

Global world – global issues

Possible answers and solutions

1. Summarise Bjørn Lomborg's view of global warming and the main arguments he presents.

Aspects of the task:

- The author's view of global warming:

Phrases from the text you could have highlighted	Your own words/paraphrases (Use your dictionary!)
"obsession of our time" (I.3)	excessive political interest (media hype)
"from governments and campaigners ... incessant admonition" (II.3–4)	moral appeals from politicians and pressure groups
"Global warming is real and caused by CO ₂ " (I.6)	Global warming is a fact and its main cause is known.
"we can do very little" (I.7)	powerless, ineffective solutions
"substantial ... cost of Kyoto compliance" (I.10)	very expensive agreement
"We need to stop our obsession with global warming" (I.37)	We must stop focusing on global warming (at the cost of other problems).
"many more pressing issues" (I.38)	Other global problems are more urgent.

- The author's main arguments:

Phrases from the text you could have highlighted	Your own words/paraphrases (Use your dictionary!)
"climate models" (II.6–7) → "change ... immeasurable" (I.8)	scientific evidence/predictions
"economic models" (I.10) → "half that amount could ... solve the most pressing ... problems in the world" (II.11–12)	An economic calculation of the costs shows that the money could be used more effectively elsewhere.
"[not] the best of all worlds" (I.19); "limited resources" (I.33)	need to be realistic; limit on the amount of money available
"moral obligation ... to spend each dollar doing the most good" (I.35)	It is necessary to compare costs and benefits when ranking the global problems.

2. Describe and analyse the cartoon in detail. Compare the cartoonist's message with Lomborg's attitude to global warming.

– Introduction:

source: Steve Greenberg, Ventura County Star, 2004

content: President Bush's attitude to global warming

message: President Bush is unaware of the threat of global warming; he ignores this problem/does not see how it can affect the USA. Global warming poses a very serious threat and may lead to catastrophe.

Task 1 aims at the contents of the text (*Anforderungsbereich 1*).

Summarise means you have to give a concise account of the main points in the text. This means that your text should be much shorter than the original text and precise in its formulations. Avoid quotations but add some line references in brackets: (I.X) or (II.X–Y).

Task 2 aims at *Anforderungsbereich 2* (text analysis).

Analyse means you have to describe and explain in detail certain aspects of the text.

Compare means you have to point out similarities and differences between the two texts.

Never give your own opinion in this *Anforderungsbereich!*

– Description and Analysis:

Description	Analysis
in the centre: President Bush sitting at his desk in his office – formally dressed (suit, tie) – arms on the desk with folded hands – upright posture – wrinkled forehead – open mouth	Mr Bush is speaking in his role as President, probably addressing a wider public or speaking to people who have approached him with a hint/warning.
on his desk: only two picture frames, two pens, an empty desk pad, a seagull	Bush is a family man, not working; the seagull represents the approaching sea / the imminent catastrophe.
in the top right hand corner: a speech bubble which says "WHAT GLOBAL WARMING THREAT?"	Two readings are possible: Mr Bush – has never heard of the problem (ignorant). – refuses to accept its urgency.
left side: the American flag ("Stars and Stripes")	This visual symbol: – helps to identify the speaker. – indicates that Bush is speaking on behalf of the whole nation.
desk: surrounded by water with fish of various sizes, an octopus and a starfish, as well as sea plants	The humour lies in the discrepancy between the President's behaviour and the exaggerated effect of global warming: The sea has entered the White House – the sea level has risen unrealistically high; it is strongly suggested that the President is close to drowning, i.e. he has lost all touch with reality.

– Comparison:

The cartoonist's message contrasts sharply with Lomborg's assessment of global warming. Whereas Lomborg plays the danger down and analyses it rationally, Greenberg presents global warming as highly threatening. The cartoon dramatizes this ecological danger and ridicules the ignorance of the American President. This contradicts Lomborg, who claims that politicians pay too much attention to global warming.

3. a) Comment on the standpoints presented in the text and the cartoon. In doing so, set up your own priorities for the world's most pressing global issues and discuss ways of dealing with them.

Your text should

- refer to both the given text and the cartoon.
- contain your own opinion on global warming: How threatening is it? How does it compare with other global threats? (present additional arguments and perspectives)
- place global warming in context, i.e. name the – in your opinion – most urgent global problems and position global warming in a list of global challenges.
- be clearly structured: introduction – main part divided into paragraphs – conclusion.
- discuss the problem from a German perspective (optional).

Task 3 a) aims at *Anforderungsbereich 3*.

Comment means you are to state clearly your opinion on the question, in this case the standpoints presented in the text. Try to support your view with evidence and arguments in such a way that you can make your point most effectively. Do not forget to write a proper conclusion.

3. b) In the role of a major politician of your choice attending an international conference on global warming, give a speech in which you discuss and prioritise a number of global challenges. Bjørn Lomborg's statements can help you. Use them as a starting point.

In your (in-role!) speech pay attention to structure:

- Clearly structure your train of thought.
- Make clear at the beginning who is speaking (introduce yourself as the politician you have chosen).
- Start with Bjørn Lomborg's attitude to global warming and comment on his arguments.
- Discuss global warming in the context of other global challenges.
- Use your background knowledge on globalisation.
- Address the listeners at the beginning and thank them for their attention / for listening at the end.

Also make sure you use appropriate language:

- Make it interesting to listen to you.
- Use a tone which fits the occasion of your speech.
- Use mainly formal English.
- Make efficient use of rhetorical devices.

Task 3 b) also aims at *Anforderungsbereich 3*.

Try to be convincing in your role as politician and make sure that you stick to the requirements of writing a speech.