



TAKE ACTION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

A guide for teachers and educators
working with young people aged 9-16

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Aimed at teachers and educators, this short guide contains practical advice, classroom activities and helpful planning tools to inspire and motivate young people aged 9-16 to take action for our planet and its people.

There are many ways in which we can all take climate action, from making individual lifestyle changes to participating in collective community responses that target the systemic causes of the climate emergency, and all are important. Taking action can develop young people's sense of agency, build skills such as leadership and decision-making, and help them to build empathy and manage eco-anxiety. This guide supports young people to take action by sharing the message about climate justice, raising awareness and influencing others to help make change happen.

A [recent survey by Inter Climate Network](#) found that more than 80 per cent of young people aged 11–18 were concerned about climate change, with half of them already choosing to take climate action. Almost all of those taking action are doing so at home, with only a third acting on climate change in school. Another key finding was that many young people do not feel they have the power to effect change, citing barriers such as a lack of knowledge about what they can do, insufficient time provided in school for positive climate action, and a sense that individual actions have little impact without wider structural change.

WHAT IS CLIMATE JUSTICE?

While the climate crisis is affecting us all, it's hitting some communities more than others — and it's the people who have done the least to cause it who are suffering the most. People facing poverty often don't have access to the support needed to survive and recover from extreme weather, such as clean water on tap during a drought, or home insurance to help rebuild after houses are destroyed by floods.

It's an injustice that our ability to cope with the climate crisis is based on where we live, what resources we have available, and what part of society we belong to.

Individuals and communities around the world are coming together and speaking out for their right to a fairer and more sustainable future. We only have eight years for the whole world to massively cut global carbon emissions — to prevent global warming from reaching catastrophic levels and creating human suffering on an unimaginable scale. It's not too late if we all take urgent action together.



Cover image: Eleanor Farmer/Oxfam

LEARN-THINK-ACT

For Oxfam, [global citizenship education](#) is an important framework for helping learners make sense of complex issues such as climate justice. Global citizenship is all about encouraging young people to develop the knowledge, skills and values they need to engage in positive ways with the world. We take a Learn-Think-Act approach that gives young people the opportunity to learn about the challenges facing our planet, think critically about how to solve them, and act as responsible global citizens.

We therefore recommend that you build young people's knowledge and understanding of climate justice by completing one or more of the activities from Oxfam's [The Human Impact of Climate Change](#) resources before supporting them to take action. These resources focus on the human element of the climate crisis and how a range of factors might intersect to affect people's experiences of climate change. With separate versions for ages 9–11 and 11–16, the activities link to a number of curricular areas including English, Geography, PSHE and Citizenship.

It is important that young people have ownership in choosing and shaping any personal action they decide to take. However, you will probably find that learning about climate justice will mean that many of your learners do want to respond in active ways. Taking action can be an appropriate and empowering response to the real-life and urgent issue of climate justice, as young people can experience being part of bringing about change that improves the lives of people and planet.

Taking action can support young people to:

- Strengthen skills such as leadership, communication and decision-making
- Improve their confidence, well-being and mental resilience
- Feel valued, engaged and involved
- Make their voices heard on issues that affect them
- Develop their sense of agency
- Build empathy and connections with others
- Manage eco-anxiety



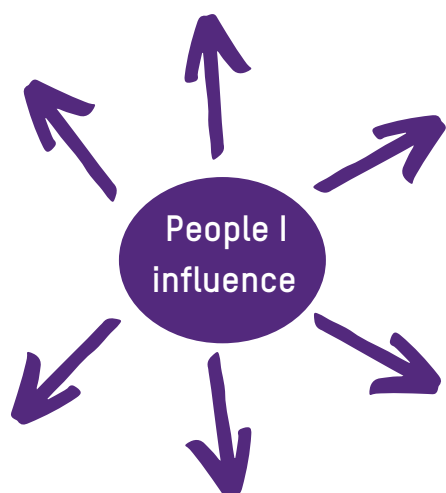
Photo: Andy Aitchison/Oxfam

ACTIVITIES TO INSPIRE CLIMATE ACTION

Who should take climate action?

- Aim: Consider who should take climate action.
- Time: 10 min
- Resources: Label four corners of the classroom or learning space: Me; Family and friends; Other people in my community; Companies and Politicians.

1. Discuss what taking action means. Explain that we can think of taking action as doing something to help stop a situation (usually bad) from developing or continuing. Or we can think of taking action as bringing about a better situation.
2. Ask learners to move to one of the labelled corners of the room depending on who they think should take action on climate change. If they are split between options, they can stand mid-way between corners (or in the middle of all four).
3. Repeat for the following questions:
 - Who can do the most to take action against climate change?
 - Who are businesses and politicians most likely to listen to about important issues such as climate change?
4. Invite learners in different places to justify their choices.
5. Tackling the climate crisis needs everyone to come together to make change happen. We can all do things in our own lives to live more sustainably, but we also need those in power — such as politicians or chief executives — to make urgent changes to protect our planet and its people.



