Describing the world: weather and climate

VOCABULARY PRACTICE
UPPER-INTERMEDIATE | B2

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Match each precise term with its definition.

1 arid ____	**a** extremely dry, with very little rainfall
2 humidity ____	**b** the amount of moisture in the air
3 microclimate ____	**c** a small area with a climate distinct from the surrounding region
4 seasonal variation ____	**d** predictable differences in weather across the year
5 precipitation ____	**e** any form of water falling from the sky, such as rain or snow
6 atmospheric pressure ____	**f** the force exerted by the weight of the air
7 volatile weather ____	**g** weather that changes rapidly and unpredictably
8 balmy ____	**h** pleasantly warm, especially in the evening
9 bitter cold ____	**i** extremely and unpleasantly cold
10 sultry ____	**j** hot, humid and oppressive weather

2 Choose the word with the most suitable connotation.

1 For an extremely dry region: arid / lush.

2 For a small area with distinct climate: microclimate / global pattern.

3 For unpleasantly cold weather: bitter cold / mild.

4 For pleasantly warm evening weather: balmy / freezing.

5 For hot, humid, oppressive weather: sultry / crisp.

6 For weather changing rapidly and unpredictably: volatile / stable.

7 For the amount of moisture in the air: humidity / dryness.

8 For any form of water falling from the sky: precipitation / drought.

3 Complete the climate collocations with one word.

1 an _____ climate (= extremely dry)

2 a _____ evening (= pleasantly warm)

3 _____ humidity (= high moisture in the air)

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4 a local _____ (= a distinct small-area climate)

5 _____ weather patterns (= rapidly changing and unpredictable)

6 bitter _____ (= unpleasantly cold)

7 heavy _____ (= significant rain or snowfall)

8 seasonal _____ (= predictable yearly change)

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4 Complete the case notes with words and phrases from the box.

arid | atmospheric pressure | balmy | bitter cold | humidity | microclimate | precipitation | seasonal variation | sultry | volatile weather

Case A: The region's 1 _____ conditions make agriculture extremely difficult, with average annual 2 _____ well below what most crops require.
Case B: The valley has developed its own distinct 3 _____, noticeably warmer than the surrounding hills due to unusual patterns of 4 _____.
Case C: Residents described the summer evenings as 5 _____, ideal for dining outdoors, in sharp contrast to the 6 _____ of winter mornings.
Case D: Forecasters struggled to predict the week's 7 _____, as sudden shifts in 8 _____ made conditions notoriously difficult to model.
Case E: The 9 _____ air made the afternoon feel heavier and more uncomfortable than the temperature alone suggested.
Case F: Farmers plan carefully around predictable 10 _____, adjusting planting schedules accordingly.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

Why forecasting is becoming harder

Meteorologists increasingly report that traditional forecasting models, built on decades of historical seasonal variation, are becoming less reliable as climate change disrupts long-established patterns. Regions once characterised by stable, predictable seasons now experience more volatile weather, including sudden shifts between arid conditions and intense precipitation. This volatility complicates agricultural planning considerably, since farmers historically relied on consistent seasonal patterns to time planting and harvesting. Some regions have also seen the emergence of unusual microclimates, as changing atmospheric pressure systems interact with local geography in increasingly unpredictable ways, further complicating efforts to forecast conditions accurately even

1 What are becoming less reliable, according to meteorologists? _____
2 Why are traditional forecasting models becoming less reliable? _____
3 What kind of weather do previously stable regions now experience? _____
4 What does this volatility complicate considerably? _____
5 What have some regions seen the emergence of? _____
6 What does this further complicate? _____

6 Rewrite each sentence using the word in capitals. Do not change the meaning.

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1 The region is extremely dry with almost no rain. ARID _____

2 The evening was pleasantly warm. BALMY _____

3 The morning was unpleasantly cold. BITTER COLD _____

4 The valley has its own distinct local climate. MICROCLIMATE _____

OVER TO YOU

Write a 120-150 word account of how climate patterns in a region have become less predictable, distinguishing observation from broader explanation.

[ ] Use at least twelve target expressions. [ ] Control connotation carefully. [ ] Avoid unsupported assumptions.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Precise terms

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

2 Connotation

1 arid 2 microclimate 3 bitter cold 4 balmy 5 sultry 6 volatile 7 humidity 8 precipitation

3 Collocations

1 arid 2 balmy 3 high 4 microclimate 5 volatile 6 cold 7 precipitation 8 variation

4 Case notes

1 arid 2 precipitation 3 microclimate 4 atmospheric pressure 5 balmy 6 bitter cold
7 volatile weather 8 atmospheric pressure 9 sultry/humid 10 seasonal variation

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 Traditional forecasting models.
2 Climate change is disrupting long-established seasonal patterns.
3 More volatile weather, including sudden shifts between arid conditions and intense precipitation.
4 Agricultural planning.
5 Unusual microclimates.
6 Efforts to forecast conditions accurately even a few days in advance.

6 Rewriting - possible answers

1 The region is arid. 2 The evening was balmy. 3 The morning was bitterly cold.
4 The valley has its own microclimate.

Over to you

Answers will vary. Check lexical precision, appropriate connotation and separation of fact from inference.