**Cambridge English B for the IB Diploma: Teacher resource**

**Audio scripts**

**Audio track 22**

[Individual oral, Standard level]

**Introduction**

You are going to listen to a standard level student’s individual oral.

[…]

**Student:** I chose this photograph because it shows the new reality of all of these hurricanes hitting America and the Caribbean. The picture shows how someone has lost his house to a hurricane. And you can see from the man’s body language how awful this must be for him. It looks like he wants to pull out his hair in desperation. It’s like he’s going ‘Aaargh, what am I supposed to do now?’ Actually, it really makes you feel sorry for him. It looks like he’s going to have to rebuild his house entirely, which makes you wonder: ‘Who is going to pay for this?’ It also makes you wonder what he lost in that house, like, ‘Did he have a pet that died in there?’ Or... ‘What happened to his family photo albums?’

I can’t imagine going into my own house after a hurricane to see everything destroyed. I wouldn’t know where to begin. But this photograph helps you feel empathy for the man.

I think the picture makes people care about this topic of climate change, which connects to the theme that we did in class, ‘Sharing the planet’, because it shows how real the effects of climate change are. I mean you can see the physical and emotional damage caused by this hurricane. And hurricanes are coming more and more often, because the temperature in the Gulf of Mexico is rising. And it’s rising due to global warming.

We talked about global warming in class. We talked about how it’s not always ‘fair’ how poor countries have to deal with all this damage, when it’s the developed countries that make all the pollution. I know the US was hit hard last year in Texas and Florida, but still... places like Cuba and Haiti were not in the news so much even though they got hit too. And they’re too poor to clean up the mess and make things hurricane-proof. Puerto Rico was a good example of a poor country that was also hit hard. But because they don’t vote in US elections, Trump didn’t send any help. At least, that’s what I read in the newspapers. They didn’t have any electricity or water for weeks and so a lot of them just packed up and moved to America to start new lives there. So now it’s an immigration problem for America. So in a sense, they are kind of paying for the climate problems that they’ve created.

So what I’m saying is that global warming is real and it has real consequences. Some people migrate because of it. Some people’s houses get crushed because of it. And it costs millions of dollars to clean up.

The problem is that many people in the United States of America are not taking climate change seriously. More specifically, I think a lot of American politicians, like the President Donald Trump, aren’t taking climate change seriously. They’re just ignoring the problem, by pulling out of the Paris Climate Agreement and not even speaking about it in the media as the cause of these hurricanes.

In class we read an article that said only fifty per cent of Americans think climate change is even happening. And only a portion of the fifty per cent who realise it’s happening agree that it is caused by humans. Many people in America think that global warming is fake. They think it’s invented by liberals and scientists, like Al Gore, to make Americans feel scared. But a picture like this shows everyone that it’s very real. And it *is* scary. The storms are more frequent and much bigger than before global warming. So they must be caused by global warming. I hope Americans will stop denying it and make changes before it’s too late.

**Teacher:** OK, thanks for that. I see that you’re making a connection here between the visual stimulus and what we discussed in class. Hurricanes are of course only one of many problems created by global warming. Can you think of other problems? And can you tell me how global warming has caused these problems?

**Student:** Yeah OK. So we talked about the causes and effects of global warming. We read an article about Bangladesh, where there’s a lot of flooding every year. People are getting salt water in their drinking water and rice fields, which is killing the rice and the mango plants. And this problem is only getting worse because sea levels are rising and more salt water is coming up-stream.

**Teacher:** But how is global warming *causing* this?

**Student:** I think that the polar ice is melting and making the sea levels rise. And when the sea levels rise they push salt water up river channels and cause flooding. And there’s the Himalayas too, which is like another polar cap and the glaciers there are melting too, which causes flooding in places like Bangladesh, which we learned about in class in *An Inconvenient Truth* by Al Gore.

**Teacher:** That’s right. Can you explain why the polar caps are melting? I mean, how does climate change work? Where’s the connection between driving your car and polar caps melting?

**Student:** Well, I think when you start your car you’re emitting carbon dioxide which gets into the air. And I think there are UV rays from the sun that get trapped in the atmosphere because of this carbon dioxide. And that’s what warms it up. Is that what you mean?

**Teacher:** Yeah, I think that’s basically how it works. Did we learn about any other causes and effects of climate change?

