

Edexcel A Geography GCSE

Topic 2: Weather Hazards and Climate Change

Definitions Flashcards

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Atmospheric circulation



Atmospheric circulation

The general movements of air around the Earth due to pressure and temperature.



Climate change



Climate change

A distinct change in global or regional patterns of climate, such as changes in temperature or precipitation patterns.



Convection current



Convection current

The movement of a fluid caused by a difference in temperature or density.



Coriolis Effect



Coriolis Effect

The effect of the Earth's rotation on wind movements.



Cyclone



Cyclone

A tropical cyclone that hits Oceania or Madagascar.



Drought



Drought

A prolonged dry period in the natural climate cycle that can occur anywhere in the world (WHO Definition).



Eccentricity



Eccentricity

A measure of how much the Earth's orbit around the Sun changes from a circular shape to an ellipse.



Eye



Eye

An area of a tropical cyclone with extremely low pressure and calm conditions.



Eyewall



Eyewall

An area of a tropical cyclone with the most intense, powerful winds and torrential rain.



Ferrel Cell



Ferrel Cell

At around 60° North and South of the equator, moist air rises, and travels to lower latitudes at around 30° . Here, it sinks along with air travelling from the equator.



Fossil fuels



Fossil fuels

Fuels made up of the remains of organic material, such as oil, coal and gas.



Greenhouse Gases



Greenhouse Gases

Gases in the Earth's atmosphere that trap energy in the Earth's system and contribute to the greenhouse effect (carbon dioxide, methane, water vapour and nitrous oxides).



Hadley Cell



Hadley Cell

Warm, moist air rises near the equator and then cools as it travels to higher latitudes (30°) where it sinks.



Hazard risk



Hazard risk

The probability that a natural hazard will negatively affect a population.



Hurricane



Hurricane

A tropical cyclone that hits the USA,
Latin America or the Caribbean.



Hydrological Drought



Hydrological Drought

When reduced precipitation impacts water supply. There is a decrease in streamflow, soil moisture, reservoir, lake and groundwater levels.



Ice core



Ice core

A cylinder of ice extracted from an ice sheet or glacier, which is used to analyse past environmental conditions.



Immediate responses



Immediate responses

Actions taken as soon as the hazard occurs and in its immediate aftermath (hours, days, and potentially a week or so after the event).



Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ)



Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ)

An area surrounding the equator where global winds converge, causing an area of low pressure with rainy conditions.



Long-term responses



Long-term responses

Actions taken after the immediate responses when the effects of the hazard have been minimised (weeks, months, and years after the event).



Meteorological Drought



Meteorological Drought

When the amount of precipitation received in an area is below average.



Milankovitch Cycles



Milankovitch Cycles

The cyclical variations in the Earth's orbit around the Sun. Includes: Eccentricity, Obliquity (tilt) and Precession (wobble of Earth's axis).



Obliquity (or axial tilt)



Obliquity (or axial tilt)

The tilt of the Earth's axis, which changes from 21.5° and 24.5° .



Ocean currents



Ocean currents

The predictable, continuous circulation of ocean water which transfers heat around the globe.



Polar Cell



Polar Cell

At 60° north or south of the equator, moist air rises, and travels to the poles (90°), where it sinks.



Precession



Precession

The 'wobble' of the Earth's axis.



Pressure belt



Pressure belt

A region of the Earth which is generally under the same pressure.



Primary effects



Primary effects

The effects that are directly caused by the hazard itself.



Quaternary Period



Quaternary Period

The geological time period which began 2.6 million years ago and extends into the present.



Secondary effects



Secondary effects

Impacts that are a result of the primary effects of a hazard.



Storm surge



Storm surge

When a tropical cyclone pushes a large amount of sea water onto the shore, causing a rise in sea level.



Subduction



Subduction

A process that occurs at a destructive plate boundary when a plate is pushed below another plate, forcing it to sink into the asthenosphere.



The Enhanced Greenhouse Effect



The Enhanced Greenhouse Effect

A process where the Earth's surface is heated by the greenhouse effect at an increased rate due to larger greenhouse gas emissions from human activities.



The Greenhouse Effect



The Greenhouse Effect

A natural process where greenhouse gases trap the energy from the Sun inside the Earth's atmosphere, warming the Earth's surface.



Track



Track

A typical pathway that a tropical cyclone takes which is driven by global wind circulation.



Tree rings



Tree rings

A ring in a tree trunk that grows annually, indicating the conditions in the year it grew.



Tropical cyclone



Tropical cyclone

A very large, spinning storm with high winds and torrential rain that forms in the tropics.



Typhoon



Typhoon

A tropical cyclone that hits India, Japan or the Philippines.

