

## Show Your Stripes in School 2024

Developed by The University of Reading and Radstock Primary School

**Aim:** Show Your Stripes in School is an activity designed for your whole school. The purpose of the activity is to communicate to pupils how much temperature has changed over the past 170 years.

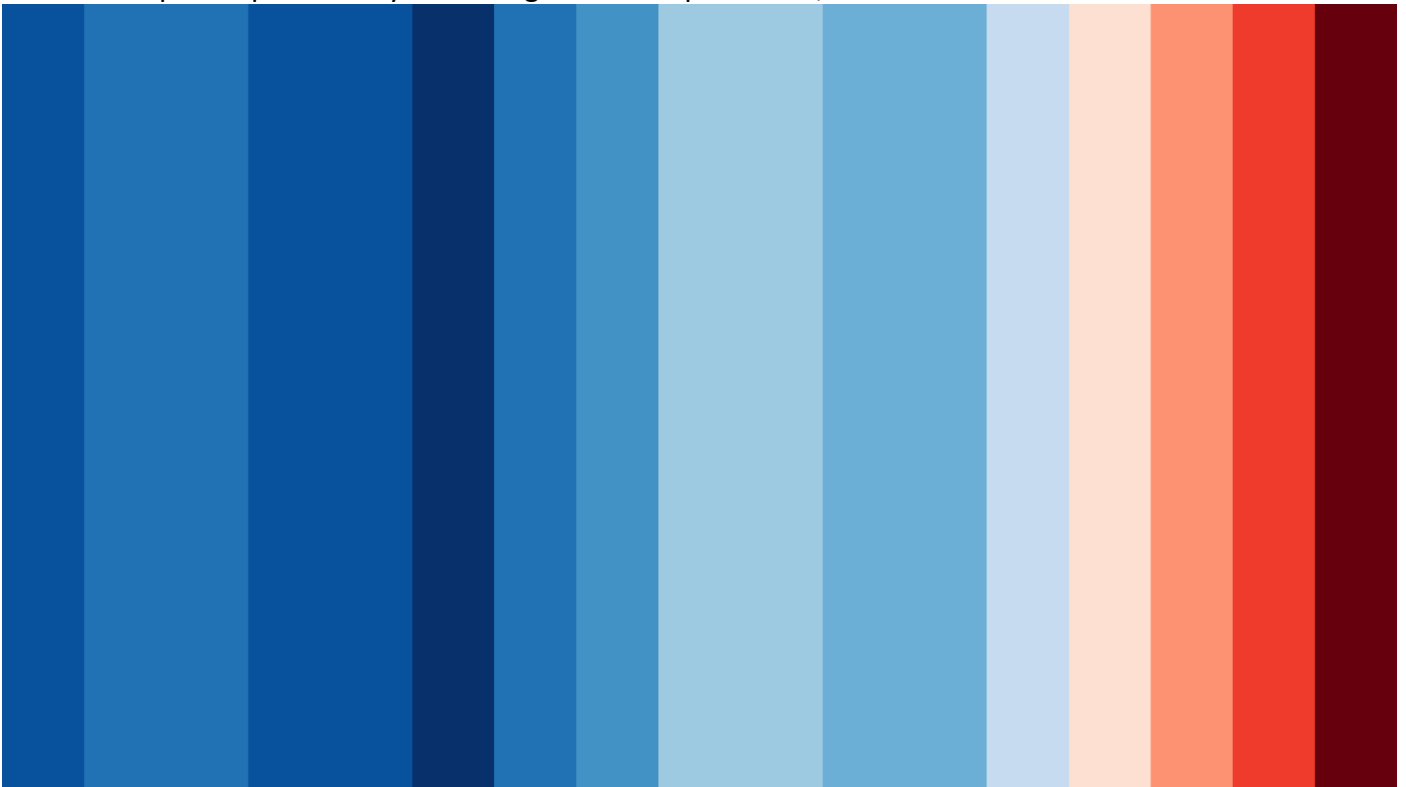
### What are the Climate Stripes?

The [climate stripes](#) are a visual representation of how temperature has changed in the past 150+ years. In the original climate stripes graphics, each stripe represents the average temperature for a year for that country or region and show the temperature warming as the colours turn from blue to red. You can download stripes for countries and cities around the world for free at [showyourstripes.info](http://showyourstripes.info).

