

An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power Worksheet – Part III
Instructor: Tony Del Vecchio

- 1. What event took place two weeks prior to the COP21 Climate Conference in Paris? What did Gore say we should do in response to this?**

Two weeks before the COP21 conference, on November 13, 2015, a terrorist attack occurred. Gore said that we have to defeat terrorism not only with “force of arms,” but also with the “force of our values.” In other words, we have to care about the future and do what the world needs to do (with regard to addressing the climate crisis, among other things).

- 2. Which country held up consensus on the Paris agreement? What was their reason for objecting to the agreement?**

India had held up the Paris Climate Agreement (aka, COP21) saying that it was a developing country and that for economic reasons, they needed access to cheap, conventional energy (i.e., fossil fuels).

- 3. Which US president stood in the way of an agreement on climate change following the Rio Summit? Why? What do you think might be the real reason for him doing so?**

George W. Bush, the 43rd President of the United States, stood in the way of the agreement, ironically claiming the same reason as India for doing so, by saying that “a growing population requires more energy to heat and cool our homes.”

The real reason he didn’t want to have the US take action on dealing with climate change is because of the influence of big money from the oil and gas industry.

- 4. How did Christina Figueres, Executive Secretary UNFCCC, suggest to Gore deal with the sole holdout on the Paris agreement?**

Figueres said that it would be helpful if the focus on renewables could be seen from a developing country’s perspective and that Gore should devote time to this.

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- 5. What was the challenge one US Congressman in the film suggested had to be overcome to convince developing countries to switch to renewable energy sources? What did India say it needed in order to cooperate on combatting climate change through renewables?**

The US Congressman said the challenge was to make renewables as cheap as coal and then partner with developing countries so that we don't continue to build huge infrastructure that will continue to put more carbon dioxide decades into the atmosphere in the future.

In order to cooperate on combatting climate change, India said that it needed access to credit.

- 6. What catastrophic event occurred in India that pointed out the need to address climate change?**

Heavy flooding in Chennai, India's 4th largest city, was caused by the heaviest rains in more than 100 years. The flooding cut off more than three million people from basic services for days.

- 7. What solution did Gore devise to resolve India's reluctance to join the Paris agreement?**

In order to resolve the impasse, Gore asked Lyndon Rive, CEO and co-founder of SolarCity, to donate their new solar cell technology to India, making them, in his words, the "corporate hero" of the Paris climate talks.

- 8. What precedent did Gore refer to as an example of quick technology transfer? What type of countries benefited from this technology? How did this help them to advance?**

Gore referred to mobile phones as an example of quick technology transfer. Developing countries that had no landline telephone grid benefitted from this technology, and as a result, were able to "leapfrog" (i.e., bypass the old landline technology) and get telephone service for the first time.

- 9. How much energy do we get from the sun on an hourly basis?**

In one hour, we get more energy from the sun than the entire global economy uses for an entire year.

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- 10. What was the final outcome of the negotiations at COP21 (aka, the Paris Accord)?**

As a result of the negotiations at COP21, India agreed to accede to (i.e., agree to join) the Paris Accord.

- 11. How much of the energy needs of Georgetown, Texas is currently being supplied by renewable energy? What are they aiming for? Why is Georgetown's decision to go with renewable energy so surprising?**

Currently, Georgetown, Texas is getting 90% of its energy needs from renewable sources. Their goal is to be the largest city in the United States that uses renewable energy technology for 100% of its energy needs. This is surprising because Georgetown is "is the reddest city (i.e., the most conservative) in the reddest county in Texas, and [the mayor is] a conservative Republican."

- 12. What event finally happened on February 11, 2015 much to Gore's delight? Who made this possible as a result of Gore's urging? What does Gore say we could learn from this project?**

On February 11, 2015, the DSCOVR climate observation satellite was finally launched because President Obama allocated federal money for the project. The satellite enables scientists to learn about the real energy balance of the Earth.

- 13. What situation occurred in November 2016 that caused panic among the delegates at the UN climate summit? Why did they feel this way? What ultimately happened?**

On November 8, 2016, Donald Trump was elected as the 45th President of the United States, which caused panic among the delegates at the UN climate summit. The delegates felt that Trump could threaten the future of any international agreement to slow catastrophic climate change. Trump said he would "cancel the Paris climate agreement," promote coal power and fracking (i.e., hydraulic fracturing), and allow for drilling of oil on federal lands. On June 1, 2017, Trump announced that he was withdrawing the US from the global climate agreement.

- 14. What advice does Al Gore give at the end of the documentary to people concerned about the climate crisis? Where does he say we are now in the environmental movement? What does he mean by this?**

Gore told us not to despair. He said that we are close to the "tipping point" beyond which the movement is resolved into a choice between right and wrong. Ultimately, Gore said the movement will succeed because it is a moral issue.