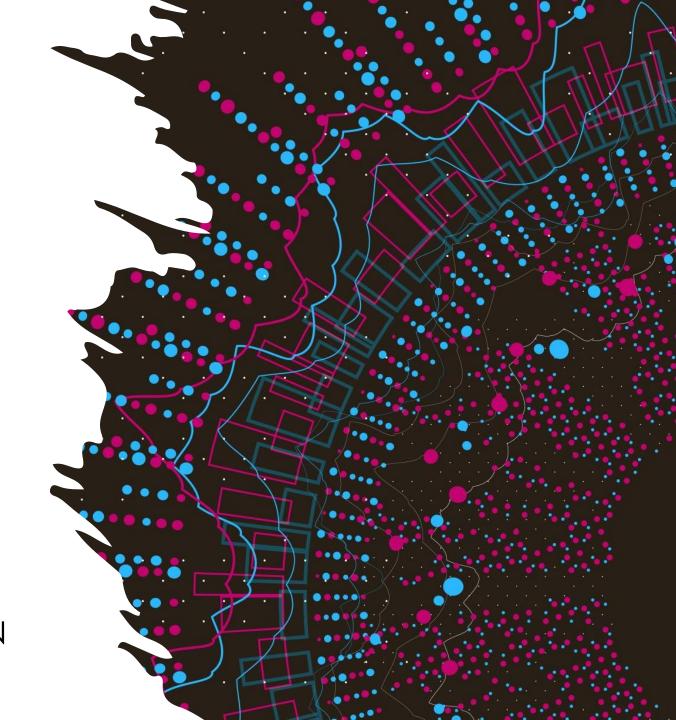# New internationalist

Care, the climate, and grammar

AN INTERMEDIATE + READY LESSON

This lesson:

- Speaking
- Reading
- Grammar: conditionals

What's happening in the photo?:

Questions to discuss:

1) How do you think care work is related to the climate emergency?

2) This is the title of the article you're going to read:

'5 reasons why we cannot separate care and the climate'

- What do you think the 5 reasons could be?

Now read the 5 reasons and see if your predictions are similar:

Make brief notes on any differences

1 CLIMATE CHANGE IS A HEALTH EMERGENCY

The World Health Organization (WHO) says that 250,000 extra people will die because of climate change (from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress) between 2030 and 2050. Already there are more cases of asthma in children, diseases carried by insects and other conditions that are made worse by climate change and pollution. Our mental health is also at risk. Research from 2018 said that climate change could lead to 40,000 extra suicides in the US and Mexico by 2050.

All this will bring a lot more work for health workers and carers.

2 CARERS HELP FIRST IN A DISASTER

The UN said that there is now one climate disaster every week. Usually in these disasters, more disabled and older people die. They can be left out of evacuation plans, so they cannot get transport and emergency information, or people simply leave them alone.

Care workers (health workers, carers, teachers and transport workers) have the long-term care work, but also have to help first in disasters. They often have to make quick decisions about how to look after people. For example, home carer Teresa Santos died in the 2017 wildfire in California together with her client 90-year-old Sally Lewis. 'She didn't save herself, she stayed with my mother until the end,' Lewis' daughter told reporters.

3 CLIMATE CHANGE MAKES MORE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GENDERS

We need to change how society sees care and labour in the home. If we don't, women and girls will have more and more work as climate change gets worse and there are fewer resources.

Probably by 2025 about 2.4 billion people will be living in areas without enough water. It will be harder to find fuel and wood for fires. It is mostly women and girls who get water, fuel and wood. They will need to travel further, and this brings the risk of violence and takes a lot of time, for example, from education.

4 CARE WORK IS CLIMATE WORK

Jobs that involve caring for people, and the planet, are some of the jobs that create least pollution. Changing to a greener economy, will mean valuing these jobs. We will need these jobs more because we have more older people and because of the climate shocks.

5 SURVIVAL

Covid-19 has been a warning that we can't protect human health and also destroy the natural world. A more caring economy must also care for nature – which gives us life.

Maria Neira (director of the WHO's department of environment and climate change) warned that the devastation of natural habitats, industrial agriculture and the trade in wildlife are important causes of diseases moving from wild creatures to humans. With other experts she wrote in June 2020 that we must make the recovery from Covid-19 just, healthy and green. We must start a wider transformation to a system that values nature as the foundation for a healthy society. Not doing this, and trying to save money by not protecting the environment health systems and social support, will cost a lot more.

So how is **grammar** related to care and the climate?

The text is talking about choices and options, so we can practise the conditional, with:

- **If we …**
- **If we don't …**
- **Unless we …**
- **As long as we …**
- **Providing /provided …**

How do we use all these? Write some sample sentences about climate change and care

1/ The World Health Organization (WHO) says that 250,000 extra people will die because of climate change (from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress) between 2030 and 2050. Already there are more cases of asthma in children, diseases carried by insects and other conditions that are made worse by climate change and pollution. Our mental health is also at risk. Research from 2018 said that climate change could lead to 40,000 extra suicides in the US and Mexico by 2050.
All this will bring a lot more work for health workers and carers.

