

Save the world, ignore global warning

Mögliche Lösungen

1. Form:

Analyse what makes this article effective and give examples from the text.

- The journalist uses words with a negative connotation to describe attempts to fight global warming ("obsession" l. 1; "incessant admonition" l. 3) → ridicules those who advocate giving environmental issues top priority to the detriment of all else
- He refers to specialists and their research ("the economic models" l. 9; "the world's top economists" l. 25) → adds weight to his arguments
- He creates a fictitious union between himself and his readers (use of "we" and "us" throughout) → assumes his readers' agree with him
- irony ("in the best of all worlds" l. 20) → portrays those who don't see that global warming is not the most important issue as lacking in realism
- He uses simple language for his demands ("This was where we could do the most good for our dollar") → makes everyone understand how simple and infallible his logic is; uses the emotionally laden term "dollar"
- antithesis ("into the future ... now" l. 35f; "caring more ... caring less" l. 38f) → suggests that his thoughts are the most obvious point of view for the present situation

2. Content:

True/false/not given (ng)? Tick (✓) the correct answer.

	Statement	true	false	ng
1	Both politicians and the media make us believe that global warming is the hottest issue of our time.		✓	
2	Even if all the governments in the world joined forces to fight global warming, the result would be negligible.	✓		
3	There is no incontrovertible evidence that global warming is caused by human activity.			✓
4	Trying to solve humanitarian problems such as fatal diseases or hunger would be unaffordable.		✓	
5	Developing countries will not suffer more from the effects of climate change than industrial nations.		✓	
6	We are morally obliged to spend the limited money which we have at our disposal more sensibly instead of wasting it on inefficient projects.	✓		
7	Politicians should do anything to cut back on CO2 emissions.			✓
8	A century from now citizens of developing countries will be wealthier than those living in countries of the 'First World'.		✓	

3. Cartoon:

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 a catastrophe.

– Description:

In the centre: President Bush is 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, he is not working; the seagull represents the rising sea level/the imminent catastrophe.

In the top right-hand corner: a speech bubble says “WHAT GLOBAL WARMING THREAT?”

– Analysis:

Two readings are possible: Mr Bush

- has never heard of the problem (ignorant).
- refuses to accept its urgency.

On the left-hand 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.

The 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 dramatically; 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 a serious threat. 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.