**Student:** Other causes and effects... Oh yeah! We watched another documentary about animals and their gases. It was called *Cowspiracy* and it was about methane gas. That was really shocking. In fact, methane is just as bad as carbon dioxide, if not worse. It turns out that there are a lot of farm animals on planet Earth and they produce a lot of waste, which creates all this methane, which also creates a greenhouse effect. And it seems to be a problem that no one really acknowledges. In the documentary we saw how all these non-profit organisations basically ignore the problem. But if you look at the amount of land that these animals need and the amount of water and food it takes to keep them alive, then you realise how they have a big impact on the environment. I was shocked by all of this. I mean, their waste goes into drink water and rivers and it destroys all the ecology near it. We learned about ‘dead zones’ in the oceans. Actually the Gulf of Mexico is one too. So the meat industry also causes these hurricanes, because it’s making the temperatures in the sea rise too, with methane in the air and waste in the sea.

**Teacher:** So do you still eat meat?

**Student:** Ha ha... Well, I think more about how much meat I eat. I think meat tastes really good, but I don’t need to eat so much. Actually we learned that Americans eat three times more meat than non-Americans. I think if we want to improve the environment, then we should start with the United States. But I try to do my part.

**Teacher:** What are some other things that you do to help the environment?

**Student:** Well... generally speaking I do lots of things. I try to take my bike everywhere instead of asking my parents for a ride. And we do the usual things in my house, like we recycle paper and glass and plastic. We switch off lights in rooms that we’re not using and we take our devices out of the socket when we’re not using them. Those kinds of things.

**Teacher:** Do you think they make a difference?

**Student:** Well, I don’t know... I mean if everyone did all of these little things then they would add up to make a big difference. I suppose that’s the problem with the world: everyone is living like whatever they do doesn’t make a difference. And if everyone thinks that way then there won’t be much of a planet left.

**Teacher:** It sounds like you care about this topic. Were there other topics related to the ‘Sharing the planet’ theme that interested you?

**Student:** Yes, let’s see. We talked about a lot of things. We talked about poverty and human rights and education.

**Teacher:** Is there one you’d like to talk about more?

**Student:** Well, I found the topic of poverty really interesting because I learned a few things that I didn’t expect to learn.

**Teacher:** Can you tell me what they were?

**Student:** Well, we watched a TED talk about basic income by a Dutch man, Rutger Bregman. He suggested that governments should just put poor people on a salary. I found it shocking and counterintuitive. I know what most people think: a basic income would reward laziness. And I used to think that too. But he was saying that poor people are poor not because they’re lazy but because they lack cash. I know that might sound silly. I mean... of course they lack cash. But he was talking about experiments in towns where poor people were just *given* cash, and they used it for useful things that helped them find work, like education. It was really interesting. It was strange but it kind of made sense.

**Teacher:** Did we talk about any other ways of tackling poverty?

**Student:** Well, yeah. But it was a little confusing. I mean, everyone seems to think they have the answer to solving poverty, especially in Africa. So, for example, we read an article by a Nigerian economist, Dambisa Moyo, who was saying that what really hurts African countries is the foreign aid from Western countries. She was saying how it just ends up in the pockets of corrupt politicians. And it only creates a dependency on the West that keeps many people poor. And that kind of makes sense too.

**Teacher:** So if Rutger Bregman says we should just give poor people cash, and Dambisa Moyo says we shouldn’t give aid to poor countries, what’s the solution?

**Student:** Well, I don’t know... I mean what I think is best is what we talked about with these small loans that you can give entrepreneurs in poor countries. I can’t remember what it was called.

**Teacher:** Microcredit?

**Student:** Yeah, microcredit.

**Teacher:** Can you explain how that helps alleviate poverty?

**Student:** So yeah, Microcredit: We looked at some of the websites to see how it worked, and it’s pretty simple. It’s a bit like Kickstarter, if you know that site. You can see that people have small business plans. I was surprised how many were related to farming, which I don’t know much about. They explain how they need ‘x’ amount of dollars to buy a new plough machine. You can give this money to them through a bank that specialises in these kinds of loans. They promise that you’ll get your money back before a certain date.

**Teacher:** Would you give money to a farmer this way?

**Student:** Well I don’t know. I mean I’m just a student. I don’t have a lot of money to give away.

**Teacher:** Would you be *giving* it away?

**Student:** Well no, you even earn a little interest on the amount.

**Teacher:** So it’s an investment really?

**Student:** Yeah and the amounts are not that big. But I don’t know. It’s not like I can see the person I’m giving the money to. You know what I mean? It’s not very personal.

