

Our Pitch on Climate Action (11-18)

Guidance for teachers

60 minutes – 2 hours depending on discussion and choice of extension activities.
The session has been designed so that you can adapt the session to your students.

Resources needed

- PowerPoint Presentation
- Paper
- Pens
- Post it Notes
- Students images of land (potential to set this as a homework before you deliver this session)

Printable Our Pitch Resources:

- Habitat X Climate Change Matching Card Game
- Climate Action Inspiration Cards
- Recent News Reports (Written or Video) on climate change impacts (optional)

Session Aims:

AIM 1: To understand what climate change is, its causes and its impacts different global habitats.

AIM 2: Be introduced to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and their role in addressing climate action.

AIM 3: Explore how athletes can use their platform to drive positive change.

Curriculum Alignment:

The materials can be delivered as part of the formal school curriculum, through school assemblies, tutorial time and/or as a cross-curricular enrichment day.

The materials can be integrated into the following National curriculum areas in England:

Geography: Pupils will, understand how human and physical processes interact to influence, and change landscapes, environments, and the climate.

Science: Pupils learn about earth and atmosphere, including the production of carbon dioxide by human activity and the impact on climate.

Citizenship: Pupils will, understand the different ways in which a citizen can contribute to the improvement of his or her community, to include the opportunity to participate actively in community volunteering, as well as other forms of responsible activity’.

Gatsby Benchmark 2, 4 and 5.

Whilst the materials meet National Curriculum requirements for schools in England, the materials can be adapted for use in other devolved nations and elsewhere.

Holding Slide

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Introduce the aims of the session

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Introduce the topic of climate change

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- **Explain:** climate change is a big and confusing topic.
- **Activity:** Ask students what they think of when they hear the two words together Climate and Change. Get them to record two words that they associate with climate change on post it notes and then invite the students to place their words on a wall/board. Ask them to put similar words together or do this yourself.
- **Discuss:** the main word clusters and how they might relate to climate change. All words that students write are important as they show their feelings and prior knowledge about this subject. We don't have to have a solution to their words, but this activity is to get them thinking about climate change and how we can take climate action.

Note: Example words students might use: warmer weather, scary, oil, gas, overwhelming, plastic in the ocean, less fish. You may choose to group the words under groups such as: causes, impacts, emotions, actions. If you are running this activity with people who have access to mobile devices, you might want to use a tool such as Mentimeter to develop a word cloud based on people's combined words. See [mentimeter.com](https://www.mentimeter.com)

Spectrum of Difference – Establish where you are at

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- **Explain:** you are going to pose a series of statements. Students should stand towards one end of the room if they strongly agree with the statement (10 on the spectrum), and the other end if they strongly disagree (1 on the spectrum). The middle of the room will act as a sliding scale, participants should stand near the middle if they neither agree nor disagree (5 on the spectrum) and can stand anywhere they feel represents their views (i.e. 3 or 7).
- The idea here is to structure a conversation where we respect different opinions and views of others, and also value others and our own opinions on the topic. It should allow you to springboard into other activities surrounding climate change and more broadly power and voice within our communities.
- Some example statements are provided below, but you could phrase your own. Read out each statement and let students move to where they feel they are on the spectrum. These questions relate to power/voice/listening and climate change locally/nationally/globally.

- I think about climate change very often.
 - Climate change effect's me personally.
 - Sport is affected by climate change.
 - I've got bigger things to worry about than climate change.
 - I try to live sustainably – it is easy for me.
 - I feel listened to by society.
 - I feel I have the power to solve issues my community face.
 - It is down to my generation to fix climate change.
 - I feel confident in discussing climate change.
- **Discuss:** after each question: Ask students to discuss with the people closest to them why they are there before asking students at extreme ends of the spectrum why they stood there? What were they discussing? Repeat questions to a range of students from the middle, establishing that we can all have different opinions and viewpoints but our voice is relevant and important to this issue.

Exploring Key Vocabulary

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Weather and Climate

- **Ask:** students what the difference is between Weather and Climate?
- **Explain:** that weather is the description of what the conditions are like in one place, at one time.
- **Explain:** that the climate is the average of weather measured over a long period of time and across large geographic areas.
- **Activity:** You may like to explore this by questioning what the climate is like in the UK (changeable – there are seasons) and in a country with a different climate such as the United Arab Emirate (generally hot and sunny) we choose to go and visit other countries to experience other climates because we can anticipate what the weather is likely to be.

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Climate Change

- **Discuss:** Considering what we have learnt about the difference between weather and climate. Ask students how they would define climate change?
- **Explain:** climate change refers to the shift in the Earth's usual weather conditions caused by humans over many years. Unfortunately, our world has been getting hotter and weather more extreme (fires, floods, droughts and storms) which is affecting all of our planet's habitats. Whether you are a polar bear in the Arctic or a camel in the desert the weather is getting more extreme, the temperature is rising and altering the climate. This affects living things ability to thrive and survive in their habitat. This alteration is largely caused by climate change.

