

THE SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF FORCED MIGRATION

A Multi-Media Educational Tool

Summer 2021

Climate Change and Forced Migration: An Introduction Via Children's Movies and Other Sources

Target audience: late elementary and middle school (grades 5-8)

Keywords: climate, activism

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Just as birds migrate as the seasons change, people might have to migrate too as the climate changes. According to [Climate Europe](#), climate is the average weather in a given area over a longer period of time. What is the climate like where you live? Do you have cold winters and hot summers or do the seasons not affect the temperature a lot? Does it rain often or is it mostly dry? When you think about the climate where you live it is important to remember that the weather is something that changes every day but the climate is more consistent, like a yearly pattern. Climate change is therefore a shift in or transformation of this yearly pattern.

Unlike how the weather changes from day to day, when the climate changes it can be dangerous or impossible to stay in the area that you have been living in, so you have to move to a safer area. This is an example of forced migration. Forced migration occurs any time that someone has no choice to move or else terrible things will happen or continue to happen to them. In this situation, you are not moving because you want to but instead because you have to. Forced migration can happen because of wars, incarceration (being put in prison), persecution (for example, because of religion or race), natural disasters, climate change, and more. Have you ever heard of forced migration? What do you know? Maybe a family member or a friend has been forced to migrate or maybe you have.

Through this section, I hope to increase your knowledge of climate change and forced migration and inspire you to continue thinking and learning about these topics.

**Note: At the end of each source, take some time to talk about new/confusing words that you encountered while reading/watching the sources.*

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WHAT CAUSES CLIMATE CHANGE?

According to the World Wildlife Fund, the 3 main causes of climate change through human activities are the **burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, and intensive agriculture**. These activities release greenhouse gasses such as carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere. You can explore the [World Wildlife Fund page](#) for more information about these human activities.

Watch this clip from the Lorax to see the severity of these actions: [Dr. Seuss' the Lorax \(2012\), Universal Pictures, Video](#)

- What happened because of the Once-ler cutting down all of the trees and building factories?

There are people like the Once-ler in the real world who are in charge of businesses that harm the **environment**. Because these businesses are so large and harmful, together they are able to change the climate all over the world. When you add up all of these changes you have the global **phenomenon** that we call climate change.

Read this article for a more in-depth look at what climate change is and for some definitions of key terms: ["What is Climate Change?" NASA, August 2021](#)

- What is one new thing you learned from this article?
- Have you noticed any signs of climate change where you live?
- To learn more about climate change, take this quiz:

https://climate.nasa.gov/climate_resources/16/quiz-global-warming/

VISIBLE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND HOW THEY CAUSE FORCED MIGRATION

How do we know that the climate is changing somewhere? Some effects of climate change that may force people and animals to move are temperatures getting hotter, ice melting, water levels rising, or wildfires, and more. These changes often are gradual, so it can be hard to determine what is a naturally occurring climate and what has worsened or developed because of climate change.

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Watch this video of the residents of Kivalina to see how small gradual changes can lead to an emergency in which forced migration is necessary: [Kivalina on the Coast: how an Arctic community is responding to climate change](#) (October 16, 2020), Alaska Public Media, Video

- (optional advanced source) **Watch** this video for a look at the residents of Kivalina speaking more directly (TW: mentions of suicide): [This Tiny Alaska Town Is Leading the Way on Climate Change](#) (April 8, 2017), Global Citizen, Video
- What were the children excited about in their new school? Oftentimes we take the simple things in our life for granted. What are some things in your school, community, or home that you are thankful for? Would someone who is a forced migrant have access to these things?

Watch this short video clip from *Ice Age 2: Meltdown*, to see how some of these effects cause animals to migrate. Here's a short video clip from the movie (watch until 8:05): [Ice Age: The Meltdown](#) (2006), Blue Sky Studios, Video

- When you're watching, try to spot one effect of climate change.
- Compare this scene from *Ice Age 2: Meltdown* to what you saw and heard in the video about Kivalina. How did the people and characters seem to feel about climate change and forced migration? Were they scared, sad, angry, etc.? What were some of the solutions discussed or actions taken by each group being affected by climate change?

