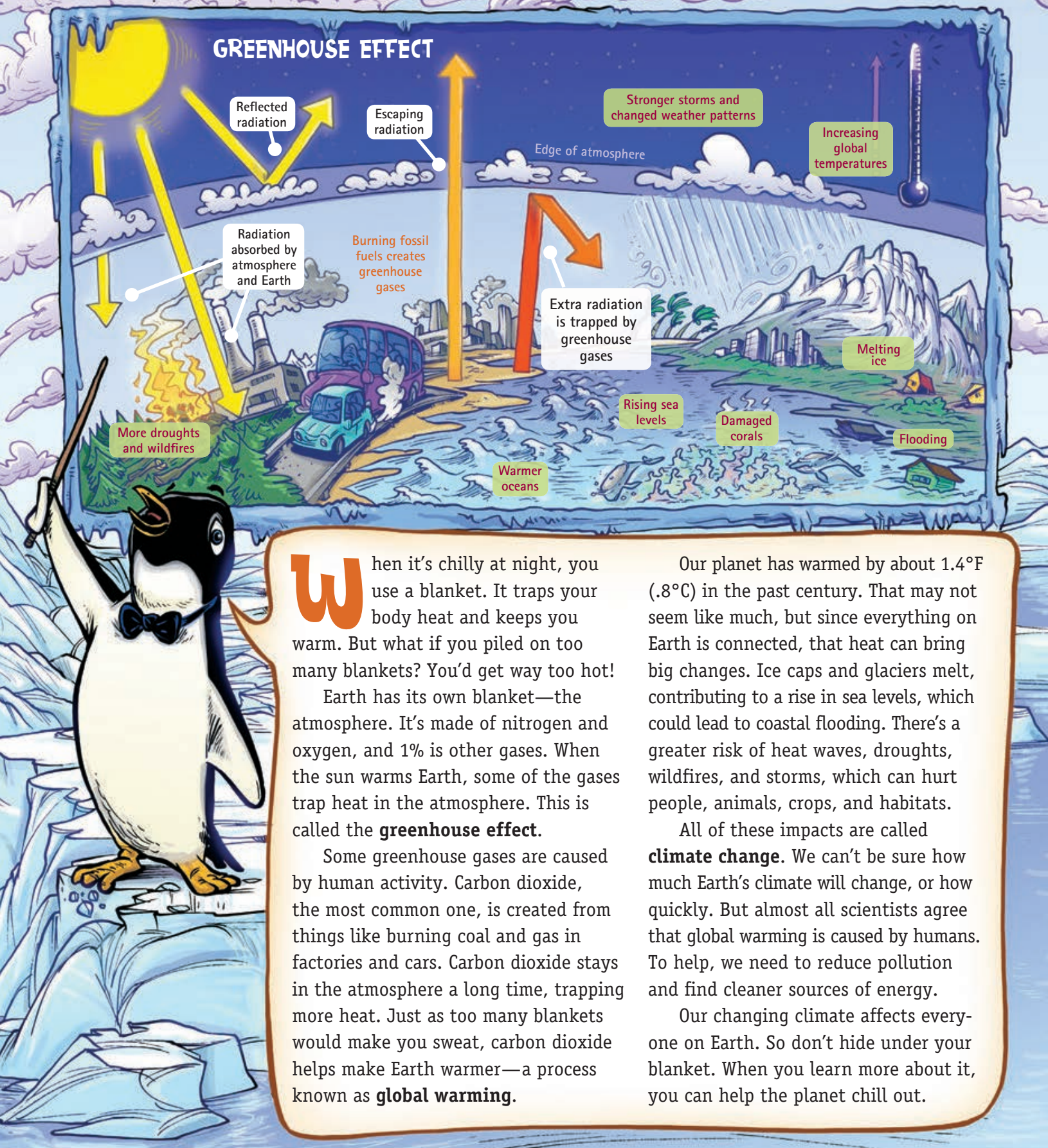


Global Warming Isn't Cool!



When it's chilly at night, you use a blanket. It traps your body heat and keeps you warm. But what if you piled on too many blankets? You'd get way too hot!

Earth has its own blanket—the atmosphere. It's made of nitrogen and oxygen, and 1% is other gases. When the sun warms Earth, some of the gases trap heat in the atmosphere. This is called the **greenhouse effect**.

Some greenhouse gases are caused by human activity. Carbon dioxide, the most common one, is created from things like burning coal and gas in factories and cars. Carbon dioxide stays in the atmosphere a long time, trapping more heat. Just as too many blankets would make you sweat, carbon dioxide helps make Earth warmer—a process known as **global warming**.

Our planet has warmed by about 1.4°F (.8°C) in the past century. That may not seem like much, but since everything on Earth is connected, that heat can bring big changes. Ice caps and glaciers melt, contributing to a rise in sea levels, which could lead to coastal flooding. There's a greater risk of heat waves, droughts, wildfires, and storms, which can hurt people, animals, crops, and habitats.

All of these impacts are called **climate change**. We can't be sure how much Earth's climate will change, or how quickly. But almost all scientists agree that global warming is caused by humans. To help, we need to reduce pollution and find cleaner sources of energy.

Our changing climate affects everyone on Earth. So don't hide under your blanket. When you learn more about it, you can help the planet chill out.