

# Winds of Change Introduction: Teachers notes

## Pupil learning

This activity is to ensure they have a background to Malawi and the lives of people there, and to understand the nature of the climate and how it is changing.

## Using the resources

The resources are designed for students to read through them independently, making notes as they go, and then use the **quiz** at the end to check to see how much they have remembered. Pupils could mark each others' quizzes if they are copied and pasted into word and printed out.

Alternatively, if pupils do not have access to ICT individually, they can be given the information in print form, and the quiz can be done as a class on the board.

There is an **extension** activity which you could direct pupils to, which may take from half to a whole lesson, and can be organised independently or as a whole class, preparing a large poster summarising differences and similarities between the UK and Malawi.

## Links

CIA world factbook:

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mi.html>

The Winds of Change Report:

[http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/climate\\_change/poverty-environment-malawi.html](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/climate_change/poverty-environment-malawi.html)

## Introduction: student sheet

As you read the introduction to life in Malawi and its climate, use this sheet to write down the **keywords** you come across, including those words in *italics* which have their meanings written in brackets.

You can also make some notes under each heading in the introduction.

Section: Life in Malawi	
Keyword	Meaning
Notes	

Section: Climate in Malawi	
Keyword	<i>Meaning</i>
Notes	

Section: Climate change in Malawi	
Keyword	Meaning
Notes	

When you have finished, use your notes to help you complete the **pupil quiz** on Malawi, and get a friend to mark it to see how good your notes were! You may also watch the **video on drought in Malawi**, to give you more of an idea of what severe events have occurred for the country and its people in recent years

### Extension activity

Go to the **CIA world fact-book** (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook>)

Find the UK, and also find Malawi (open them on two screens). You are going to compare the two countries. You could look at:

- A. land area
- B. population
- C. life expectancy
- D. land use
- E. water resources and per capita (*per person*) usage
- F. % of the population who are children
- G. religion
- H. educational expenditure as % of GDP (*Gross Domestic Product – amount of money earned in the entire country in a year*)

Create a **country comparison** on an A3 sheet – use maps, pictures and data. Split the A3 sheet into two halves, one side for **similarities**, and one for **differences**. You could do this in a pair, or the whole class could get involved with different people researching different areas.

## Introduction: The ‘Winds of Change’ in Malawi



### Life in Malawi

Malawi is a small country in South-East Africa, with a population of just over 13 million people (a quarter of the UK's population). The country runs in a thin strip 520 miles long from north to south and the terrain varies from barely 37 metres (100 feet) above sea level in the lower Shire Valley in the south to mountain ranges some 3000 metres (10,000 feet) high in the east. About 15% of Malawi's area consists of Lake Malawi, nearly 370 miles long.

The majority of people (4 out of 5) in Malawi live in *rural* areas (countryside) areas, and many are very poor, and over half of the population suffer from *food insecurity* (not having or being able to find enough food to live properly). Most people in rural areas are farmers, growing a variety of crops such as maize, sorghum and vegetables which are *dependant* (they need them) upon rain. Maize is the most important crop, and the economy and farmers livelihoods depend on it. Most farmers grow food to consume themselves (called *subsistence*) and sell any *surplus* (extra). Traditionally they have been able to *harvest* (cut and collect) different crops 2 or 3 times a year.

Map of Malawi  
(from the CIA world factbook)



Some farmers also grow *cash* crops (grown to sell, not eat) such as cotton or macadamia nuts. In some areas there are large *plantations* (farms with very large fields of one crop) of crops to *export* (sell abroad) of things like tea and tobacco. Around lake Malawi there are also many communities of fisherman dependant upon fish stocks from the lake.

## The climate in Malawi

Malawi's *climate* (the weather) is naturally variable, in large measure due to its *topography* (the height and shape of the land), with lake Malawi also having an effect.

In general, the seasons are divided into:

- the **cool** (May to August)
- the **hot** (August to November)
- the **rainy** (November to April)
- the **post-rainy** (April-May)

In the south the *wet season* (rainy) normally lasts from **November to February** but rain continues through March and into April in the north. *Annually* (yearly) there may be changes in how much rain is received, and the global ocean sea surface temperatures (like *El Nino*) has a strong effect.

*Maize* (which gives corn) is planted when the rains come and harvested in March and April.

## Climate change in Malawi

As there are lots of different *microclimates* (small areas with their own typical weather), it is hard to see how the climate has changed over recent years. However certain *trends* (patterns) are clear from weather data.

### *Temperature*

The annual *mean* (average) temperature has increased by nearly 1°C since 1960, and the summer (rainy season) has heated up more than the winter (hot season). There are now more 'hot' days and less cold days observable. Predictions are that by 2060 temperature could rise by 1 to 3°C more.

### Rainfall

Changes in rainfall are more variable from place to place, however overall it seems, rainfall is becoming more *erratic* (less predictable), increasing the problem of *droughts* (lack of water) and when rain does fall, it falls more heavily, increasing the problem of *flooding* (water flowing over ground). Also, the rain is arriving later than before, which make the *growing season* (when crops can be grown) shorter.

## Drought in Malawi – Video clip

Now, watch the video about the effect that **drought** has had in recent years in Malawi.

Try to pick out some of the keywords and make some notes from this also.

## Winds of change: student quiz

1. Where is Malawi?
  - a. South America
  - b. South-East Africa
  - c. North Africa
  
2. How many people live in *rural* areas?
  - a. Half
  - b. 2 out of 3
  - c. 4 out of 5
  
3. How many people in Malawi suffer from *food insecurity*?
  - a. 1 in 10
  - b. half
  - c. more than half
  
4. What does *subsistence* farming mean?
  - a. farming crops to export
  - b. growing enough food to eat yourself
  - c. farming in a hot environment
  
5. What crop are most people in Malawi dependant on?
  - a. maize
  - b. cotton
  - c. sorghum
  
6. Which is the most important season? Why do you think this?
  - a. rainy season, as most crops are water dependant
  - b. hot season, as heat helps the plants to grow
  - c. cool season, so people don't get too hot
  
7. What months are the rainy season?
  - a. May to August
  - b. April to May
  - c. November to April
  
8. What has happened to the average temperature in Malawi since 1960?
  - a. It has getting cooler
  - b. It has risen by nearly 1°C
  - c. It has risen by nearly 2°C

9. What main effects are changes in rainfall having in Malawi?
- Increasing droughts and floods
  - Increasing yields of maize
  - Causing lake Malawi to grow
10. Why is the growing season in Malawi getting shorter?
- Crops do not like the heat
  - Rain is flooding the crops
  - Erratic rain making the rainy season begin later

## Wind of Change: Quiz answers

1. b
2. c
3. c
4. b
5. a
6. a
7. c
8. b
9. a
10. b