Complete these sentences:

a) If the climate changes more and we have more pollution, there …….. be more cases of asthma.

b) ……… we do something about climate change, there could be an extra 40,000 suicides by 2050.

c) If nothing improves, there will be a lot more work for …… ………………………………

Answers:

a) If the climate changes more and we have more pollution, there **will** be more cases of asthma.

This is a first conditional – about a real option in the future.

b) Unless we do something about climate change, there could be an extra 40,000 suicides by 2050.

Unless means 'if not' and is a type of first conditional.

c) If nothing improves, there will be a lot more work for **health workers and carers**.

Again, a first conditional.

2/ The UN said that there is now one climate disaster every week. Usually in these disasters, more disabled and older people die. They can be left out of evacuation plans, so they cannot get transport and emergency information, or people simply leave them alone. Care workers (health workers, carers, teachers and transport workers) have the long-term care work, but also have to help first in disasters. They often have to make quick decisions about how to look after people. For example, home carer Teresa Santos died in the 2017 wildfire in California together with her client 90-year-old Sally Lewis. 'She didn't save herself, she stayed with my mother until the end,' Lewis' daughter told reporters.

Complete these sentences:

a) .... we have more disasters, more disabled and older people will die.

b) .... disabled people are included in evacuation plans, they can get left alone.

c) If Teresa Santos ...... stayed with Sally Lewis, she wouldn't .... died.

Answers:

a) **If** we have more disasters, more disabled and older people will die.

This is a first conditional – a real possibility.

a) **Unless** disabled people are included in evacuation plans, they can get left alone.

*Unless, meaning 'if not' and another real first conditional. You could also put: **If** disabled people are **not** included …*

a) If Teresa Santos **hadn't** stayed with Sally Lewis, she wouldn't **have** died.

This is a third conditional about the past, and in the negative, with past perfect and past conditional tenses.

3/ We need to change how society sees care and labour in the home. If we don't, women and girls will have more and more work as climate change gets worse and there are fewer resources.

Probably by 2025 about 2.4 billion people will be living in areas without enough water. It will be harder to find fuel and wood for fires. It is mostly women and girls who get water, fuel and wood. They will need to travel further, and this brings the risk of violence and takes a lot of time, for example, from education.

Complete these sentences:

a) ………… we change how society sees care and labour in the home, women and girls could have less work.

b) ……… climate change gets worse and there are fewer resources, women and girls will have more work.

c) ………….. women and girls get water, fuel and wood, we need to ensure they are protected from violence and loss of education.

Answers:

a) **Provided / providing / if** we change how society sees care and labour in the home, women and girls could have less work.

First conditional – with 'if', 'provided' or 'providing'.

b) **If** climate change gets worse and there are fewer resources, women and girls will have more work.

First conditional – a real option.

c) **As long as / if** women and girls are getting water, fuel and wood, we need to ensure they are protected from violence and loss of education.

First conditional with 'if' or 'as long as' – real possibility.

Now write similar sentences with:
if / unless / provided / providing / as long as
about parts 4 and 5 of the article:

4/ Jobs that involve caring for people, and the planet, are some of the jobs that create least pollution. Changing to a greener economy, will mean valuing these jobs. We will need these jobs more because we have more older people and because of the climate shocks.

5/ Covid-19 has been a warning that we can't protect human health and also destroy the natural world. A more caring economy must also care for nature – which gives us life.

Maria Neira (director of the WHO's department of environment and climate change) warned that the devastation of natural habitats, industrial agriculture and the trade in wildlife are important causes of diseases moving from wild creatures to humans. With other experts she wrote in June 2020 that we must make the recovery from Covid-19 just, healthy and green. We must start a wider transformation to a system that values nature as the foundation for a healthy society. Not doing this, and trying to save money by not protecting the environment health systems and social support, will cost a lot more.

Example sentences:

a) **If** we change to a greener economy, we will need to value these jobs more.

b) **If** we destroy natural habitats, more diseases could move from animals to humans.

c) **If** we don't value nature, and try to save money by not protecting the environment health systems and social support, it will cost a lot more.

d) **Unless** we value nature, we will need to spend a lot more money on health.

e) **Provided / providing** we transform the system to value nature, we could have a just, healthy, green recovery from Covid-19.

Speaking: discuss to agree on an order of importance for these 5 ideas:
1 CLIMATE CHANGE IS A HEALTH EMERGENCY
2 CARERS HELP FIRST IN A DISASTER
3 CLIMATE CHANGE MAKES MORE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GENDERS
4 CARE WORK IS CLIMATE WORK
5 SURVIVAL

and try to use some of the conditional sentences you've worked on in your discussion

Follow-up

Read the original (more difficult) article:
https://newint.org/features/2020/10/06/5-reasons-why-care-and-climate-are-inseparable

And more simplified articles from the eewiki:
https://eewiki.newint.org
(you can search – top right – for topics you are interested in)