1. Full citation.

Crook, Clive. "Action on Carbon Is Down the Drain." *Financial Times*. The Financial Times, 25 June 2010. Web. 24 Feb. 2013

2. Where did/does the author work, what else has s/he written about, and what are her/his credentials?  (This question only has to be answered once for Vogel.)

Clive Crook is a columnist for the Financial Times and the National Journal. He also currently serves as senior editor at the Atlantic Monthly. Most of his writing focuses on the intersection of politics and economics. In 2004, he co-chaired the Copenhagen Consensus project, which called upon renowned economists from around the world to frame future development priorities.

3. What are the topics of the text?

This article offers harsh criticism of the American policy-making system in regards to climate change legislation. Crook discusses the Senate’s failure to pass even a modest energy bill, identifying the division within the American government as a cause. He then goes on to question why voters, though concerned about climate change, are not worried enough to demand more stringent regulation.

4. What is the main argument of the text?

Crook argues that the main reason for the lack of stronger climate change legislation is a lack of demand for action. Voters are not concerned *enough* to force policy makers to make change. This, according to crook, is caused by a lack of credibility among climate scientists. After decades of science acting as “a taxpayer-funded lobbying shop”, choosing which information to spoonfeed the American people, the public has ceased to trust scientist-activists.

5. Describe at least three ways that the argument is supported

Crook begins his argument by discussing the failure of the US Senate to pass a climate change bill, even after abandoning the planned comprehensive cap-and-trade measure. He uses this as an example of the US government’s inability to make progress regarding climate change.

He then goes on to discuss the global failure that was the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference, citing this as an example of the failure of governments to adequately address climate change.

Crook also offers an analysis of the partisanship within the U.S. government, and how this essentially prevents any agreement on the climate change issue.

6. What three quotes capture the message of the text?

*“Leading scientists have worked as activists rather than scholars, on the principle that the public needs to be scared and must not be troubled with complications. Uncertainies are suppressed, disagreements kept quiet, inconvenient truths set aside.”*  
  
*“What was supposed to be a disinterested clearing-house for science to guide policy became, in part, a taxpayer-funded lobbying shop – and a notably incompetent one. The science was fitted to the case for action rather than the other way round. The public does not trust scientist-activists, and is right not to.”*  
  
*“Restoring confidence in climate science should be a priority – a task that the recent flurry of*[*inquiries supposedly vindicating*](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e2c11328-89bf-11df-9ea6-00144feab49a.html)*the Climategate e-mailers has set back. The IPCC needs new leadership, a fresh mandate and strong oversight. Governments should stop outsourcing their advocacy role to a supposedly non-political scientific body. Scientists demanding deference to their expertise are entitled to it only if they leave politics to the politicians. The case for action on greenhouse gases is strong, but not certain. Action ought to be taken despite the doubts.”*

7. What three questions about environmental risk and precaution does this article leave you with?

If the American people cannot trust scientists, and cannot trust politicians, who is going to lead the charge in climate change policy?

Have the scientists truly failed, or have the American people simply failed to listen? To what extent do Americans let their political affiliations affect the way they view scientific evidence?

Is there such a thing as unbiased science? Or does it simply defy human nature?

8. What three points, details or references from the text did you follow up on to advance your perspective on environmental risk and precaution? (Provide citations, with a brief explanation of what you learned.  One of these should be fully annotated, as your second required reading for each week.)

1. “Climategate emails” – I had never heard this term before, so I looked it up and found:

“In November 2009, the servers at the University of East Anglia in Britain were illegally hacked and emails were stolen. When a selection of emails between climate scientists were published on the internet, a few suggestive quotes were seized upon by many claiming global warming was all just a conspiracy. A number of independent enquiries have investigated the conduct of the scientists involved in the emails. All have cleared the scientists of any wrong doing” (<http://www.skepticalscience.com/Climategate-CRU-emails-hacked.htm>)

1. Given that this article was written in 2010, I wanted to see what Mr. Crook had to say about Obama’s second inaugural address. While he applauded the president for praising a bipartisan initiative on climate change (led by Sen. John McCain), he cautioned against becoming overly optimistic, saying,

“Let’s not get carried away. Washington is still broken. The State of the Union hasn’t mended it. But it hasn’t made matters worse, and these days that’s a kind of triumph”

(<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-02-13/in-state-of-the-union-obama-swerves-back-to-center-clive-crook.html>)

1. Finally, this article reminded me of something I read last year, which seems to support Crook’s argument. A 2011 poll showed that “the American public is less likely to believe in climate change than it was five years ago.” Despite the fact that scientists are more sure of climate change than ever before, they seem to be struggling to convince the American public that it is a real problem. (<http://www.npr.org/2011/06/21/137309964/climate-change-public-skeptical-scientists-sure>)