

What can we do about climate change, Here and Now?

Ideas for Primary and Secondary Students

Introduction

'Climate Change Costs Lives, Let's sort it, Here and Now'

Climate change is a huge issue in the world today. Every year, the UN organises a Climate Change Conference where leaders from around the globe meet to discuss issues such as CO₂ targets and keeping global warming below a certain temperature. Scientists agree that this is vital for the future of everyone living on the planet and that **it's the worlds poorest who will suffer** the most from climate change.

To take action you may want to raise awareness, campaign, fundraise or go green, or you may take an action which involves a little bit of each of these.

Raise awareness – Get everyone on board to join the fight against climate change. Think about the human impact of climate change; most people think about polar bears when they think about climate change, but people are important too!

Campaign – Put pressure on decision makers to do what they can. Whatever you do, please [email us](#) to let us know.

Fundraise – World temperatures have already increased by 0.8 degrees over pre-industrial levels and further warming is now inevitable. Therefore money is needed vitally to assist the poorest in adapting to climate change.

Go green – This is probably what you'll think of doing first. It's certainly important and we won't stop climate change without significant individual and collective action, but it's worth remembering that taking action is not just about changing our own lives. Have a look at ideas in the other categories too!

So here are loads of ideas about how you can help and what you can do to make a difference...

Learn about the human impact of climate change – get your teacher to look at Oxfam’s teaching resources around Climate change on our website:

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/category.htm?20>

Organise a climate change film screening – Show the ‘Sisters on the Planet’ stories to your friends. The story is about four inspirational women fighting the effects of climate change:

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/climate_change/sisters/. Speak to your teacher about showing it to teachers, students, parents and others in your school hall.

Do a climate change assembly – want to get your whole school fired up about cooling down? Do an assembly and let others know why climate change is important to you.

Organise a ‘Climate Factor’ concert – Do you enjoy The X Factor? Well then, you should enjoy Climate Factor! Invite your mates round, sing your favourite songs but change the words to be about climate change. Suggest to your teacher to do a massive ‘Climate Factor’ concert at school. Make sure you get some petition signatures, or raise some money at the same time.

Put on a show – Think about what fires you up. Your show could be as diverse as an art exhibition, a performance, a Climate change event, or a quiz night. Make sure you invite the community along!

Organise an Oxjam event – Oxjam is a chance for anyone to fight poverty with music or other event. Invite your mates round to your house, or organise a party at school but charge people to attend. Your party could be anything, a house party, a clothes swap party, a raffle, a fete, a theatre performance, an exhibition an auction or a quiz night. For more ideas, go to http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/fundraise/oxjam/index.php

Get creative – Don’t hide the artist inside you, express to the world how you feel about climate change! You could do this through plays, music, school displays/ exhibitions, paintings, poetry, dance, stories, making windmills, pavement art, sand writing, photography – whatever you do take a picture of your finished work and send it to education@oxfam.org.uk and we will publish it online.

Get the media interested – Whatever you do, whether you’re putting on an exhibition or a quiz night, or inviting your local MP in for question time, invite the media to cover your story and spread the word about the human impact of climate change. See

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/activists/guides.html for further information about how to engage with the media.

Use Oxfam’s Climate Change Campaign resources – need petitions, posters, banners, action cards or reports? Download or order them from

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/activists/materials.html

Get some signatures on a petition – collecting signatures is a simple and good way to show people in power how much you and everyone you know cares about issues. Go to http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/activists/materials.html to download a climate change petition.

Contact your local MP – Invite your local politician into school for a climate change themed activity or a question time event. Ask them a couple of questions that are difficult to dodge! Or write them a letter and tell them what you think about climate change, to find out which politicians represent you go to <http://www.writetothem.com/> In fact, if you write to the Prime Minister, you'll usually get a reply. The address is 10 Downing Street, London, SW1A 2AA.

Organise a Wave – Get a group of mates, your youth group or perhaps your whole school involved in a huge, blue Mexican wave to show support for the ongoing climate change campaign. Make a film and send it in to go on our website.

Hold a Climate Challenge – Each year group or class can design a wind-powered vehicle to race outside, make and investigate wind turbines or to write poetry related to climate change. Challenges could take place on Blue Day or in the build up with a 'sharing assembly' at the end for the whole school.

Demand action until you're blue in the face – Blue represents flood water. Either paint your faces blue or decorate a blue mask to show that you're blue in the face about climate change!