Who do you influence?

- Aim: Think about how we are influenced and how we can influence others.
- Time: 20 min
- Resources: Paper; pencils

1. Discuss what influencing someone means. Draw out that it is about affecting the way someone thinks and behaves.
2. Talk with learners about who and what influences them. For example, individuals such as a parent or teacher, a football club, a fashion brand or a type of music. We might be influenced by people close to us, such as family and friends, or people we don't know, such as celebrities.
3. Discuss with learners what they are influenced about and how. For example, a parent might influence what they eat or what time they go to bed. A celebrity might influence what they wear, what music they listen to or their views on different political or social issues. Bring into this discussion the different ways in which we might be influenced, such as by people talking to us, social media or what we watch on television or online.
4. Ask learners to think about who they influence. Give each learner a piece of paper and ask them to draw a spider diagram with themselves in the centre and the individuals and groups of people they influence outside this. They should write or draw the people they think they influence the most near to the centre, and those they influence the least further away from the centre.
5. Share and discuss their ideas.
 - How do you influence these people? For example, by talking with our friends or messaging them on social media we might influence their likes and dislikes or what they choose to do in their spare time. Companies can be influenced by what people buy and customer feedback. Government officials can be influenced by the people they represent through direct conversations, letters or petitions.
 - Do you think everyone has the same influence over others? What factors might affect how much influence someone has? For example, age, race, gender or a combination of these might affect how much influence some people have.

ACTIVITIES TO INSPIRE CLIMATE ACTION

What action will we choose?

- Aim: Discuss and compare possible actions to share the message about climate justice.
- Time: 30 min
- Resources: Copies of the [Climate action ideas](#) (optional)

1. Organise learners into small groups and ask them to discuss possible ways in which they could share the message about climate justice and encourage others to take action. The [Climate action ideas](#) could be used to prompt their thinking.

- How could they spread the message at home, at school or in their community?
- How could they influence a company, their local council or the government to take action?

2. Now ask learners to work in their groups (or as a whole class) to choose their top three climate actions.

Encourage learners to think about:

- How easy will this action be to organise?
- What support will we need to do it? Will we need anyone to help us? If so, who?
- What might be the barriers to carrying out this action? How could they be overcome?
- Are there any safety considerations we need to think about?
- How much impact might this action have? How many people could it reach? How big a change might each of these people be able to make?

3. Share learners' ideas as a whole group. Explore the choices that learners have made and their reasons for them.

Action planning

- Learners could use the [Action plan template](#) to help them plan their climate action. The white boxes should be completed before the action begins, and the blue box after the action has happened.
- You might also like to share the Top tips with learners to support their action planning.

OUR ACTION PLAN

What is our goal? What do we want our action to achieve?

What are we going to do?

Who is going to do it? Do we need anyone to help us?

When will we do it by?

How will we know if we have been successful?

GET IN TOUCH!

We would love to hear about any action that your young people take. Please either tag @OxfamEducation in any social media posts or drop us an email — education@oxfam.org.uk.

CLIMATE ACTION IDEAS

Give an assembly or teach another class

Use an assembly or lesson to share your messages with other learners in the school. Perhaps you could give a presentation or perform a short play. How could you get your audience to take part?

Use your voice

Compose a song or write a poem to inspire people to take climate action.

Have a conversation

Talk with your friends and family about how you think and feel about climate change. Consider what action you could take together.

Make an animation

Create a short animation or film. Want to be inspired? Take a look at this [climate justice explainer animation](#) from some budding young film-makers in Scotland.

Design a poster or infographic

There are lots of ways to encourage others to take climate action: draw a picture, design a poster, paint a mural, make a sign or create a cartoon.

Share online

Write a blog post for your school website or an article for the newsletter. Ask your teacher to help you share some posts on your school's social media feed.

Find out more

One way to take action on an issue is to find out more about it. What questions do you have about climate change? Carry out some research on your own or with friends.

Put on a performance

Come up with a dance or perform a play to raise awareness. Perhaps you could share stories from people who are being impacted the most by climate change right now.

Ask questions

Organise a virtual quiz on the theme of climate justice. Maybe you could include questions about the impacts of climate change and ways in which people can reduce their carbon footprint.

Talk with those in power

Invite decision-makers to meet with you at school or virtually. This could be your Member of Parliament, someone in your town council or local business owners.

Get creative

Make something to share your message. Perhaps you could sew, knit, sculpt or crochet. Or you could try pottery or making a collage.

Write a letter

Write a letter to your local Member of Parliament, someone on your town council, or a company. Tell them about the issue and what action you think is needed.

Organise a film screening

Show a film to raise awareness about climate justice. See [Take One Action](#) for some ideas.

Take action at school

Think about what climate action you could take as a school. Meet with your head teacher to share your ideas. Perhaps your school could join the [Let's Go Zero](#) campaign and aim to become carbon zero by 2030.

