

An inconvenient Truth

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MASTERING READING

A You are going to read a review of a movie about global warming. Share what you know about the subject with the class. The following words from the review may help you.

atmosphere	drought	fuel	heatwave	carbon dioxide
melt	flooding	glacier	hurricane	wildfire

B Now read the review and see if any of the facts you and your classmates discussed are mentioned.

The Decade's SCARIEST True Story

AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH

Reviewed by Melanie Stone



If you like scary movies, *An Inconvenient Truth* is for you. It just might be the most horrifying movie of the decade. The problem is, the scary stuff isn't just happening on the screen - it's happening in the real world.

Directed by Davis Guggenheim, the Oscar-winning documentary stars Al Gore, former Vice President of the United States. Since running for President in 2000, Gore has

devoted his life to an issue he feels strongly about: saving the Earth from global warming. A presentation he prepared on the subject has been shown in hundreds of cities around the world. *An Inconvenient Truth* is a filmed

version of this presentation. Sound boring? Well, it's not. If it were, it wouldn't be one of this year's most popular films. Whether you're into environmental issues or not, this is a movie that you must see.

What exactly is global warming? Carbon dioxide (CO₂) exists naturally in the Earth's atmosphere. It keeps our planet comfortably warm by holding in some of the sun's heat.

However, the fuels we burn today release so much CO₂ into the atmosphere that too much heat is trapped.

The movie shows, in cartoon form, how this works: As we watch, carbon dioxide "gangsters" trap poor, helpless sunrays, who have no hope of escape.

Using animation and special effects, the film presents the facts in a way that's crystal clear, and even entertaining. Viewers watch as glaciers in Greenland and Antarctica break up and fall into the ocean. A huge graph shows changes in carbon dioxide levels and temperatures over thousands of years.

In recent years, these levels are far higher than at any time in the past. And the future? Estimated levels for the future are so high that Gore must be lifted up on a special crane in order to point to them!

The results, he says, will be catastrophic. Melting glaciers will cause sea levels to rise and lead to worldwide flooding. Simulated films show water flooding city streets - from New York to Amsterdam to Calcutta - creating 100 million refugees and worldwide chaos. Intense heat waves, droughts and wildfires will hit many areas, while other places will be devastated by storms and hurricanes stronger than any the world has ever known. (This may explain the terrible hurricanes that have been hitting the Gulf of Mexico in the past few years.)

In addition, many species of animals and plants will simply disappear when the climate gets warmer. And all this will happen in our lifetime if we don't cut down on the amount of fuel we burn.

There are skeptics who deny that global warming is a problem, and Gore devotes plenty of time to answering them. These people insist that the climate changes we are experiencing are part of a normal cycle of warming and cooling which has always occurred on our planet. However, Gore points out that most scientists today agree with his point of view: that these changes are not normal, and that people are causing them. If we had taken action years ago, things would not have come to this, they say. The film's message, by the way, is not entirely negative. True, we're heading for disaster - but there is still hope. There may be time to save the Earth and life as we know it if we make immediate, drastic changes in our lifestyles. We must burn less fuel, use more efficient cars and find alternative sources of electricity. Inconvenient? Absolutely! Do we have a choice? Not really.



C Test Your Understanding

Answer the questions in your notebook.

1. Answer the questions according to lines 1-19.
 - a. What is the movie *An Inconvenient Truth* about?
 - b. Why does the reviewer call it "the most horrifying movie of the decade"?
2. What causes global warming? Complete the missing information according to lines 20-42.
 - a. People

- b. Too much CO₂ is released into the atmosphere.
- c. CO₂
- d. The Earth's temperature ...

3. Why is the special crane mentioned in line 41?

Complete the answer.

To show how