

ClimateQuest – Joke Book

A Spark & Anvil joke book. Groan-worthy puns, tricky riddles, silly nonsense, and real fun facts from the world of ClimateQuest – read them out loud and make someone laugh.

Why was the weather report so unpredictable?

Because weather changes daily – but climate is the long game!

How to use this book

Read a joke, pause at the question, and try to guess the answer before you read on. Best of all: read them out loud to a friend, a grown-up, or your class. A good laugh makes the tricky stuff easier – that's real science.

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Puns

Why was the weather report so unpredictable?

💡 Because weather changes daily – but climate is the long game!

What did the sun say to the solar panel?

💡 "I've got energy to spare – catch!"

Why did the ice cap go to the doctor?

💡 It was feeling a little thin!

What did the tree say to the CO₂?

💡 "I'll take that off your hands – literally!"

Why was the recycling bin so happy?

💡 It knew it was making a difference, one bottle at a time!

What did the atmosphere say to the greenhouse gases?

💡 "You're trapping too much heat – things are getting uncomfortable!"

Why did the wind turbine feel proud?

💡 Because it was turning over a new leaf – with every revolution!

What did the glacier say as it melted?

💡 "I used to be so cool – what happened?!"

Why did the carbon footprint try to get smaller?

💡 It realized it was leaving too big of an impression!

What did renewable energy say to fossil fuels?

💡 "Your days are numbered – mine are sustainable!"

Why was the ozone layer relieved?

💡 Because the Montreal Protocol actually worked – proof that people CAN fix things!

What did the sea level say to the coastline?

💡 "I'm rising to the occasion – better start backing up!"

Why was methane such a troublemaker?

💡 It was 80 times more potent at trapping heat than CO₂ in the short term – and it came from the most unexpected places!

What did the Paris Agreement say?

💡 "195 countries agreed to keep warming under 2°C – now we just have to actually DO it!"

Why did the electric car feel smug?

💡 "Zero tailpipe emissions – I'm CLEAN!" Electricity grid: "About that..."

What did the climate model say to the skeptic?

💡 "I've been predicting warming for 50 years and I've been right every time!"

Why was the permafrost so worried?

💡 "I've been frozen for thousands of years and NOW I'm thawing? I've got methane in here!"

What did the coral say during bleaching?

💡 "I'm losing my algae partners – without them, I literally lose my color AND my food source!"

Why did the carbon capture technology feel underappreciated?

💡 "I pull CO₂ straight from the air! But everyone only talks about trees."

What did the feedback loop say?

💡 "Warming melts ice, which absorbs more heat, which melts more ice, which absorbs more heat, which—" Everyone: "WE GET IT."

Riddles

I'm the day-to-day conditions outside: temperature, wind, rain, or sunshine. What am I?

 Weather!

I'm the average weather patterns in a region over 30+ years. What am I?

 Climate!

I'm a gas in the atmosphere that traps heat from the sun, keeping Earth warm. What am I?

 A greenhouse gas (like CO₂ or methane)!

I'm energy from the sun, captured by panels and turned into electricity. What am I?

 Solar energy!

I measure the total amount of greenhouse gases produced by a person, event, or product. What am I?

 A carbon footprint!

I'm the process where gases in the atmosphere trap heat, similar to glass in a greenhouse. What am I?

 The greenhouse effect!

I'm a slow-moving river of ice that's melting faster than ever as temperatures rise. What am I?

 A glacier!

I'm energy from moving air, captured by turbines with spinning blades. What am I?

 Wind energy!

I'm what happens when sea water absorbs too much CO₂ and becomes more acidic. What am I?

 Ocean acidification!

I'm the international agreement where 195 countries pledged to limit global warming. What am I?

 The Paris Agreement (2015)!

I'm a layer of gas in the stratosphere that protects Earth from harmful UV radiation. What am I?

 The ozone layer!

I'm ground that stays frozen for two or more years – but I'm starting to thaw. What am I?

 Permafrost!

I'm a process where warming causes changes that lead to even MORE warming. What am I?

