wind of the fact that I'm leaving.

10. steal one's thunder

ex. I kept quiet about my pregnancy because Kate was getting married, and I didn't want to steal her thunder.

1 weather [ˈweðə] (n) 天氣

Ex. He goes out jogging **in all weathers**.

word family:

- The paint on the outside walls has weathered badly.
- Wind and sun had weathered his face.
- An improvement in the economy is helping us weather the storm.

2 humid [ˈhjuːmɪd] (a) 潮濕的

Ex. I'm used to the hot and humid climate.

word family:

- The temperature is 67 degrees with the humidity at 75%.
- If the air in the room is too dry, you can put a bowl of water near the radiator to humidify it. **OPP:**
- We bought a humidifier for the office. **OPP:**

word roots: 表「狀態」 hum =

humble (low+adj)

humiliate (low+V)

ex**hume** (out+ground)

in**hume** (in+ground)

3 storm [stɔ:m] (n) 暴風雨

Ex. 30 people were killed when storms **struck** the Mid-West.

word family:

- The movie **went down a storm.**
- Jazz **took** London and Paris **by storm** in the 1920s.
- The city was stormed by rebel forces.
- The sky was starting to look stormy.

4 freezing [ˈfriziŋ] (a) 冰凍的、極冷的

Ex. After walking through the snow, my feet were freezing.

word family:

- The cold weather froze the water pipes. **OPP:**
- The government has been forced to cut spending and freeze public-sector wages.
- We skated over the frozen lake.

5 damp [dæmp] (a) 潮濕的

Ex. The shirt still feels a bit damp.

word family:

- The whole house smells of damp.
- If you dampen laundry, it's much easier to iron it.
- Nothing can dampen (down) her enthusiasm.

cf.

moist

word focus: **wet**

- very wet:
- a little wet:
- when the air feels wet:

■ Climate change

Global warming is the gradual increase in the average temperature of the earth's atmosphere, and is caused by harmful gases. Many environmentalists believe that most of this pollution is the result of human activities. Here are some of the **effects**:

- As the ice at the poles **melts**, sea levels could rise by almost a meter in the next century.
- There will be more extreme and unpredictable weather, e.g. heat waves or floods.
- The earth will become even warmer because the rainforests are disappearing.
- Famine and disease will spread, and this will especially **affect** people in poor countries.

6 effect [ɪˈfekt] (n) 結果、影響

Ex. The radiation leak has had a disastrous effect **on** the environment.

word family:

- The new salary increases will take effect **from** January onwards.
- It's an extremely effective cure for a headache.
- Many parents lack confidence in their ability to effect change in their children's behavior.

7 affect [əˈfekt] (v) 影響

Ex. The weather affected everyone's mood.

word family:

- At university she affected an upper-class accent.
- I found her very affected.
- Her love of opera was just an affectation.
- It was an affecting drama.
- He had a deep affection for his country.

8 melt [melt] (v) 融化

Ex. The meat is beautifully cooked - it melts in your mouth.

word family:

- The little girl gave him a smile that melted his heart.
- As the police sirens were heard, the crowd started to melt away.

cf.

■ Types of disaster

Disasters related to extreme weather events such as floods, cyclones, hurricanes, blizzards, droughts **occur** regularly. Events related to extremes of the earth's geology such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions occur less frequently, but result in major consequences when they happen. Tsunamis often result from earthquakes. Avalanches result from massive accumulations of snow.

Disasters are commonly categorized by their **origin**; natural or man-made. Most disasters investigated in the literature are natural disasters. Recently, however, industrial accidents have been categorized as disasters. The Bhopal gas release and the Chernobyl nuclear accident are two examples of a man-made disaster. Forest fires (initiated by man) may be another example.

Disasters may occur suddenly in time, or they may develop over a period of time. Most occur suddenly and perhaps unexpectedly. However, some events develop gradually, including some floods and famines related to drought.

9 disaster [dɪˈzæstə] (n) 災難

Ex. Heavy and prolonged rain can **spell** disaster **for** many plants.

word family:

- My carefully planned party had been a complete disaster.
- Such a war would be disastrous for the country.

10 occur [əˈkʊə] (v) 發生、存在

Ex. There were car pileups occurring on a four-lane expressway.

word family:

- The plant occurs naturally throughout South America.
- It occurs to me that it is a national holiday, so I can have a day off.
- Flooding in the area is a common occurrence.

word roots: 表「行為動作」 cur =

recur (again+run)

incur (in+run)

concur (together+run)

excursion (out+run+n)

concourse (together+run+n)

11 origin [ˈɒrədʒɪn] (n) 起源、由來

Ex. All meat should be clearly labeled with its **country/place of origin**.

word family:

- The land was returned to its original owner.
- The original painting is in a museum in London.
- I have to buy a wedding present and I want to find something really original.
- The building was originally used as a prison.
- Many Christmas traditions originated **in** Germany.