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Increase knowledge and understanding of climate change

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- **Discuss:** Ask students what they think causes climate change. They may discuss with a partner before feeding back– some of these answers may have come up at the beginning of the session.
- **Explain:** that climate change is caused by things humans are doing, like burning huge amounts of fossil fuels, cutting down too many trees, producing lots of plastic and over-farming crops and animals.

These things add greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxides, and water vapour) to our air, trapping the Sun's energy and causing the Earth and oceans to warm.

Note: Depending on your class you may wish to take this opportunity to further explore the greenhouse effect and global warming.

- **Reflect:** When delivering this section, you may like to reflect on what extreme weather or impacts of climate change are being reported in the news to set further context. This may be fires, floods, droughts and storms in the UK or around the world, people being displaced by climate change or habitats being destroyed. You may show students appropriate footage from trusted news sources and discuss what and why the event is happening.

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Impact of Sport

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Discuss: Explore how sport can have a large environmental impact – even in places you might not first consider.

- **Swimming:** Chlorine is a chemical that is dangerous in high quantities to the natural environment, a lot of fresh water required for swimming pools.
- **Football pitches:** Grass that needs to be watered, trees cut down, less biodiversity.
- **Basketball:** Use of energy for indoor training sessions and games, athletes flying around the world.

Finding Solutions - UN Sports for Climate Action.

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- **Explain:** Briefly introduce the United Nations (UN) Sports for Climate Action Framework.
- **Explain:** that the sports body SailGP is an international sailing race that has signed up to the recommendations within the UN Sports for Climate Action. SailGP was the first climate positive sports organisation with teams competing both on and off the water, as they can also score points against 10 key sustainability criteria.

Notes: For further information see <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/sectoral-engagement/sports-for-climate-action>

Finding Solutions – Protect our Future

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Explain: that Protect Our Future is The Emirates Great Britain SailGP team's education programme. It aims to use the inspiration of athletes and the global community of sport to empower young people with the knowledge to take climate action and drive behavioural change.

Activity: Watch the film on this slide as inspiration: A video with world-class athletes Eliud Kipchoge, Chemmy Alcott, Hussain Alireza, and Hannah Mills to add athlete voice to the Challenge. They have shared their stories and linked climate actions, to help inspire students.

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Discuss: Ask students if they were surprised the athletes were so passionate about climate action?

Introduce the Sustainable Development Goals

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Explain: Reinforce the message that many people are working towards improving the planet. Explain that the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs for short, are a list of promises that people all around the world have made to make the planet a better place. Imagine it like a to-do list for the whole world to make sure everyone has a good life and the Earth stays healthy. There are 17 goals in total, and each goal focuses on a different important thing.

Activity: Select a (or run all three!) SDG related activity:

World's Largest Lesson

- Show the video clip of Malala introducing the World's Largest Lesson <https://vimeo.com/138852758>.

Sustainable Development Goals and Sport

- Divide the SDG symbols and linked photos between the students, so that each pair or small group has at least one SDG symbol and linked photograph. Some of the SDGs are more accessible than others, so for younger or SEND students, so you might want to preselect some of the SDGs for this activity.
- Ask students to think how a sport that they are interested in could help to deliver the SDG. An example could be **Goal 5: Gender Equality** – are all sports accessible to girls and boys? If not, what can be done about it? Or **Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production** – link to merchandise that sports clubs encourage fans to buy (such as football shirts). What happens to them at the end of one season?

Make the Link: Sustainable Development Goals

- Move your students to a space where they can stand in a large circle.
- Handout the SDG symbols and photograph randomly around the circle. Make sure that each symbol has its linked photo in the circle. If you have less than 34 students taking part, then remove the corresponding amount of SDG symbols and photos from the pack.
- Ask all the students to hold up their SDG symbol cards or photographs.
- Give any student holding an SDG symbol a ball of string. Ask them to say which symbol they have before asking them to hold onto the end of the string and throw the ball of string to the person who has the linked SDG photograph. They need to be ready to catch it!
- Once the ball of string has been caught, ask the student to briefly say what is in their photo. Ask them to then throw the ball of string to another student who has a SDG symbol and so on. When every student is holding a piece of the string, you should have a web of string.
- Ask the students who are holding the SDG 13: Climate Action symbol and photo to loosen their hold of the web. Which SDGs are affected by others 'slacking/not acting enough' on climate action? Now ask the students to pull the web tight. What happens?
- Recap that if we work together on all the SDGs, we can all feel the impact and therefore achieve targets.

