

The story...

Can trees help climate change?

Learn language related to...

research

Need-to-know language

experiment – test to find out how something works

instruments – tools or equipment needed to do experiments

tracks – (here) measures and records

monitored – watched in order to notice any changes

don't put all your eggs in one basket – (expression) don't rely on just one plan because it could go wrong

Answer this...

Why do experts mix the types of trees they plant?

Watch the video online:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/english/features/lingohack>

Transcript

A forest in Staffordshire (in the UK) transformed into a hi-tech laboratory. Researchers here are investigating how the trees use carbon, and it's difficult to find out. In an unusual **experiment**, extra carbon dioxide is piped to the trees, to create the kind of atmospheric conditions expected in the middle of the century. And **instruments** measure how the forest reacts.

The scientist in charge says there's still a lot to learn. And he worries that governments and companies are rushing to plant trees as an easy answer to climate change.

Professor Rob MacKenzie, University of Birmingham

If you try and use trees to tidy up the mess that we're making through emissions, you are putting those trees into a very rapidly changing climate and they will struggle to adapt.

This device **tracks** the movement of carbon dioxide. In a healthy forest, the gas is not only absorbed by the trees but some is released as well.

What scientists here are finding out is the way carbon flows into a forest and out of it, is a lot more complicated than you might think. So, if mass tree planting is meant to be a solution to tackling climate change, the trees are going to have to be **monitored** and cared for, over not just decades, but maybe centuries as well.

Of all the challenges, the task of planting is the simplest. Shelby Barber from Canada can do an amazing 4,000 trees in a day.

BBC reporter, David Shukman

People talking about planting millions, billions of trees around the world. Is it possible do you think, physically?

Shelby Barber, Planter

It's definitely possible with the right amount of people, the right group of people. I've personally, in three years, planted just over half a million trees.

Once planted the trees need to survive, and experts are mixing different types to minimise the risk of disease.

Eleanor Twe, Forestry England

It's a bit like making sure you **don't put all your eggs in one basket**, you're spreading out your risk. And then if one part of that woodland fails, for whatever reason gets disease, it can't tolerate future climatic conditions, there are other parts of the forest that are healthy and able to fill in those gaps.

Suddenly there's momentum to plant trees on a scale never seen before. So what matters is doing it in a way that ensures that forests thrive - so they really do help with climate change.

Did you get it?

Why do experts mix the types of trees they plant?

Experts mix different types of trees to minimise the risk of disease.