Start a 'People & Planet' group – People & Planet supports student led campaign groups at 60 sixth forms and colleges in the UK. They campaign and raise awareness about the global issues by organising special events, debates, quizzes, colourful demonstrations, boycotts, club nights and more <http://peopleandplanet.org/>.

Come up with your own ideas – Think about how you can help in the fight against climate change. Be as wild and whacky as possible – think about what you're into – football, dancing, films – and base your ideas around that. Your ideas for action should show other people how they can help too.

Raise money to help people fight disasters – Natural disasters have doubled since the 1980's and most of the people affected live in the poorest countries. Help the poorest to deal with disaster by investing in Oxfam unwrapped gifts such as radio sets (£16) or emergency communications (£50) – go to <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/shop/content/unwrapped/schoolspack.aspx>

Recycle your unwanted mobile phones and gadgets – Help Oxfam to turn your unwanted gadgets like mobile phones into tools, seeds, schoolbooks and lots of other things for countries like Ghana and Sri Lanka. http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/recycle/recycle_schools.html

Have fun and fundraise! – Chances are you already have a good idea about how you're going to fundraise for Oxfam. If not, here are a few suggestions. And remember, you can be sure that every penny will help people to fight against poverty.

You could:

- Raise funds at an existing event such as a school disco or local fun run
- Hold a quiz night for Oxfam at school
- Run a raffle or a tombola at your school sports day

Keeping it simple is a good idea. For more suggestions, check out our fundraising ideas at <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/fundraise>

Renewable energy for your home/school – Persuade the bill payer at home or school to help fight climate change and raise money for Oxfam, by switching their electricity supply to Ecotricity, a green energy supplier and generator:

<https://www.oxfam.org.uk/donate/ecotricity.html>

Measure your carbon footprint – see how good you are at being green and where there is room for improvement by measuring your carbon footprint on:

<http://www.carbonfootprint.com/calculator.aspx>

Measure your schools carbon footprint – The Carbon Detectives' Kit is an online carbon footprint calculator for schools in England. The kit enables you to explore what can be done at an individual and school level to prevent the predicted significant impacts of rising temperatures: <http://www.carbondetectives.org.uk/content/home/index.html>.

In Wales, the whole country is aiming to reduce its carbon footprint (One Wales, One Planet). To find out how you can contribute, visit:

<http://wales.gov.uk/walescarbonfootprint/home/?lang=en>

Join or start an eco-committee – Your school might have a school council or an eco-committee which makes decisions and plans about making your school greener. Why not join it or if your school doesn't have one then why not get one started?!

Finally... tell us about it!

We always love hearing about schools and youth groups making a difference!

Visit <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education> or e-mail us at education@oxfam.org.uk to contact us. Please also send in pictures and reports of your activities so that we can put them up on the website.

Information for Teachers

Curriculum links

Taking action is supported by the secondary National Curriculum under the overarching aim of 'responsible citizenship' and more specifically by the KS4 Citizenship curriculum opportunities. Taking action also strengthens critical thinking, project management and problem solving skills. We therefore believe that taking action constitutes both good learning and responsible citizenship.

The QCA's KS4 Citizenship Scheme of Work Unit 07 'Taking Part – Planning a Community Event' provides a learning framework in which many of the following activities, which aim to engage learners as participants, may take place.

For the SOW see <http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes2/ks4citizenship/cit07/?view=get>

In Wales, taking action is supported by the Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) framework. Climate change forms one of the 7 themes, through which teachers can deliver ESDGC across the curriculum. Taking action is also supported by the Personal and Social Education Framework (PSE Curriculum) under 'Active Citizenship' where learners should be given the opportunity to "participate in school and the wider community".

Youth participation

Oxfam promotes and supports young people taking action to mitigate the impact of climate change and help the world's poorest adapt to the changing climate. We believe that this action is best initiated and sustained by young people themselves, with the support of adults, at a level appropriate to young people's responsibilities, interests and abilities.

Roger Hart's 'Ladder of Participation' provides a useful model for evaluating the degree to which activities involving young people meet the aim of engaging them as active citizens, for more information follow this link: <http://www.freechild.org/ladder.htm>.

Fundraising - make it educational

Fundraising should be used as part of a powerful educational experience. To help young people get the most from fundraising in terms of learning, Oxfam has produced this guide for schools.

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/teachersupport/fundraising_support/