

Olympiáda v anglickom jazyku, 35. ročník, celoštátne kolo 2024/2025, kategória 2C1 – riešenia a úlohy

R O L E P L A Y

STUDENT

You and your classmates have learned about an EU-funded project to support sports facilities at secondary schools in Slovakia. You have submitted a project on behalf of your school and it has been shortlisted for the interview round. Now, you have come to meet the project manager, who you need to convince that your school deserves to be awarded the grant. You have to explain which sports facilities and equipment are needed, why this support should be provided to your school, how this donation will help promote fitness and a healthy lifestyle among the students and in the broader community, and in which ways publicity can be attracted to the project's outcomes.

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R O L E P L A Y

TEACHER

You are the manager of an EU-funded project to support sports facilities at secondary schools in Slovakia. You are holding a meeting with students whose projects have been shortlisted for the interview round. During the interview, each student representative will have to convince you that their school deserves to be awarded the grant. You want to know which sports facilities and equipment are needed, why this support should be provided to the given school, how this donation will help promote fitness and a healthy lifestyle among the students and in the broader community, and in which ways publicity can be attracted to the project's outcomes.

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PICTURE DESCRIPTION

Look at the pictures and describe the differences and similarities between them. Identify the issue they illustrate, outline the pros and cons of each approach, and express your personal opinion on the matter.



LISTENING COMPREHENSION – SCRIPT (please read only once)

For more than 20 years, NASA instruments in space have tracked a growing imbalance in Earth's solar energy budget, with more energy entering than leaving the planet. Much of that imbalance can be pinned on humanity's emissions of greenhouse gases, which trap heat in the atmosphere. But explaining the rest has been a challenge. The loss of reflective ice, exposing darker ground and water that absorb more heat, isn't enough to explain the deficit, and the decline in light-reflecting hazes as countries clean up or close polluting industry falls short as well.

But George Tselioudis, a climate scientist at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, and his colleagues now think they can explain the growing gap with evidence collected by a remarkably long-lived satellite. They find that the world's reflective cloud cover has shrunk in the past two decades by a small but tangible degree, allowing more light in and boosting global warming. Climate scientists now need to figure out what's causing these cloud changes.

Clouds come in all shapes and sizes, but two of the most consistent cloud swaths are formed by Earth's large-scale airflow patterns. One band, near the equator, stretches around the planet like a belt. It forms as the trade winds of the Northern and Southern hemispheres converge, forcing moist air upward to cool and condense into clouds. Another band occurs in the midlatitudes, where jet streams usher large swirls of stormy weather around the planet.

In August 2024, Tselioudis and his coauthors reported that over the 35 years covered by weather satellite imagery, the equatorial cloud bands had narrowed, while the tracks of midlatitude storms had shifted toward the poles, hemming in the region in which they can form and shrinking their coverage. But the result, published in *Climate Dynamics*, was stitched together from many different satellites, each with its own quirks and errors, which made the researchers unsure the small trends they had detected were real.

Now, the team has turned to a single satellite, NASA's Terra, which has been monitoring the planet for nearly a quarter-century. Looking at the same cloud systems, the team found exactly the same trends, with cloud coverage falling by about 1.5% per decade.

The team also found that 80% of the overall reflectivity changes in these regions resulted from shrinking clouds, rather than darker, less reflective ones that could be caused by a drop in pollution. For Tselioudis, this clearly indicates that changes in atmospheric circulation patterns, not pollution reductions, are driving the trend.

The new work doesn't stand alone. Earlier this year, in *Surveys in Geophysics*, a group led by climate scientist Norman Loeb at NASA's Langley Research Center, also traced the gap in the energy imbalance to declining cloud coverage. But Loeb, who leads work on the set of NASA satellite instruments called Clouds and the Earth's Radiant Energy System, which tracks the energy imbalance, thinks pollution declines may be playing an important role in the cloud changes, especially in the Northern Hemisphere. "The observations are telling us something is definitely changing," he says. "But it's a complicated soup of processes."

If global circulation changes are at work, an urgent question is whether they will continue, says Tiffany Shaw, a climate dynamicist at the University of Chicago. The same models that predict a narrowing of the equatorial storm belt also suggest climate change will cause air over the eastern Pacific Ocean to warm faster than the west, weakening an important branch of large-scale circulation. But for the past few decades, the eastern Pacific has actually been cooling, strengthening these winds instead. Other observations, meanwhile, suggest the rest of the circulation is weakening. The confusion makes it hard to know whether the cloud banks will continue to shrink as the world warms. "With a lot of this," Shaw says, "the real world will show us the answer."

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ANSWER KEY

GRAMMAR 15 points

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|------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1. was playing | 6. decided to tackle | | | |
| 2. can't/cannot bear to throw away | 7. trying to make | | | |
| 3. was/is used to making | 8. leaves | | | |
| 4. was left | 9. do | | | |
| 5. had | 10. having | | | |
| 11. to | 12. up | 13. another | 14. can/could | 15. once/when/if |

VOCABULARY 10 points

1 C 2 A 3 D 4 A 5 B 6 D 7 B 8 C 9 A 10 C

READING COMPREHENSION 10 points

1 H 2 A 3 M 4 D 5 J 6 G 7 I 8 L 9 B 10 E

LISTENING COMPREHENSION 5 points

1 B 2 C 3 D 4 B 5 A

Zoznam použitej literatúry a zdrojov:

<https://www.pohodafestival.sk/uploads/news/detail/30-vyrocie-neznej-revolucie-doraz-na-ekologiu-i-vedecky-festival-na-pohode-2019.1561496617.jpg>

<https://freedesignfile.com/upload/2017/04/Camping-friends-sitting-around-the-campfire-to-play-guitar-Stock-Photo.jpg>

Voosen, P. 2025. Earth's clouds are shrinking, boosting global warming. *Science*, vol. 387, no. 6729, 3 January 2025, p. 17.

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