

# THE WEATHER

## 1 Basic vocabulary

*The climate refers to the general weather conditions in a place. For example:*

*Parts of southern England have an almost Mediterranean climate for part of the year.*

*Some people think pollution is causing climate change in many parts of the world.*

*In countries with a tropical climate there is a dry season and a rainy season. In Europe there are four seasons. Translate these into your language:*

1. spring ..... 2. summer ..... 3. autumn ..... 4. winter .....

*British English autumn = American English fall.*

## 2 What's the weather like?

Match the sentences on the left with the related sentences on the right:

- |                                    |                                     |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. It was sunny and very hot.      | a. We had thunder and lightning.    |
| 2. We had a lot of rain.           | b. There were a few wintry showers. |
| 3. It snowed on and off.           | c. It was quite misty.              |
| 4. It was very windy.              | d. It was very overcast.            |
| 5. It was dull and cloudy.         | e. There was a bit of drizzle.      |
| 6. We had some light rain.         | f. There was quite a breeze.        |
| 7. It was a bit foggy.             | g. We had a bit of a heatwave.      |
| 8. There was the most awful storm. | h. It was very wet.                 |

Now put the following adjectives into the correct pattern below:

- lovely miserable beautiful horrible fabulous glorious terrible foul
9. What ..... / ..... / ..... / ..... weather! It hasn't stopped raining all day.
10. What ..... / ..... / ..... / ..... weather! Let's go down to the beach.

*A breeze is a fairly strong wind. It is not as strong as a gale.*

*Fog is much thicker than mist. It's often misty in the mornings or in the mountains.*

*Drizzle is very fine rain.*

*If it is overcast, it is very dull.*

*Wintry showers is used on weather forecasts to mean a little snow.*

*When would you expect to see a rainbow?*

## 3 Weather collocations

Match each group of adjectives with one of the nouns on the right:

- |                                     |           |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. light, steady, heavy, torrential | a. storm  |
| 2. light, stiff                     | b. fog    |
| 3. dense, thick, patchy             | c. sky    |
| 4. severe, tropical                 | d. breeze |
| 5. clear, blue, grey, cloudless     | e. rain   |

Now complete these expressions with a word on the right:

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 6. a gust of    | f. ice         |
| 7. a ray of     | g. bad weather |
| 8. a sheet of   | h. wind        |
| 9. a blanket of | i. sunshine    |
| 10. a spell of  | j. snow        |

## 4 Temperature words

Use these words to complete the sentences:

freezing      cool      mild  
warm      humid      chilly

1. It's absolutely . . . . . out. I'd put a coat on if I were you.
2. We've had lovely sunshine. It's been so . . . . . I've been on the beach every day.
3. I was on holiday in Thailand last month. It was so . . . . . all the time. Thank goodness the hotel had air-conditioning.
4. It was pretty hot down at the beach but there was a lovely . . . . . breeze.
5. It's a bit . . . . . in here. I think I'll put the heating on.
6. We haven't had a bad winter at all. It's been very . . . . . for the time of year.

## 5 Wet weather

Choose the correct ending for each sentence:

1. It's pouring . . . . .
  2. I'm soaked! I just got caught . . . . .
  3. It looks like it's going to rain. If I were you, I'd take . . . . .
  4. The weather's terrible. I hope it clears up . . . . .
  5. It suddenly started pouring down. I had to shelter . . . . .
  6. My feet are soaking wet. I got out of the car and stepped . . . . .
- a. a bit later.  
b. in a doorway.  
c. an umbrella.  
d. in a huge puddle.  
e. in that heavy shower.  
f. with rain out there!

*When the rain is very heavy, we say that it's pouring. It is rare for people to say that it's raining cats and dogs. This is an idiom taught by English teachers, but seldom used!*

## 6 Weather forecasts

Use the correct form of the verbs to complete the forecast:

rise      fall      reach      remain

Tomorrow the south will again (1) . . . . . warm and dry. Temperatures could (2) . . . . . 25°C during the afternoon. In the north, the day will start quite cool, but temperatures will (3) . . . . . gradually during the day. Later in the week the weather will turn cold and night-time temperatures could (4) . . . . . as low as 8°C.

Now use these words to complete the next forecast:

wintry      icy      melt      sleet      frost

Tonight will be cold and most parts of the country can expect an overnight (5) . . . . . Tomorrow will also be bitterly cold with (6) . . . . . showers in many places. Rain or (7) . . . . . will turn to snow, especially on high ground, later in the day. Roads will be (8) . . . . . and drivers are advised to take extra care. At the weekend daytime temperatures could fall below zero and there will be snow in most parts of the country. Monday will be a little warmer and by Tuesday morning the snow will begin to (9) . . . . .

## 7 Vocabulary notes

Here are some notes on special expressions used to talk about the weather:

1. When a clear sky becomes cloudy, we say, "It's clouding over." **When it improves**, we say, "It's clearing up."
2. A long spell of **unusually hot weather** is called a **heatwave**. A cold spell is sometimes called a cold snap.
3. Another **word for chilly** is nippy.

## KEYS

**Exercise 2:** 1g 2h 3b 4f 5d 6e 7c 8a

9. miserable, horrible, terrible, foul

10. lovely, beautiful, fabulous, glorious

A *rainbow* appears when there is sunshine and rain at the same time.

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

**Exercise 4:** 1. freezing. 2. warm 3. humid 4. cool

5. chilly 6. mild

**Exercise 5:** 1f 2e 3c 4a 5b 6d

**Exercise 6:** 1. remain 2. reach 3. rise 4. fall 5. frost

6. wintry 7. sleet 8. icy 9. melt

Source: Chris Gough (2001) *English Vocabulary Organizer*. Language Teaching Publications. England.