March for climate justice

Organise a march in your school grounds to raise awareness and make your voices heard.

Create a pledge tree

Encourage everyone in your school to pledge to make one or more lifestyle changes to reduce their carbon footprint. Write the pledges on paper leaves and display them in the school's entrance.

TOP TIPS

1. Keep it simple

Use words that are easy to understand. Remember that other people might know nothing or very little about this issue.

2. Know your facts

Do some research about the issue. Make some notes and keep them to hand in case people have questions. Make sure you get your information from reliable sources.

3. Stay positive

Climate change is already having serious impacts everywhere, but it's not too late to make important differences for our planet and people's lives if we all take urgent action together.

4. Think outside the box

The more exciting, eye-catching activity you can do, the more likely you are to draw attention to what it is you're doing.

5. Listen to others

Respect the ideas and viewpoints of others. People may want to take climate action in different ways. Listen also to those who choose not to take action to understand why.

6. Use your superpower

Maybe you are great at talking to people. Perhaps you are good at organising things. Maybe you love art and drawing. We all have skills and experiences to share. Find out what you do best and use this to make a difference in the world.

7. Be passionate

You can probably remember being inspired by someone who was passionate about their topic. Being knowledgeable, enthusiastic and determined will help you to share your message with others.

8. Small is beautiful

Every action matters. Any climate action you take, no matter how small, will make a difference.

9. Join with others

Get everyone together to share your ideas, consider the ideas of everyone and agree on which one to choose. Try to reach out to people you wouldn't normally talk to.

10. Tell a story

Stories motivate people. Perhaps you could share [stories of how people around the world are being affected by climate change](#). Maybe you could share your story of why this issue matters to you and what action you are taking.

TOP TIPS

11. Be realistic

Think about how realistic your activity is. How easy will it be to do? What support will you need to do it?

13. Measure your impact

Collect evidence of what you achieve to share your success and help you to plan actions in the future. How many people took part in your activity? Perhaps you could do a survey before and after to see if people's views on an issue change.

15. Create a timeline

Make a timeline to help make sure everyone knows what to do by when. But be flexible – things can change!

17. Celebrate your success

Think about what went well and feel proud of your achievements. Telling others about what you are doing might encourage them to take action as well.

19. Have a 'take-home message'

What's the most important part of your message – the key thing you want people to remember?

12. Take care of yourself

We can all have different thoughts and feelings about climate change. Sometimes we might feel hopeful and motivated. Other times we might feel angry or sad. Talking with others, taking time out and being outside with nature can all help.

14. Make it fun

Making things fun can help you to reach others. People are more likely to listen to and remember your message if they enjoy taking part in the activity you plan.

16. Take small steps

Planning an action can sometimes feel overwhelming. Breaking things down into small steps can help you to make things happen.

18. Get inspired

Find out about some of the [amazing ways in which young people around the world are taking climate action](#).

20. Be the change

Taking action starts with every single one of us. Think about what you could do at home or school to reduce your carbon footprint.

OUR ACTION PLAN

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What are we going to do?

Who is going to do it? Do we need anyone to help us?

When will we do it by?

How will we know if we have been successful?

FURTHER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

The Human Impact of Climate Change

These [Oxfam Education resources for ages 9-16](#) focus on the human element of the climate crisis and how a range of factors might intersect to affect people's experiences of climate change.

Schools Speak Out

Discover everything you need to [inspire and engage young campaigners](#). At Schools Speak Out, young people can demonstrate leadership, get involved in Oxfam's latest campaigns and take action to tackle the global challenge we face.

Explore Climate Justice: A human rights-based approach

Created by a number of partner organisations, this [teaching resource](#) has been specifically designed for the Curriculum of Excellence in Scotland.

Sustainability and Environmental Education (SEEd)

A collated list of online [resources to support teaching and learning about sustainability and climate change](#).

Transform Our World

A [resource hub](#) to help teachers bring environmental action into the classroom.

Global Dimension

Browse dozens of [global learning resources](#) on the topic of the environment and sustainability.

Climate Cymru

[Learning and action materials](#) tailored for Welsh schools.

Let's Go Zero

Join other schools working together to [go net zero](#) by 2030.

Getting climate-ready: a guide for schools on climate action

This [guide from UNESCO](#) provides advice and support for taking a whole-school approach to climate action.

Take action

Find out more about the action being taken in the UK to campaign against climate change, and how individuals and communities can get involved.

- In England: [The Climate Coalition](#)
- In Scotland: [Stop Climate Chaos Scotland](#)
- In Wales: [Stop Climate Chaos Cymru](#)

Local support networks

Access local support for resources, projects and training opportunities.

- In England: [Consortium of Development Education Centres \(CODEC\)](#)
- In Northern Ireland: [Centre for Global Education](#)
- In Scotland: [International Development Education Association of Scotland \(IDEAS\)](#)
- In Wales: [Wales Alliance for Global Learning \(WAGL\)](#)