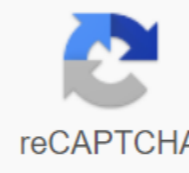




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Acid rain worksheet

Rain is an essential part of our lives. It allows plants to grow and helps us provide the water we need to survive. Rain, however, is not always just water: air pollution has affected the rain, and dissolved gases can turn it into ... acid rains. What is acid rain? As the name suggests, acid rain is simply when the rain turns sour, but what you may not know is that the daily rain is already very slightly acidic. Daily rainwater usually has a pH of about 5-6. However, it is recorded that the pH is less than 3 (rainwater in the US was once measured at pH 1.8!) and this is what we call acid rain. What causes acid rains? Acid rain is caused by air pollution with gases that dissolve in rainwater and make it acidic. There are three main gases responsible for acid rains. Where does the gas come from? What's he doing? Carbon dioxide naturally exists in the atmosphere due to vital processes such as breathing. Daily rainwater is slightly acidic due to the release of carbon dioxide into the air to obtain very weak carbonic acid. Sulphur dioxide produced through plants by burning fossil fuels: Sulphur dioxide is also naturally produced during volcanic eruptions: Sulphur dioxide will dissolve in rainwater to produce strong hydrogen sulfide acid (leading to acid rains). Nitrogen oxides produced by ignition vehicle engines are included: Nitrogen oxides are also produced naturally in thunderstorms: Nitrogen oxides will dissolve in rainwater to produce strong nitric acid (leading to acid rains). What does acid rain do? Acid rain is usually not strong enough to burn your skin and clothes, but it can have many harmful effects on living and non-living things in our environment. How can we prevent acid rains? Now all cars are equipped with catalytic converters to help make polluting gases less harmful. Oil companies also produce low sulphur gasoline to help reduce the amount of sulphur dioxide produced. Some of the carbon dioxide in the air is inevitable, as it naturally exists due to vital processes. We can help prevent acid rain by trying to produce less unnecessary CO2 through the use of alternative energy sources, which also helps to reduce the sulphur dioxide content in the air, as much of this comes from low-quality fossil fuels. Page 2

What is Global Warming? Global warming is an increase in the temperature of the Earth's atmosphere. It is thought that over the next 100 years the Earth will be about 6 degrees hotter than it is now. Why? The Earth's atmosphere is surrounded by a layer of gases that allow heat from the sun to come in and out, but still keep the Earth at the right temperature so that humans, animals and plants can survive. This layer of gases consists of the following greenhouse gases: water vapor carbon dioxide methane nitrous oxide ozone chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) Most of these gases occur naturally. However, however, were produced by humans from pollution. This caused the layer of gases to thicken, causing something known as the greenhouse effect. The Greenhouse Effect The diagram above shows the greenhouse effect, where heat from the sun passes through the atmosphere to heat the Earth's surface. Usually, many of the sun's rays simply bounce off the surface and head back from the Earth's atmosphere; however, this is becoming a problem. The layer of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere blocks some of the sun's rays from coming out, meaning they reflect back on Earth to reheat the surface. The layer of gas acts like the glass in a greenhouse (hence the name) - allows the heat inside, but not everything from it leaves it to come out. Where do these greenhouse gases come from? Burning fossil fuels produces carbon dioxide, water vapor and nitrous oxide. You can see from the chart below that CO2 levels are clearly going up and down, but since the industrial revolution, they have shot at a much higher level than ever before. The green line (at 350ppm) shows what many scientists believe is a safer LEVEL of CO2. Reducing trees and rainforests also increases CO2 levels and water vapour as the plants that absorb them are destroyed. Waste from natural animals will weaken methane and a growing population means an increase in agriculture, leading to an increase in animal/animal waste. What about ozone? Ozone (O3) is a substance that naturally exists in our atmosphere. Its job is to block harmful UV rays from the sun. However, the ozone layer was damaged due to chemicals called CFC (chlorofluorocarbons). These chemicals were also used as refrigerants in aerosol cans. C.I.A. was widely used until scientists discovered that a hole had developed in the ozone layer. It turned out to be caused by the atmosphere of the C.I.A. Since then, all CFCs have been banned, and in the chutch, the ozone layer has corrected and the harmful rays are still blocked. What could happen? If the Earth's temperature rises, it could lead to: the polar caps, which melt, causing sea levels to rise floods and rivers, killing the aquatic organisms that once lived there more droughts, making it more difficult to grow crops Less water for drinking, cleaning and growing crops The loss of some plants and animal species due to the heat and dry conditions Hurricanes, tornadoes and other storms (which are caused by changes in heat and water evaporation) can be obtained more often What can we do to help? World leaders at the UN have agreed to try to reduce CO2 levels in the atmosphere by using alternative clean fuels such as solar and wind power. Water and energy saving is a big thing and can be helped by: Turn off all electrical appliances when they are not in use (do not leave in Use of energy-saving bulbs washing clothes in or under ... and many, many others. Take a look around your house and see how good you are at energy saving! Now we're going to look at some questions about Global Warming. Page 3

Below, the image shows the recovery of two birds called DODDOS. Dodo lived on the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. Now he's gone. That means there's no more living dodo. Dodo was discovered in the early 1500s by European sailors. He wasn't afraid of humans, as dodo wasn't used to seeing them, so it was easy to hunt meat. He couldn't escape because he couldn't fly, so he disappeared in the 1700s. The introduction of the most predator into the dodo ecosystem (humans) led to its extinction. Moreover, the dodo was destroyed for the crops, and the sailors who brought with them (e.g. rats and cats) ate the eggs of the dodo. Ecosystems and biodiversity in an ecosystem depend on each other. In our example below: If the grass dies due to drought, the organisms that feed on it (for example, mice) will die and some of them will die so that their population can decline. This will affect secondary users who feed on them (e.g. snakes) as they will not be able to find so much food. If new animals are introduced into the ecosystem, it will also affect feeding links and populations of different species. Besides living organisms, there are also environmental factors that can affect populations. Temperature and the presence of water and sunlight are some very important factors. If the temperature suddenly drops, some organisms may die, since they are not adapted to the cold, which leads to a decrease in their population. In order to survive, other animals may need to migrate to more suitable environments. Finally, the disease epidemic can also destroy an entire population. It has already become clear that every living organism plays a key role in its ecosystem and the extinction of an organism can have a devastating impact on the environment. That is why it is really important to maintain biodiversity: a measure of the diversity of different types of life on Earth. In other words, a measure of the diversity of different organisms present in different ecosystems. Biodiversity may refer to: - different species - differences between similar species - even differences between members of the same species. The latter is particularly important when it comes to abrupt changes in the environment. It is important that some members of a species adapt quickly to the sudden change in order to survive. Human activities are responsible for reducing the population of many species. Overfishing has caused many species of fish to become endangered. The species is endangered when only a few of its members remain alive. There are many endangered species around the world. For example, the white rhino: currently only two white rhinos are alive, both females. White rhinos and other species are from poachers to their horns. Environmental pollution and climate change have played a role in disrupting the balance of ecosystems around the world. Page 4

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