They have been used by all sorts of people and organisations [around the world](#) to start conversations about climate. They have previously featured on the [Reading FC kits](#), on a [Reading Bus](#), and have been painted on buildings and bridges around the world. They were developed by Prof. Ed Hawkins MBE, a climate scientist at the University of Reading to help everyone start conversations about climate change.

### What is the activity?

We would like you to get your children to come together to make their own, human climate stripes. We have developed a special ten-year average set of stripes to use, shown below.



These stripes show the average temperature globally for 17, ten-year blocks beginning in 1854. The two stripes at the right of the diagram shows the average temperature for 2003-2023, the time-period in which most of your pupils were born.

To make your climate stripes, you need to:

- Ask a class or group of children to come to school wearing a colour close to one of the stripes. The most obvious way to do this is (but you can do this in other creative ways too):  
Year 6 (dark red)  
Year 5 (light red/pale orange)  
Year 4 (light blue)  
Year 3 (light blue)  
Year 2 (dark blue)  
Year 1 (dark blue)
- Ask the children to line up in year group or class order, with 2-3 lines for each year group
- You should now have a simple representation of the climate stripes, representing the change in temperature globally between 1854 and 2023.
- Take a picture of the human stripes to share with children and with parents. In the picture you might like to include other climate related props or printouts of the stripes or to hand out or share the stripes with children and parents. The stripes are free and open for anyone to use how they wish.
- Please share your picture on social media if appropriate (and considering any social media/photography rules in relation to pupils); it would be great to include the following social media tags so we can see how many schools are showing their stripes. @UniofReading #showyourstripes



*Pupils at Radstock Primary School were the first to recreate the stripes in this way.*



## FAQs

**Does it matter if children match the colour exactly?** No, the purpose of the activity is to help children start to talk about how quickly temperature has changed during the lifetime of their grandparents and parents. The stripe will still be a good visual metaphor for this change even if the colours are not exact.

**Can I add more stripes?** Yes, adding two more stripes is easy, just extend back in time with classes wearing darker blue colours. If you are really ambitious you might also try to represent the annual stripes available from [showyourstripes.info](http://showyourstripes.info), but you may need more planning to match the colours exactly for this activity.

**Why don't the colours change as much as the original stripes?** To make it easy for schools to replicate the stripes we designed this average version in which each stripe is a twenty-year period. Within each stripe, average temperature will be higher or lower consistent with your personal experience of how climate can vary from year to year. What is unique about the most recent period of Earth's history is the inexorable upward trend in temperature caused by human activity and this is shown in all versions of the stripes.

**I want to go further and add climate change to my lessons, how can I do that?** There are many brilliant resources available that can help you add teaching about climate change to your curriculum. A great place to start is the [Climate Change Educational Partnership](#) which has resources mapped to key stages and subjects. There are also fantastic resources available from the [Met Office](#) and the [Royal Meteorological Society](#) among many others. If you want to go even further, your school can apply for funding to develop climate related research through the Royal Society along with a partner university through the [Tomorrow's Climate Scientists](#) programme.

You can find out more about the University of Reading's Climate Education resources here: [Climate Education - University of Reading](#)

**I'm worried about adding to the anxiety of the young people in my school:** Climate and eco-anxiety are real concerns for [young people](#). While studies of how to actively address this challenge are still at early stages, many experts suggested that having access to [high quality knowledge](#) about climate change and having open conversations between young people and adults are critical to addressing anxiety. Discussing ways to tackle climate change is also a key step. Unfortunately, the majority of young people still leave school with many misconceptions about climate change as revealed by a recent [survey](#). Getting involved in 'Show Your Stripes in School' can be a starting point for developing an action plan to bring deeper and wider climate education into your school.

**How do I talk to parents about what we are doing?** Sometimes, teachers are nervous about addressing climate change because they think it is a controversial topic. This is not the case. There is an [overwhelming scientific consensus](#) that humans are causing recent global warming. The most recent UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) [assessment of climate change](#) describes the human influence on climate as 'unequivocal'.

We hope that the 'Show Your Stripes in School' activity will engage young people and their parents in discussion about climate change.

In 2024, this activity is also part of Let's Go Zero's Climate Action Countdown (7 June – 5 July) which offers free resources for climate themed activities each day during the countdown. [Climate Action Countdown - Lets Go Zero](#)