

Show Your Stripes

Developed by The University of Reading and Radstock Primary School, suitable for all Key stages.

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 175 years.

What are the Climate Stripes?

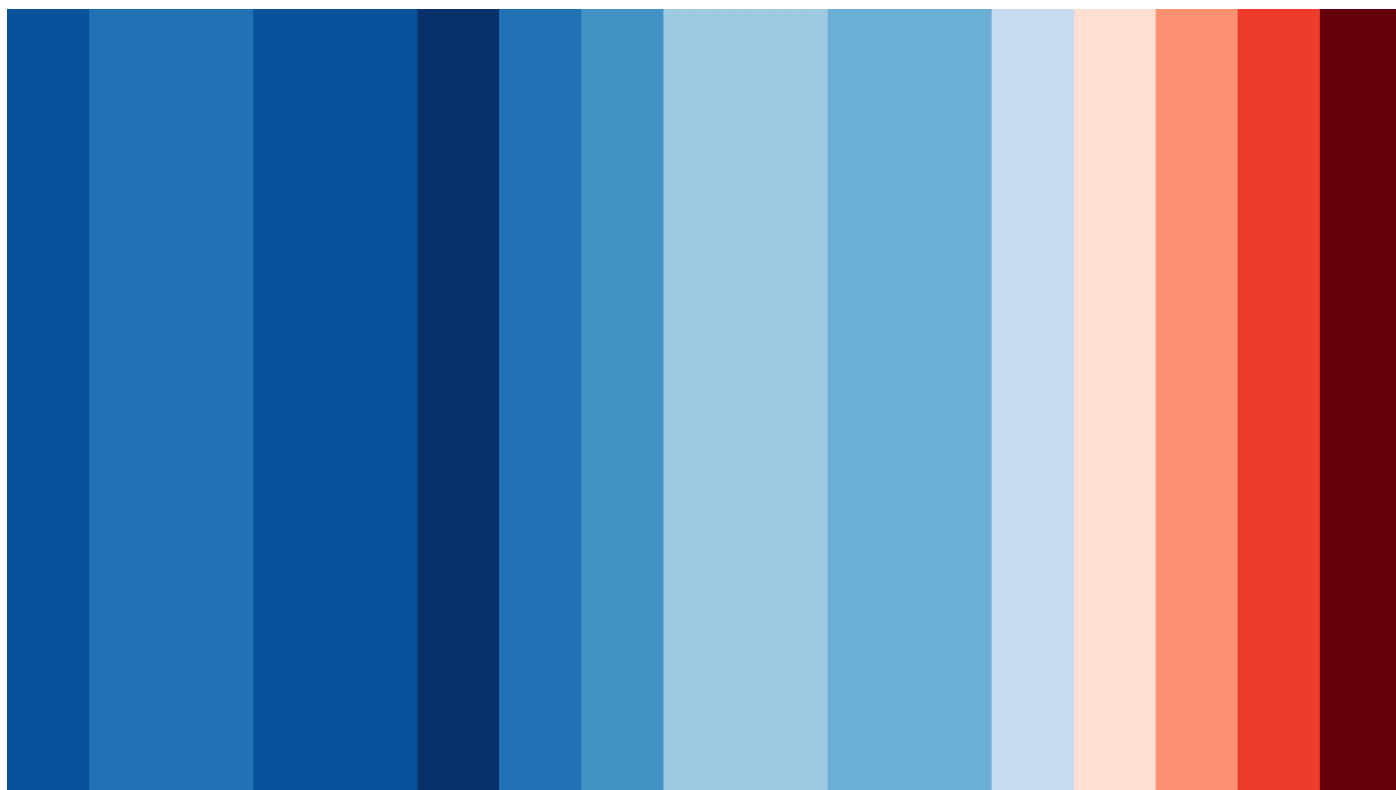
The [climate stripes](#) are a visual representation of how temperature has changed in the past 150+ years. In the original climate stripes graphics, each stripe represents the average temperature for a year for that country or region and show the temperature warming as the colours turn from blue to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

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 2003-2024, 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 2024.
- 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, 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.