 A positive feedback loop!

I reflect sunlight back into space – ice, snow, and clouds do this job. What am I?

 Albedo!

I'm the difference between the energy Earth receives from the sun and the energy it radiates back. What am I?

 Earth's energy balance (or radiative forcing)!

I'm technology that removes CO₂ directly from the atmosphere or from industrial emissions. What am I?

 Carbon capture and storage (CCS)!

I'm a computer program that simulates Earth's climate systems to predict future changes. What am I?

 A climate model!

I'm the idea that meeting today's needs shouldn't compromise future generations' ability to meet theirs. What am I?

 Sustainability!

I'm the phenomenon where cities are significantly warmer than surrounding rural areas. What am I?

 The urban heat island effect!

I'm ice cores drilled from glaciers that contain trapped air bubbles from thousands of years ago. What am I?

 Ice core samples (paleoclimate records)!

Silly Stuff

The sun and a solar panel become best friends. – Sun: "I'll send you free energy EVERY DAY!" Solar panel: "And I'll turn it into electricity!" Cloud: "Can I get in on this?" Sun: "You're literally blocking me right now."

An ice cube gives a TED talk about climate change. – "As someone who is PERSONALLY affected by rising temperatures—" *starts melting* "–I'd like to discuss the urgency of—" *puddle*

Weather and climate get confused at a party. – Guest: "Climate, is it going to rain tomorrow?" Climate: "I'm the AVERAGE over 30 years – ask Weather." Weather: "Probably! Or maybe not. Check back in an hour."

CO₂ attends a greenhouse gas support group. – CO₂: "I'm the most famous greenhouse gas." Methane: "I'm 80 times more potent!" Water vapor: "I make up 60% of the greenhouse effect." N₂O: "Does anyone know I exist?"

A glacier writes a memoir titled "I Used To Be Cool." – Chapter 1: "10,000 years of frozen magnificence." Chapter 15: "Started losing some weight – everyone says it's the heat." Final chapter: "If found, please return me to the Arctic."

A carbon footprint tries to go on a diet. – "No more driving – I'll bike! No more beef – I'll eat plants! No more flying – I'll video call!" Footprint shrinks from size 14 to size 8. "Can I get to zero?" Earth: "That would be amazing."

The ozone layer throws a comeback party. – "In the 1980s, I had a HOLE. But you banned CFCs and I'm healing!" CFC: "I was just trying to keep refrigerators cold!" Ozone: "And I was trying to keep everyone alive. I won."

Sea level rise sends a polite letter to coastal cities. – "Dear Miami, I'm arriving slowly but surely. Expected to be 1-3 feet taller by 2100. Please plan accordingly." Miami: "Can we negotiate?" Sea level: "Not really, no."

A positive feedback loop gets out of control at a rock concert. – "Warming melts ice! Less ice reflects less sunlight! More sunlight warms more! MORE WARMING!" Sound engineer: "Someone stop this feedback!" Climate scientist: "THAT'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN SAYING."

Permafrost wakes up after 30,000 years. – "What year is it? Why am I MELTING? What's a 'car'? And why is there so much CO₂?" Scientist: "It's a lot to take in." Permafrost: "I was FINE being frozen, thank you very much."

A climate model runs a simulation where everyone uses renewable energy by 2050. – "Temperature rise limited to 1.5°C! Coral reefs saved! Glaciers stabilized!" Policy maker: "And the cost?" Model: "Less than the cost of doing nothing." Policy maker: "...run it again."

An ice core from Antarctica is read like a history book. – "Chapter: 200,000 years ago – CO₂ was 280 ppm. Chapter: today – 420 ppm." Scientist: "This is unprecedented in recorded Earth history." Ice core: "I'm literally the record."

Carbon capture technology and a tree have a competition. – Tree: "I've been removing CO₂ for 400 million years." Machine: "I can remove 40,000 tons per year." Tree: "There are 3 TRILLION of me." Machine: "...I need to scale up."

