

Primary Geography: Explain this...

Weather, climate and climate change

Do you know the difference between weather and climate? Well, the weather tells us what it's like outside each day. Like, if it's raining ... or if the sun is shining ... and if it's hot or cold.

But climate is worked out by looking at weather patterns in one area over a long period of time, usually around 30 years. It tells us what the weather there is likely to be at different times of the year.

There are several different climate zones around the world. These are large areas that have similar climates.

In the United Kingdom we have a temperate climate and four distinct seasons. We get cool winters and warm summers ... well warmish!

Other climate zones are very different to ours.

A polar climate is very, very cold and dry, but with lots of ice and snow, as it's too cold for it to melt.

A Mediterranean climate has warm, dry summers and mild, wet winters.

A hot dry climate is what it sounds like - very, very hot and dry because it hardly ever rains.

A tropical climate is also hot all year round - but also very wet - although some do have a dry season.

But scientists say the earth is warming and our climates are changing. This is affecting food and water supplies, as well as habitats such as oceans and forests, which are all needed by humans, plants and animals.

That's why we need to look after our planet ... so it can look after us!