Skim this article from the New York Times to learn more about **climate migration**: Abraham Lustgarten, "[The Great Climate Migration](#)," *New York Times*, 2019

- What was the main cause of people migrating?
- Where did people leave from and where did they migrate to?

Look at these maps to see this more globally: [Environmental Migration Portal Maps](#), International Organization for Migration (IOM)

- Point out areas where people will probably be forced to migrate.
- How did you determine areas where people might be forced to migrate?

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Watch this video of children who are **refugees** to better understand what it feels like to be someone who is forced to migrate: [Kids, refugees, questions: 'What is it like to have no home?' \(December 9, 2016\), The Guardian, Video](#)

- What would your message be to a child your age that is a refugee?
- If you had to move today, draw what the inside of your suitcase would look like. What special items would you take with you? What things would you need to take? What would you be forced to leave behind?

WORST CASE SCENARIO AND WHAT WE CAN DO TO PREVENT IT

Climate change and forced migration are serious issues in the world today. If we do nothing, many places will become uninhabitable for humans and other species in future decades.

Watch the opening scene of Wall-e to see an example of the worst-case scenario: [Wall-e \(2008\), Walt Disney Pictures, Video](#)

- What did you see? What colors were used? What did you observe in the piles of junk?
- The introductory scene of Wall-e seems to say that even if we implement some forms of **renewable energy**, without larger changes to policies and lifestyles we will still fail to stop climate change. What is an example of a change in lifestyle that can help prevent further climate change?
 - For some examples, take a look at this article: [Christie Aschwanden, "What lifestyle changes will shrink your carbon footprint the most?," Science News, Mat 14, 2020](#)

Luckily, people are becoming aware of how important these issues are and are taking steps towards change. If we all come together, humans can do better in the future and protect the planet.

Watch the credits of Wall-e to see how changes in laws, policies, and lifestyles can bring us together and make a difference: [Wall-e \(2008\), Walt Disney Pictures](#)

It is important to know that policy and lifestyle changes will not be the same everywhere. Some countries and groups of people already live in ways that promote a healthy and stable climate. For example, according to [Our World in Data](#), the US

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emits more carbon dioxide than any other single country in the world, therefore the US needs to make the largest changes in the fight against climate change. However, within the US different groups of people contribute to the carbon dioxide emissions in different amounts. Those that have more money tend to contribute more, and those that have less money tend to contribute less. Because of this, the issue of climate change is a very difficult problem to solve fairly. Using [Our World in Data](#), explore which countries have released the most and the least carbon dioxide emissions.

By trying to stop climate change you are also helping to prevent forced migration, which can be very scary and dangerous. Similarly to what was stated in Part 2, forced migration is not equally distributed across the globe. Currently, communities like those in Kivalina (as seen in Part 2) are facing the scary truth that they have to leave their home, however these communities contribute almost nothing to carbon dioxide emissions, especially when compared to US cities.

Read/skim this explanation of the **Paris Agreement** to see what governments are doing to try and halt climate change (pages 8-16): [Sara Cognuck González and Emilia Numer, “The Paris Agreement for young people,” UNICEF, 2020](#)

- When reading this source, look for sections of the Paris Agreement that place more responsibilities on richer countries/countries that have higher emissions.

Watch this TED talk by Greta Thurnberg to hear more about **climate activism** (optional advanced source): [School strike for climate – save the world by changing the rules \(2018\), TEDx Talks](#)

What can you do as a kid? Watch this video to find out: [I’m only a kid, I can’t do anything about climate change... right? \(February 28, 2018\), Global Weirding with Katharine Hayhoe, Video](#)

- Brainstorm one idea that could be implemented in your school, town, or state.

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SUMMARY QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

- How do you feel about what you have learned?
- What hopes do you have for the future of climate change? How about forced migration?

To learn more about climate change and migration, plus different forms of activism that you can be a part of, check out these websites:

<https://www.youngvoicesfortheplanet.com/for-kids/>

<https://www.learningtogive.org/resources/immigration-and-refugees>