

Reflection essay on literature review

Literature



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The issue on climate change, also referred to as global warming, has become very serious that countries around the world are now working hand in hand to arrive at fast solutions. One of the foremost reasons for the problem is carbon emission. Carbon emissions, otherwise known as CO₂ or carbon dioxide emissions are naturally produced via the normal carbon cycle as well as common human activities such as burning of fossil fuels. This natural cycle alone does not pose any problem to the climate.

This cycle has the billions of tons of carbon emissions from natural sources in the atmosphere removed by plants and oceans. They serve as “sinks” to these CO₂. It will again be emitted back to the atmosphere as part of the natural cycle. As long as the process remains in balance, the carbon emissions and removals made by the sinks found in nature are basically equal.

During the 1700s however, when the Industrial Revolution began, the human activities that results into carbon emissions have greatly increased the concentrations of CO₂ in the atmosphere that the cycle is no longer balance (www. CarbonEmissions. com).

No less than 6 ½ billion individuals burn fuels, gas, coal or oil to provide electricity, to keep warm, to light homes, move planes, cars, boats, etc. and to run industries. This burning of fuels results into the production of about 6 gigatons of carbon emissions that go into the atmosphere annually. This translates into an increase of 41% in the amount of carbon dioxide in the air since the industrial age. This occurrence adversely influences the planet’s radiation balance (Lelieveld, 2006).

To understand the effects of carbon emissions, a more thorough discussion about it follows.

Global Emissions and Trends

Aside from carbon emissions, there are other gas emissions that can be harmful when in big amounts. A global effort is now being done to reduce these gas emissions, better known as greenhouse gases, in order to arrest climate change. Failure to do this can result into an increase in temperature of about 1.4°C up to 5.8°C by year 2100 (IPCC).

The global carbon dioxide emissions, which are the most significant anthropogenic greenhouse gas of all, increased very quickly in the last century, particularly due to fossil fuels combustion. The chart below shows the trend of global carbon emission as it greatly increased from 1900 to 2000. The increase of carbon emissions was particularly faster during the last 5 decades but slowed down a little during the last twenty years.