



Total time

1 hour
(minimum)

Age range

year 6, 7 and 8
(10-13 years)

Is there really anything we can do about Climate Change?



Context

The week of July 1st - 8th is the first ever London Climate Action Week and all schools are invited to take part. It's a great opportunity to link curriculum-based climate change learning with global and social learning for the Sustainable Development Goals and encourage pupils to practise social action for change. We have created four lessons to follow on a weekly basis in the period leading up to LCAW but all are independent so you can use them flexibly to suit. Lesson plans available here:

<http://www.londonsustainableschools.org/london-climate-action-week.html>

Learning objectives

- To place previous climate change learning in a human context and understand that human activity is both the cause and the solution.
- To build a sense of hope that solutions are achievable.
- To understand how individuals can be part of the solution

Step 1: Game – Climate Change Consequences¹

5
mins

Stand in a circle holding a ball, ask pupils if they have ever had a day where everything just seems to go wrong. Ask what happened first. Repeat this to the group and ask pupils to put their hand up if they can think of something bad that may follow as a result. Pass the ball to a learner with their hand up and ask them to give an example of what might happen next. Keep repeating this with learners passing the ball to each other. Carry on until they cannot think of any more consequences.

- For example. 1: *Alarm doesn't go off* 2: *No time for breakfast* 3: *You are tired and hungry* 4: *You can't concentrate in lessons* 5: *You fall behind in school*
- Repeat the game but starting with the words: **Deforestation** or **Melting Ice Caps** (if you are short of time – start straight with this activity)
- Ask pupils to put their hand up if they can think of a potential impact that comes with these words. Pass ball to learner with their hand up and ask them to give their impact.
- Now ask pupils to put their hand up if they can think of something that may follow as a result of this impact. Keep repeating this with learners passing the ball to others with their hands up.

Step 2: How to Save our Frozen Planet?

20
mins

Show pupils this video: 'How to save our frozen planet' (8 mins)

<https://www.ourplanet.com/en/video/how-to-save-our-frozen-worlds>

- Write these questions on the board and ask learners to listen out for answers.
- What are greenhouse gases?
- What is clean energy?
- What temperature is within safe limits for Global Warming?

After watching the video ask pupils to share their immediate feelings about what they have seen.

- Do they feel there are achievable solutions to climate change?
- Who do they think should be responsible for leading these solutions?
- If they could ask any question in parliament what would they ask?

Make a note of the questions students would like to ask and explain to students that the UK is unique in the world for agreeing the first national law on climate change in 2008.

Show this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Exq7Rppq90I>

Does this video answer any of the questions they had?

¹ This game is taken from Oxfam's climate change resources: (<https://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/climate-challenge-7-11>)

Step 3: The UK declares a Climate Emergency

Project Appendix A onto the board and ask if they recognise these organisations and people.
Show them this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFkQSGyeCWg>

Do they know what the different organisations are asking for?

Use these links for research:

- WWF - <https://www.wwf.org.uk>
- Friends of the Earth - <https://friendsoftheearth.uk>
- Greta Thunberg - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greta_Thunberg
- David Attenborough - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Attenborough
- Extinction Rebellion - <https://rebellion.earth>

On 1st of May 2019 the UK declared a climate emergency. Headlines across British newspapers included:

- ‘Parliament has shown that it intends to be symbolically at war with climate change with the declaration of a UK climate emergency’
- ‘The UK motions attempts to translate this ongoing urgency for meaningful change into legislative momentum, which can hold government accountable’.
- ‘The UK is the first country in the world to declare a climate emergency’

There is no single definition of what this means but many local areas say they want to be carbon-neutral by 2030.

In pairs *ask pupils to discuss what actions they will have to take at home or with their families to become more carbon efficient. E.g. walking to school, switching to renewable energy, flying less or eating less meat - all these actions contribute to climate action.*

What things are easy to change and what might be more difficult?

Step 4: Helping Teachers Take Action

For individuals to take action for climate change everyone must **understand the problem** and **education** is a critical part of that. Campaigners try to influence people to take action for climate change and the UK is unusual in having legally-binding climate change laws. This should make it easier to take serious action but there are still actions

Write the following statement on the board or show the article:

“School students could easily go through 11 years of compulsory education and hear climate change mentioned in fewer than 10 lessons out of approximately 10,000”.

This statement was recently made by a London secondary school teacher. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/feb/21/teachers-to-join-climate-protests-to-demand-curriculum-reform>

Do you think this should change? What can be done?

Action:

Design a new lesson on Climate Change that teachers in your school could use and that could be shared with other London schools. (If short of time start this action and finish for homework).

To do this they need to:

1. Decide which topic they will focus on in their new lesson based on what they feel they would like to know more about
2. Describe **what** they want to learn about in their lesson
3. Plan the lesson. They could use the format of this lesson if it helps (step 1 - starter, step 2 - main activity, step 3 - action). Think about any resources you might need - films, links, images, activities etc
4. Be clear about **when** they would like to see this lesson take place and how they will persuade the teacher to teach their lesson.
5. Describe **why** – why they feel it is important for the national curriculum be reformed to make climate and ecological crisis an educational priority?

Pupils (or their teacher) can send their lesson designs to lesson@project-everyone.org

Extra Resources

There are some great resources available for teachers on Climate Change. Here are just a few:

WWF: Climate change resources - <https://www.wwf.org.uk/get-involved/schools/resources/climate-change-resources>

Oxfam: Climate challenge - <https://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/climate-challenge-7-11>

www.ourplanet.com

World's Largest Lesson - <http://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/>

UN.org – climate action – Why It Matters - https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/13_Why_it_Matters_Climate_Action_letter_size_1p.pdf

Understanding climate change with Tiki the Penguin http://tiki.oneworld.org/global_warming/climate8.html

Small Island States on the frontlines of climate change <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8oS8WToxv5c>

Great extra resources for students to use:

<https://climatekids.nasa.gov/time-machine/>

<https://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/see-and-do/atmosphere>

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate-guide/climate-change>

Add your voice for the planet - <https://voicefortheplanet.org/globe>

Appendix A: Biggest Climate Threats to the U.K

