

## Imagining a world without fossil fuels

Can you imagine a world without fossil fuels? In this video, former UN climate chief Christiana Figueres outlines her vision of a world that's entirely free of fossil fuels.

### Tasks

Do the preparation task first. Then watch the video and do the exercises. You can also read the transcript.

### Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–j) with the vocabulary (1–10).

#### Vocabulary

1. .... fossil fuels
2. .... fumes
3. .... abundant
4. .... the grid
5. .... to subsidise
6. .... greenhouse gases
7. .... to plummet
8. .... a commodity market
9. .... to bend the curve of emissions
- 10..... a side effect

#### Definition

- a. to pay part of the cost of something
- b. to go down in amount very quickly and suddenly
- c. an unwanted or unexpected result
- d. more than enough
- e. trade in large quantities of substances or products such as oil
- f. gases, especially carbon dioxide, that prevent heat from the earth escaping into space
- g. fuels, such as gas, coal and oil, that were formed underground millions of years ago
- h. to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and global warming
- i. strong, unpleasant and sometimes dangerous gas or smoke
- j. connection to the main supply of electricity, water, etc.

### Task 1

Put the ideas in the correct group.

#### Groups

1. The world now with fossil fuels  
.....  
.....

2. The imagined world without fossil fuels  
.....  
.....

#### Ideas

- a. Energy is abundant for billions of years.
- b. Electricity is available for everyone.
- c. We smell car, bus and truck fumes.
- d. Public health improves.
- e. There is a lot of traffic noise.
- f. Governments spend a lot of money on protecting underground fuel sources and pipes.
- g. Fossil fuels are no longer used.
- h. Smog and greenhouse gases affect public health.

### Task 2

Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

|              |                       |           |               |
|--------------|-----------------------|-----------|---------------|
| challenges   | dangers               | emissions | energy system |
| Fossil fuels | global transformation | subsidise | wind power    |

1. Governments will save money if they no longer ..... fossil-fuel production.
2. Our ..... is undergoing an unstoppable transformation.
3. The coal-fired power industry is being rapidly replaced by sun and .....
4. Our collective mission is to bend the curve of .....
5. .... have made an extraordinary contribution to humanity.
6. Now that we understand the ..... of fossil fuels, we should no longer use them.
7. The journey to a fossil-fuel-free future is the most exciting ..... we have ever seen.
8. Renewable energy is the answer to so many ..... in the world.

### Discussion

Did you learn anything new from the video?

## Transcript

Imagine a world without fossil fuels. None at all.

Imagine a world where you never need to smell the fumes of a passing car, bus or truck and where traffic noise is massively reduced.

Imagine a world powered by something you can't touch, which will be abundant for billions of years.

Imagine a world where every single home has electricity, no matter how far it is from the grid. That's the future beyond fossil fuels.

Imagine governments no longer needing to subsidise fossil-fuel production or spend fortunes protecting their underground fuel sources, pipes and transmission lines.

Trillions of taxpayer dollars are freed up.

Smog and greenhouse gases plummet. Public health improves. This healthy future is closer than you think. Our energy system is undergoing an unstoppable transformation. The coal-fired power industry that took a century to build is being rapidly replaced by sun and wind power, forces of nature which cannot be dug out of the ground or sold on commodity markets.

In this totally fossil-fuel-free world, electricity belongs to everyone. It's home-grown in the true sense, bringing power to the 1.3 billion people who are currently inexcusably without it.

The Paris climate agreement bound nations of the world to work peacefully for a fossil-fuel-free economy. But we need to move fast. We must harness the power of the sun and work at the speed of light.

Our collective mission is to bend the curve of emissions now so that renewable energy outcompetes fossil fuels as the best new source of energy in all markets around the world by 2020.

So let's thank fossil fuels for all they have done. Their contribution to humanity has been nothing short of extraordinary. However, now that we understand the dangers and the side effects and have exciting, everlasting alternatives, it is time to retire them. Pronto!

The journey to our fossil-fuel-free future is the most exciting, the most innovative, the most necessary, the most inclusive and far-reaching global transformation we have ever seen.

This is the answer to so many challenges in the world. The energy newtopia. The only question now is, how quickly can we get there?

## Answers

### Preparation task

1. g
2. i
3. d
4. j
5. a
6. f
7. b
8. e
9. h
10. c

### Task 1

1. c, e, f, h
2. a, b, d, g

### Task 2

1. subsidise
2. energy system
3. wind power
4. emissions
5. Fossil fuels
6. dangers
7. global transformation
8. challenges