

IELTS Speaking topic – Weather and climate

This is a sample response for IELTS Speaking Part 2 and 3. In addition to the model answer there are highlighted words and phrases. **Teal** is for vocabulary relating to this topic, **yellow** is for generally useful words and phrases.

IELTS Speaking Part 2

Describe an unusually hot or cold season in your country.

You should say:

- what season it was
- how long it lasted
- how you coped with the extreme temperature

and say how you felt about it.

Model answer

*My country is in a moist continental climate zone, so the summers are warm but never too hot. However, about two years ago we had a massive **heatwave** that **bumped up** the thermometer all the way to 40 degrees Celsius. This was in the month of June, normally a pleasantly warm period with fair amount of **precipitation**. That year was a different story - the air was **sultry**, you could feel the ground almost burn under your shoes. It lasted for well over a week - they say that the emergency room was overfilled with people who had suffered a **heatstroke**. I know the older people had it the hardest as they are more sensitive to weather **extremes**.*

*As the climate is normally much more forgiving here, people have no air-conditioning, and neither did I at the time. I remember how we decided to buy a fan and apparently so had everybody else in our town. This resulted in a deficit which some people **took advantage of**, reselling fans for a profit. Surprisingly, after a couple of days it didn't feel so bad, we gradually got used to the conditions. I really hated it the first days, but eventually I **came to terms with** the situation and after seven or eight days the head **subsided**. One thing I had learned is I wouldn't want to live in a hot climate!*

IELTS Speaking Part 3

Weather and climate

Is it healthier to live in a colder or hotter climate? Why?

*I'd have to go with warmer climates. First of all, you get more sunny days over the year and as we all know exposure to sun is an essential element of well-being. Because of that people naturally spend more time outdoors, more than they would in a colder country. According to publicly available data, people in warmer climates tend to have higher **life expectancy**. I think this is a good indicator of how life there is actually healthier. However, there is one important point to consider. Some people suffer from **heat intolerance** - they find it difficult to stay outside if the air is hot and dry. It goes without saying that living in **sultry** weather is not an option for these particular individuals.*

Do you think that people will be able to have control over the weather? Is it a good or a bad thing?

*I am sure that we already can control it, for instance planes can spray chemicals to make clouds disappear. They do this for some big scale festivals and celebrations. If we talk about more **intrusive** control, such as shifting air masses, forcing rains and such then it is definitely a possibility. It is tricky to give a prediction when we will be **capable of** doing that, probably within the next decade. Controlling the weather has **innumerable applications** - one big one is*

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controlled **irrigation** of **crops**. Just imagine a region suffering from **drought** that has to spend sky-high amounts of money on artificial **watering**. This would no longer be an issue.

Climate change

How much impact do humans have on climate change?

The environmental effect of humanity is difficult to measure precisely, but it is clearly enormous. We should probably categorise this impact into two rough types - direct and indirect. The **former** is driving and using other forms of transportation, leaving trash as a result of consumption, using electricity and **contaminating** water. Forest fires and other human-provoked disasters fall in the **latter** category. No matter the category though, it is clear than humans are the strongest negative driver of climate change in general and global warming in particular.

Other than the humanity, what else is affected by this change?

Flora and fauna are the biggest groups that feel the negative consequences of changing climate. As **median temperatures** crawl up, many species are forced to migrate further North. This **shakes up** the natural balance, often disrupting the food chain. It goes without saying that trees and plants have no such option so eventually they die out. The results are reduced biodiversity which in turn leads to other, more complex issues.

Weather and climate vocabulary

Heatwave (n) - a period of unnaturally hot weather during warmer seasons.

Precipitation (n) - a technical term for rain, snow, hail and similar phenomena

Sultry (adj) - dry and hot

Heatstroke (n) - feeling of nausea, weakness, possible loss of consciousness due to too much time spent in the sun

Heat intolerance - a human condition when the person can't be exposed to high temperatures.

Irrigation (n) - same to watering but usually on a bigger scale i.e. in farming

Crops (n) - any edible cultures planted by humans

Drought (n) - a natural phenomenon when the amount of frequency of rainfall is too low so the plants suffer from lack of water

Watering (n) - the process of giving water to plants

Contaminate (v) - to make something dirty

Flora and fauna - plants and animals, respectively

Median temperature - average temperature. The average can be a day, a month, a year and so on.

General vocabulary

Bump up - to increase, to make bigger

Extreme (n) - a very high number or amount of something

Take advantage of smth - to exploit something, to use something in your interest

Come to terms with - to accept something, to agree to it. Usually used with something negative or unpleasant

Subside - to decrease gradually

Intrusive (adj) - disturbing and involved in something to a degree that is too much.

Capable of - if someone or something is capable of doing something, it can do it

Innumerable (adj) - too much or many to count

Application (n) - (here) a way or method of using something

Former, latter - words used to refer to something mentioned previously. 'Former' refers to the first thing and 'latter' - to the last one.

Shake up - to change something considerably.