

Rainfall shutdown during lockdown

By Matt Taylor

According to the Met Office, it has been the sunniest and driest spring on record for parts of Scotland and northern England.

Since the start of spring, not only have our daily lives changed massively, but our weather has completely turned around too.

The back end of winter was filled with grey skies and endless rain. Travel was difficult and swollen rivers burst their banks. Flooded homes and businesses disappeared under rising water.

Met Office figures show that in 2020 we saw the wettest February on record. At the peak of the flooding, the Environment Agency in England had almost 600 active flood warnings in force, the highest number ever.



BBC

February 2020: Flooded homes and businesses near Ironbridge after the River Severn rose to unprecedented levels.

Rainfall shutdown in lockdown

E2-3 Functional English

Name _____ Date _____

Fast forward to the end of May and large parts of the UK look completely different. Instead of flooded fields and waterlogged gardens, we see cracked ground, wilting crops and parched, brown lawns.

Some rivers that flooded in February are now exceptionally low. Water levels in the Rivers Lune and Kent in north west England are as low as in the dry summers of 1984 and 2011.

The lack of rain in May has broken records in England with parts of north west, central and south east England seeing their driest May ever. Only 4mm of rain fell in south east England and 13mm in north west England.



BBC

Dry and warm conditions cause the ground to crack in Haddenham, Buckinghamshire, in late May.

For England and Wales as a whole, it was the second driest May on record, just 2mm wetter than the 8mm of rain recorded back in May 1884.

Adapted from BBC Weather 1/6/20: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/weather/features/52840873>

Reading questions

1. What record was broken in February 2020?

(E3.9. 1 mark)

2. Which river flooded the pub in the picture? What town is it near?

(E2.12. 2 marks)

3. What had replaced the floods by the end of May?

(E3.9. 1 mark)

4. Can you think of another way of saying “exceptionally low”?

(E2.10, E3.11. 1 mark)

5. What happened in Haddenham?

(E2.12. 1 mark)