

Directions: In this section, you are going to read a passage with ten statements attached to it. Each statement contains information given in one of the paragraphs. Identify the paragraph from which the information is derived. You may choose a paragraph more than once. Each paragraph is marked with a letter. Answer the questions by marking the corresponding letter on **Answer Sheet 2**.

Climate change may be real, but it's still not easy being green

How do we convince our inner caveman to be greener? We ask some outstanding social scientists.

- A) The road to climate hell is paved with our good intentions. Politicians may tackle polluters while scientists do battle with carbon emissions. But the most pervasive problem is less obvious: our own behaviour. We get distracted before we can turn down the heating. We break our promise not to fly after hearing about a neighbour's trip to India. Ultimately, we can't be bothered to change our attitude. Fortunately for the planet, social science and behavioural economics may be able to do that for us.
- B) Despite mournful polar bears and charts showing carbon emissions soaring, most people find it hard to believe that global warming will affect them personally. Recent polls by the Pew Research Centre in Washington, DC, found that 75-80 percent of participants regarded climate change as an important issue. But respondents ranked it last on a list of priorities.
- C) This inconsistency largely stems from a feeling of powerlessness. "When we can't actually remove the source of our fear, we tend to adapt psychologically by adopting a range of defense mechanisms," says Tom Crompton, change strategist for the environmental organization World Wide Fund for Nature.
- D) Part of the fault lies with our inner caveman. Evolution has programmed humans to pay most attention to issues that will have an immediate impact. "We worry most about now because if we don't survive for the next minute, we're not going to be around in ten years' time," says Professor Elke Weber of the Centre for Research on Environmental Decisions at Columbia University in New York. If the Thames were lapping around Big Ben, Londoners would face up to the problem of emissions pretty quickly. But in practice, our brain discounts the risks—and benefits—associated with issues that lie some way ahead.
- E) Matthew Rushworth, of the Department of Experimental Psychology at the University of Oxford, sees this in his lab every day. "One of the ways in which all agents seem to make decisions is that they assign a lower weighting to outcomes that are going to be further away in the future," he says. "This is a very sensible way for an animal to make decisions in the wild and would have been very helpful for humans for thousands of years."
- F) Not any longer. By the time we wake up to the threat posed by climate change, it could well be too late. And if we're not going to make rational decisions about the future, others may have to help us to do so.
- G) Few political libraries are without a copy of *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth and Happiness*, by Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein. They argue that governments should persuade us into making better decisions—such as saving more in our pension plans—by changing the default options. Professor Weber believes that environmental policy can make use of similar tactics. If, for example, building codes included green construction guidelines, most developers would be too lazy to challenge them.

- H) Defaults are certainly part of the solution. But social scientists are most concerned about crafting messages that exploit our group mentality(心态). "We need to understand what motivates people, what it is that allows them to make change," says Professor Neil Adger, of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research in Norwich. "It is actually about what their peers think of them, what their social norms are, what is seen as desirable in society." In other words, our inner caveman is continually looking over his shoulder to see what the rest of the tribe are up to.
- I) The passive attitude we have to climate change as individuals can be altered by counting us in—and measuring us against—our peer group. "Social norms are primitive and elemental," says Dr. Robert Cialdini, author of *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*. "Birds flock together, fish school together, cattle herd together..." just perceiving norms is enough to cause people to adjust their behavior in the direction of the crowd.
- J) These norms can take us beyond good intentions. Cialdini conducted a study in San Diego in which coat hangers bearing messages about saving energy were hung on people's doors. Some of the messages mentioned the environment, some financial savings, others social responsibility. But it was the ones that mentioned the actions of neighbours that drove down power use.
- K) Other studies show that simply providing the facility for people to compare their energy use with the local average is enough to cause them to modify their behaviour. The Conservatives plan to adopt this strategy by making utility companies print the average local electricity and gas usage on people's bills.
- L) Social science can also teach politicians how to avoid our collective capacity for self-destructive behaviour. Environmental campaigns that tell us how many people drive SUVs unwittingly(不经意地) imply that this behaviour is widespread and thus permissible. Cialdini recommends some careful framing of the message. "Instead of normalising the undesirable behaviour, the message needs to marginalise it, for example, by stating that if even one person buys yet another SUV, it reduces our ability to be energy-independent."
- M) Tapping into how we already see ourselves is crucial. The most successful environmental strategy will marry the green message to our own sense of identity. Take your average trade union member, chances are they will be politically motivated and be used to collective action—much like Erica Gregory. A retired member of the Public and Commercial Services Union, she is setting up one of 1,100 action groups with the support of Climate Solidarity, a two-year environmental campaign aimed at trade unionists.
- N) Erica is proof that a great-grandmother can help to lead the revolution if you get the psychology right—in this case, by matching her enthusiasm for the environment with a fondness for organising groups. "I think it's a terrific idea," she says of the campaign. "The union backing it makes members think there must be something in it." She is expecting up to 20 people at the first meeting she has called, at her local pub in the Cornish village of Polperro.
- O) Nick Perks, project director for Climate Solidarity, believes this sort of activity is where the future of environmental action lies. "Using existing civil society structures or networks is a more effective way of creating change... and obviously trade unions are one of the biggest civil society networks in the UK," he says. The "Love Food, Hate Waste" campaign entered into a collaboration last year with another such network—the Women's Institute. Londoner Rachel Taylor joined the campaign with the aim of making new friends. A year on, the meetings have made lasting changes to what she throws away in her kitchen. "It's always more of an incentive if you're doing it with other people," she says. "It motivates you more if you know that you've got to provide feedback to a group."

P) The power of such simple psychology in fighting climate change is attracting attention across the political establishment. In the US, the House of Representatives Science Committee has approved a bill allocating \$10 million a year to studying energy-related behaviour. In the UK, new studies are in development and social scientists are regularly spotted in British government offices. With the help of psychologists, there is fresh hope that we might go green after all.

36. When people find they are powerless to change a situation, they tend to live with it.

37. To be effective, environmental messages should be carefully framed.

38. It is the government's responsibility to persuade people into making environment-friendly decisions.

39. Politicians are beginning to realise the importance of enlisting psychologists' help in fighting climate change.

40. To find effective solutions to climate change, it is necessary to understand what motivates people to make change.

41. In their evolution, humans have learned to pay attention to the most urgent issues instead of long-term concerns.

42. One study shows that our neighbours' actions are influential in changing our behaviour.

43. Despite clear signs of global warming, it is not easy for most people to believe climate change will affect their own lives.

44. We should take our future into consideration in making decisions concerning climate change before it is too late.

45. Existing social networks can be more effective in creating change in people's behaviour.