Reading

1. Read the article. Do you think NASA is right?

The Arctic Ice Cap and Global Warming

The U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (usually called NASA) has studied the Arctic ice cap for over 25 years. Satellite equipment is used to record temperatures there. Photographs are also taken by these satellites. Then the two pieces of information are combined by NASA. The result shows that the Arctic area is getting warmer, and the area of the ice cap is getting smaller. It is estimated that nine percent of the ice cap is lost every ten years.

What happens as the ice cap melts? The result is less ice—which is white— and more water —which is dark blue. Some of the sun's heat is reflected back into the atmosphere by the white ice. That helps it stay cool. The dark water takes in more of the sun's energy than ice does. The result is that the water temperature rises. As the water gets warmer, it melts more ice. As the process continues, our planet slowly gets warmer and warmer.

How is the Earth affected as a whole? NASA says that the food supply could be affected. Some fish die when the water temperature changes. Warmer water temperatures also mean warmer air temperatures. This could have a bad effect on a variety of fruit and vegetable crops. NASA also expects the water level to rise by 2.5 feet in the next 50 to 100 years. This means that cities near coastal areas might be flooded.

2. Check the ideas the article talks about.

_✓_ 1. NASA has studied the Arctic ice cap for 25 years.

___ 2. NASA used photographs in its study.

___ 3. The thickness of the ice cap was measured.

___ 4. There may be fewer fish in the ocean in the future.

___ 5. The ice cap will disappear in 50 years.

___ 6. In 50 years the water level in the oceans may rise 2.5 feet.

