

YEARS OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY



SERIES VIEWING GUIDE – MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL – EPISODE 1: DRY SEASON

STORY SUMMARY

The series premiere of this globetrotting docu-series about the human impacts of climate change explores the devastating effects of extreme drought and deforestation. Harrison Ford travels to Indonesia to investigate how the world's appetite for palm oil - an ingredient in everything from candy bars to laundry detergent - has led to massive deforestation and turned that country into one of the world's largest emitters of greenhouse gases. Back in the U.S., Don Cheadle visits Plainview, TX where a community once reliant on a meat-packing plant for its livelihood is looking for answers. Many blame the drought that caused the plant's closure on the will of God or say it's part of a natural cycle, however, Katharine Hayhoe—a climate scientist and Evangelical Christian—has a very different explanation. And, Pulitzer Prize-winner Thomas Friedman embarks on his first of three Middle Eastern trips to examine how climate change can be a stress point in a volatile political situation and push it over the edge.

SUMMARY

Students will begin to learn about the perspectives and evidence related to the stories shared in Episode 1 and share their own stories and evidence about climate change impacts in their community.

TIME NEEDED

110 minutes

2 class periods; or

(1) 2 hour after-school time period

MATERIALS

- Link to Episode 1: *Dry Season*
- Copy of Episode 1 Viewing Guide



STUDENTS

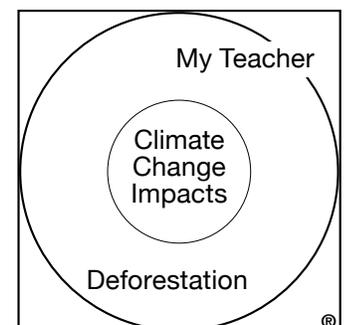
Locate the following places on a map. Northern California, Indonesia, Syria, Plainview, Texas

Break the class or group into small groups and ask each of them to explain how climate change is both a local and global problem.

Have each group create a definition for **evidence** on a large piece of paper; hang the definitions in the room to review after watching Episode 1: *Dry Season*.

Have each student/person add an impact to a climate change impacts Circle Map as shown below. After viewing Episode 1 ask each student/person to add to the map if they feel descriptions are missing.

Note: Circle Maps are a type of Thinking Map. There are three parts: the word(s) to describe in the center, the describing words in the outer circle, a frame of reference to note how you know/learned the information you have.



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WATCHING THE FILM

- Ask students to answer the **Before You Watch** questions prior to watching the episode.
- After viewing the episode, students should complete the **After You Watch** – Reflection section. Students can answer these questions on their own, or opt for a class discussion.
- Encourage students to answer the final question, “What issues or solutions are you interested in learning more about?” Consider student answers when choosing which lessons you will use in the corresponding YEARS Lesson Plans for Episode 1.

FOLLOW UP DISCUSSION

The theme for this discussion is “evidence and claims”. Discuss the role these terms play in Episode 1. There are many claims and scientific evidence presented by all kinds of people.

- How do we know what a credible source is when determining an arguments validity.
- How have students’ or the groups’ views changed?
- What opinions have remained the same?
- What new information had the greatest impact on them?

EXTENSIONS

Another discussion to have around the series is to ask students to summarize or find their favorite quotes and explain why that statement had an impact on their thinking about climate change, evidence, beliefs or opinions and public policy.

- Ask students to share why the statement has meaning for them. For example is it the person who is making the statement that makes it powerful or the context?
- You may also post the following quotes on the wall or present on pieces of paper for student to read and discuss ingroups or out loud in a large circle.



QUOTES FROM DRY SEASON:

“20% of all emissions come from deforestation.”

Rama Nemani – from minute 9:00

“It seems like the same people who don’t want to believe in that [climate] science, believe in science when they need to take a pill or when they need or want something to work right in the house.”

Don Cheadle – screen grab from 30:03

“We all believed that we were going to come together, pray about this and something was going to change for Plainview. I had never heard of climate change and after hearing Katherine, I was just like, Wow!, well if we start using the right things and doing the right things we can probably save our planet.”

Nelly Montez – from minute 15:55

“The average droughts going to become more severe as it gets warmer. The bottom line is the natural suspects all have alibis, we can’t blame it on the natural cycles, the sun, the ice ages, volcanoes; natural causes would be causing us to cool right now.”

Katherine Hayhoe – from 30:03

“The drought didn’t just dry out the soil, it dried out the whole political landscape.”

Thomas Freidman – from minute 54:55



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BEFORE YOU WATCH

Before you are introduced to the stories in Episode 1: *Dry Season* and learn about the issues facing communities around the world, take a few minutes to answer the following questions:

1. What types of actions do you see in your community that are contributing to climate change? Explain.

2. Why do you think the series producers use the tagline, “The Biggest Story of our Time”

3. Do you think your actions impact our climate and environment?

4. How do you know what to believe as true or false?

5. How do you determine whether or not a source is credible?

AFTER YOU WATCH – REFLECTION

Now that you have had the opportunity to listen to the stories in Episode 1, answer the following questions:

1. Why is understanding Syria’s water war important?

2. How do you feel about deforestation’s impact on wildlife?

3. The evangelical community typically looks to the bible to explain climate change. Why is it important to understand the perspective of various groups when working on solutions to climate change?

4. Why do you feel it’s important for the film’s producers to share these climate change stories?

5. What issues or solutions are you interested in learning more about?