**Teacher:** But there’s a picture of them online. You’re probably friends with people on Facebook that you hardly know.

**Student:** Yeah, but that’s different: I’m not lending them money.

**Teacher:** But would you? If they asked?

**Student:** Ha ha... I don’t know. It depends on the friend.

**Teacher:** OK, but realistically, are you more likely to get your money back from a bank that deals in these kinds of loans, or from a friend?

**Student:** Yeah, I see what you mean. The bank, of course. Point taken.

**Teacher:** And you probably wouldn’t charge your friend interest. Am I right?

**Student:** No. You’re right. It’s probably really safe, this microcredit stuff. But I suppose it’s nothing I’ve thought about actually doing.

**Teacher:** It’s just a thought. I’m just trying to point out that what we discussed in class doesn’t have to stay in the class. You can actually change the way you think outside class.

**Student:** Right. I get it. Maybe I’ll try it one day.

**Teacher:** Anyway, I’d like to change the topic and focus on a different prescribed theme.

**Student:** OK.

**Teacher:** What did you think about the topics that we studied on ‘Identities’? We talked about a few topics that explored this theme. Can you think of anything that caught your interest and perhaps influenced the kind of person you would like to become?

**Student:** Oh, OK, yeah, that’s a big question. We talked about what it means to be a ‘citizen of the world’. That was interesting because we talked about the effects of globalisation and how it affects us.

**Teacher:** What does that mean, ‘citizen of the world’? Do you consider yourself as one?

**Student:** So to be a ‘citizen of the world’ means that you’re multinational or international, where you can feel at home anywhere. And you know how to get around or navigate different places and... cultures. I think that’s what it’s about. It’s about being respectful of other cultures. And I think I’m probably a citizen of the world too, because I try to respect everyone at our school. And we have a lot of cultures here.

**Teacher:** Can you give an example of how you’re respectful? How do you respect people from other cultures?

**Student:** Yeah, sure... I mean I know we have a lot of Americans in our school, and sometimes I really don’t understand why they behave how they do. But then in class we read an article, remember? It was by an American guy who was living in Russia.

**Teacher:** Yeah...

**Student:** So he explained that he had a hard time living in Russia, because everyone was judging him openly and honestly. Whereas, in the States he was used to a kind of fake niceness everywhere.

**Teacher:** Yeah...?

**Student:** And he explained that, eventually, he came to like the Russian directness, because he could learn from it. He also explained how Russia went through a difficult time under communism. He said that honesty was really important during communism, because you needed to know who you could trust. And the fake niceness from America was also important, because in the context of America, where you have capitalism, everyone has to sell themselves or their business in order to get ahead in life. So he could explain how these cultural differences have roots in history. And it made a lot of sense to me. It made me think.

**Teacher:** So what you’re saying is that this article helped you understand why your American classmates behave a certain way. And you can respect this way, even though it’s different from how you usually behave in your culture?

**Student:** Yeah, that’s what I’m trying to say.

**Teacher:** So being a ‘citizen of the world’ means respecting people from other cultures. And you say you think of yourself as a ‘citizen of the world’. How else do you see yourself? Are there any places or people you identify with?

**Student:** Well, yes, of course. I think by being here at this school, with so many other students from all over the world, it’s become clear to me that I’m really Dutch. But that’s OK. I like being Dutch.

**Teacher:** And what does it mean for you to be Dutch?

**Student:** Well, you know, it’s about more than tulips and windmills. I think being Dutch is all about being really practical. I don’t know. It’s like this: I live in the Middle East, because my dad has business here. And things are kind of crazy here, if you ask me. I mean every country is different. But when I go home and I fly over Holland, I see that everything is in its place. Greenhouses, fields, motorways, buildings. And it’s all so flat. You know, the Dutch are kind of hyper-organised, which makes me a little claustrophobic, because every square centimeter is managed. But it’s also comforting, knowing that it’s managed. That’s what it means for me to be Dutch, I guess.

**Teacher:** And are there typical Dutch traits that you’re critical of?

**Student:** Well I don’t want to stereotype, but we are also very stingy. We do things on the cheap. Dutch people are famous for bringing their own food with them on holiday. I once got into trouble for making a packed lunch from the items at a breakfast buffet. But I thought that was normal, because I see my parents do it all the time. I suppose it’s just being economical. But it’s kind of embarrassing sometimes.

**Teacher:** I think we’ve run out of time, but I’ve enjoyed talking to you about your culture and international-mindedness and microcredit and environmentalism and this photograph, not to forget.

**Student:** Oh yeah, the photograph.

**Teacher:** Thanks for your time.