

Climate Storytelling **for** Animation Creatives

Climate content isn't a genre. It's the condition we are all living in. Thinking about climate in your story is about creating worlds that feel relevant and alive.

"Climate change doesn't have a knowledge problem... it has a storytelling problem." — YUVAL NOAH HARARI



Questions to ask when creating your story, characters and world:

Reality Check

Two questions to ask of every script.

- Does climate change exist in the world of the story?
- Do your characters notice it?

That's the whole test (and most scripts wouldn't pass it.)

Adapted from Good Energy's Climate Reality Check.

Character

Noticing the world is a character trait, not a message.

- Does any character have a relationship with the natural world?
- Do they notice weather, seasons, ecosystems? Their noticing reveals character as much as it builds the world.
- Do they have environmental awareness without it becoming their whole personality?

Story

Stories let us imagine the world differently — this is where change begins.

- Are there moments in your arcs where a character's choice connects to an environmental consequence?
- Not every beat needs a crisis or a lesson. A character simply living a different way - normalized, not remarked on, counts as a story too.

World & Setting

A well-built world doesn't just exist around your characters — it pushes on them.

- What relationship does this world have with its natural environment?
- Background details like a solar panels, a community garden, or a dry riverbed can touch on and normalize our climate reality.
- These details are cheapest to add early — during art department and asset design, before textures and lighting are locked for render.

Tone & Direction

The difference between a message and a mood.

- Is the goal for audiences to notice this, or to feel it as part of the world?
- Is the content solution-focused and age-appropriate?
- Does it offer agency alongside awareness — something a viewer can do, feel, or understand?

Nature as Presence

The natural world can act, not just appear as scenery.

- A heatwave, a drought, or a season can change how people interact and what they decide.
- Indigenous and lived knowledge of the land is often the most precise and relational source available.
- Show care, not just crisis. Stewardship and small acts — tending a garden, a shoreline, water source — are as real as disaster.

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