All the renewable energies form a band called "The Sustainables." – Solar plays daytime gigs. Wind plays whenever it feels like it. Hydro has a steady rhythm. Geothermal keeps things grounded. Nuclear: "Am I in the band?" Everyone: "...it's complicated."

Earth's energy budget gets audited. – "Incoming: 340 W/m² from the sun. Outgoing: 340 W/m². Surplus: 0.87 W/m²." Auditor: "That surplus is the ENTIRE problem." Earth: "Less than 1 watt per square meter is causing all this?!"

Fun Facts

Weather and climate are NOT the same thing! – Weather is what's happening outside right now (sunny, rainy, windy). Climate is the average weather pattern over 30+ years. A cold day doesn't disprove climate change!

The greenhouse effect is actually essential for life on Earth! – Without it, Earth's average temperature would be about -18°C (0°F) instead of 15°C (59°F). The problem is that humans are ENHANCING the greenhouse effect by adding extra gases.

A single large tree can absorb about 22 kg (48 lbs) of CO_2 per year! – Over its lifetime, a tree can absorb over a ton of CO_2 . That's why planting trees is one of the simplest climate solutions – nature's original carbon capture technology!

Earth's temperature has risen about 1.1°C (2°F) since the late 1800s. – That might sound small, but just 5°C of cooling was enough to cause the last Ice Age. Small temperature changes have HUGE impacts on Earth's systems!

The ozone hole is one of the biggest environmental SUCCESS stories. – After discovering CFCs were destroying the ozone layer, 197 countries signed the Montreal Protocol in 1987 to ban them. The ozone layer is now healing and should fully recover by ~2066!

The ocean has absorbed about 30% of all human-produced CO_2 – but at a cost. – This CO_2 absorption makes the water more acidic (ocean acidification), which threatens coral reefs and shellfish whose shells dissolve in acidic water.

Ice cores from Antarctica contain trapped air bubbles up to 800,000 years old! – Scientists can measure CO_2 levels from these bubbles. Current CO_2 (420 ppm) is higher than at ANY point in the past 800,000 years – the previous peak was about 300 ppm.

The "albedo effect" means that melting ice creates a dangerous feedback loop. – White ice reflects 80-90% of sunlight. Dark ocean water absorbs 90%. As ice melts, more dark water is exposed, which absorbs more heat, which melts more ice!

Renewable energy is now cheaper than fossil fuels in most of the world! – Solar electricity costs have dropped 89% since 2010. Wind has dropped 70%. In many countries, building NEW solar is cheaper than running EXISTING coal plants!

Livestock (cows, pigs, chickens, and more) produce about 14.5% of all global greenhouse gas emissions. – A single cow can produce up to 100 kg of methane per year through digestion. That's why reducing meat consumption and improving farming practices are climate strategies!

The Keeling Curve, measuring CO₂ at Mauna Loa since 1958, is one of science's most important datasets. – Started by Charles David Keeling, it shows CO₂ rising steadily from 315 ppm to over 420 ppm – with a seasonal zigzag as plants grow and shed leaves. It was the first clear evidence of human impact on the atmosphere.

Climate models have been remarkably accurate at predicting warming trends. – A 2019 study comparing 17 climate models from 1970-2007 found that most were accurate within 0.1°C of observed warming. They're not perfect for regional predictions, but the global trend has been spot-on.

The "carbon budget" estimates how much more CO₂ we can emit while staying below 1.5°C warming. – As of 2023, the remaining budget was about 250 billion tons of CO₂ – at current rates, that's used up in about 6 years. Every fraction of a degree matters.

Greta Thunberg's school strike in 2018 sparked a global youth climate movement. – Starting alone outside the Swedish parliament at age 15, she inspired millions of students worldwide to demand climate action. The movement shows the power of individual action at any age.

Nature-based solutions could provide about 37% of the emission reductions needed by 2030. – Protecting forests, restoring wetlands, improving soil management, and protecting oceans are among the most cost-effective climate strategies – and they benefit biodiversity too!

Keep laughing

That's **70 jokes** from ClimateQuest. Made someone laugh? Try making up your own – the best jokes are the ones you tell.

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