

During 2019, the name Extinction Rebellion kept popping up on the news more and more – leading many to question and wonder:

Who are Extinction Rebellion?

In this article, we aim to teach you all about who the group are and what they aim to achieve.

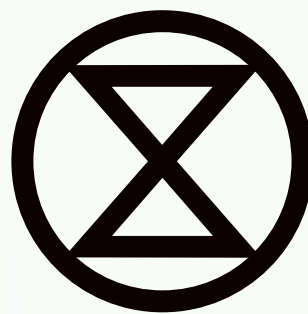
Reading Comprehension

Y5

Y6

Who are Extinction Rebellion?

Extinction Rebellion say they are an international activist organisation, who use non-violent methods to encourage those in power to take action on climate change and other environmental issues. The group was launched in 2018 and has groups in many countries all over the world. Their logo is an hourglass inside a circle, which they picked to symbolise that time is running out for us to make the necessary changes on Earth to protect human and animal life.



**extinction
rebellion**

Why did they begin?

They started this group as they realised “The science is clear: It is understood that we are facing an unprecedented global emergency. We are in a life or death situation of our own making. We must act now.” They want to stand up and make sure the world’s governments take notice of their actions and act fast in order to save the planet.

Who is in this group?

There is a wide cross-section of society in this group, from young to old - from students to retired people to executives. Each has joined as they are keen to get active and spread awareness of what needs to happen in order to stop further destruction of the planet. Despite the fact the movement started in London, it is now worldwide and there are groups in many places across the planet.



What do they want to achieve?

They have three main demands, which they want people in power to take action on.

1. They want the government to declare a “climate and ecological emergency” and work together with other institutions to help spread the message calling for things to change.
2. They want the UK to act now to stop loss of habitat and reduce carbon emissions to **net zero** by 2025.
3. They want a special group called a Citizens’ Assembly to be created. It would be made up of people from across society, who would work together to decide how to solve the climate crisis, with advice from experts.

How have they protested?

During the summer of 2019, the group staged two weeks of protest, which brought London to a standstill. The group always aim to “peacefully occupy the centres of power and shut them down” and they want to do this by causing “major disruption”. They hope the disruption is noticed and that the media will report about them and their disruption, so that people become more aware of the environment crisis and also to put pressure on governments to do more to deal with the issue of climate change. In London, more than 1,400 people were arrested and over 70 people were charged with offences, including criminal damage and obstruction of a highway. Some of London’s busiest routes were brought to a complete standstill for more than 11 days. During the summer, the group also held similar protests in different cities, using five colourful boats to stop traffic in **Manchester, Cardiff, Glasgow, Bristol and Leeds.**

What have Extinction Rebellion protesters been doing?

Lots of young people have been taking part in the protests

There are many ways members have protested, which include some of the following:

- blocked traffic
- glued themselves to trains



- jumped on top of tube trains in London
- chained themselves outside politicians' houses
- planted trees on Waterloo Road in London
- protested at Heathrow Airport, causing delays to some flights
- sprayed fake blood at a government building from the top of a fire engine

Backlash to Extinction Rebellion

Whilst the group firmly believes they can help stop climate change, some critics have said that the group's demands are unrealistic. Researchers at the Centre for Alternative Technology said that it would be a huge challenge to get to zero emissions by 2025, but that they support ambitious goals. Flights would have to be restricted and many people would have to

drastically change their behaviour - for example, by eating less meat and dairy in their diets, or changing how they travel. In order to get enough renewable energy to replace gas boilers, Britain would need thousands of extra wind turbines.



What have people said about the protests?

Home Secretary Sajid Javid has said the climate activists have “no right to cause misery” and the Met Police “must take a firm stance”. Ken Marsh, chairman of the Metropolitan Police Federation, said: “This is very, very difficult for us because my colleagues have never come across the situation that they are faced with at the moment. They are dealing with very, very passive people, probably quite nice people, who don’t want confrontation whatsoever with the police or anyone else - but who are breaking the law.”

The group has been criticised not only for causing disruption, but also for wasting public money, after London police boss Cressida Dick said April’s protests had cost the police an extra £7.5 million.