Note: As reference the SDG Goals are:

1. No Poverty: We want to make sure everyone has enough money to live a good life.
2. Zero Hunger: We're working to make sure everyone has enough good food to eat.
3. Good Health and Well-being: We want to help people stay healthy and happy.
4. Quality Education: Every child should have the chance to go to a good school and learn.
5. Gender Equality: Boys and girls, men and women, should all be treated the same and have the same opportunities.
6. Clean Water and Sanitation: Everyone should have clean water to drink and a clean place to go to the bathroom.
7. Affordable and Clean Energy: We want to use energy that doesn't hurt the Earth and is not too expensive.
8. Decent Work and Economic Growth: People should have jobs that are fair, pay well, and help the country grow.
9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure: We want to make sure our communities have good roads, bridges, and other things that help us live better.
10. Reduced Inequality: We want to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and has the same chances in life.
11. Sustainable Cities and Communities: We want to have nice places to live that are good for the environment.
12. Responsible Consumption and Production: We want to use things in a way that doesn't waste them and is good for the Earth.
13. Climate Action: We want to stop the Earth from getting too hot and protect it for the future.
14. Life Below Water: We want to take care of the oceans and make sure all the sea animals have a safe home.
15. Life on Land: We want to take care of the forests and make sure all the animals on land have a safe home.
16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions: We want to live in a world where there is no fighting, and everyone is treated fairly.
17. Partnerships for the Goals: We want people from different countries to work together to make these goals happen.

Introduce SDG 13: Climate Action

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- **Explain:** SDG 13 Climate Action was touched upon in the previous activity. Take a closer look at the target and the latest Paris Agreement.

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- **Activity:** Using the activity on this slide, discuss how athletes and/or sports teams have a direct role to play in achieving the UN SDGs. Consider areas such as waste reduction, use of energy, travel and transport and food. Students might want to consider local and/or national examples. You could also critique sports teams' climate action.

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- **Increase awareness of the role that athletes and sport can play when they use their platform to drive positive change.**
- **Activity:** Read the quote on slide 17 before using the following slides to look at how athletes are using their voices to advocate for different causes. Use the examples of Marcus Rashford, the England Women's Football Team, The British Cycling Team and the Emirates Great Britain SailGP team to prompt discussion.

Note: To extend this activity, ask students to conduct a research task to see if they can find examples of how different athletes/sports have contributed toward either direct action and/or have used their role to educate or advocate on climate change.

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- For students who might need more guidance, direct them to sports and/or clubs such as Forest Green Football club <https://www.fgr.co.uk/eco-park>.
- Seven athletes taking action on climate change <https://www.dw.com/en/meet-the-athletes-taking-action-on-climate-change/a-48660770>
- The role of sport and climate change <https://earth.org/sports-climate-change>

Activity: Establishing students connection to global lands (this may be set as a homework task before this session)

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Discovering young people's emotional connection to land will help them engage with some of the wider conversations about climate change and begin to think of the consequences and the actions we can take to contribute to a solution.

Home task: Either set students the task of bringing in a photo of land that "means something to them". This may be land that is local – a place they visit often, a place they pass each day, or it may be a global connection, a land which connects them to their heritage, a land where they grew up, or their family is from, a land connected to a hobby or sporting interest or even a land they would like to go to. There is no right or wrong for what the students pick.

- **Explain:** that when you next meet, they must be prepared to describe their land, give a verbal tour of their land and explain why they chose it, and why it is important to them. What message does it tell them?
- **Alternatively:** you can simply get students to think of a place without the image, allow some time for them to carefully choose a land that is important. You could ask them to draw their land or write down the place on a piece of paper.

Note - Expect variation in the chosen lands, there is no right or wrong. Some may be football stadiums, gardens or trees near their home, whilst others may be lands further away where they have a connection, relative or memory.

- **Ask:** Ask students to spend the next few minutes with their image or memory of that land and free write about it with the stimulus:
- “Imagine you are in that place and write down your story – why is that land important to you, what message does it tell you?”
- They can start their writing with “This land is important to me because...”

Note - What is important is that we are establishing an emotional connection to climate change – which will help them find and use their voice. Our athletes connection was through their sporting careers, and how climate change impacts lands associated with their sport. Establish that we care about the lands around the world and we want to protect them.

- Once this is complete, get students to work in pairs or small groups and share their stories. Can they identify common themes, are there key phrases, emotions, or landscapes within their stories? Are these lands impacted by the climate change? Get them to choose one word that encapsulates their story, which they will share with the rest of class.

This may be home, family, tree, beauty, ocean, memory, sport etc.

- Get students to write down their word and name on a post it notes and stick them up on the board/wall. Encourage students to group similar words together or you can do this for them.
- Either group students into project teams depending on the common this may be geographical, similar imagery, similar connection, or choose a theme you will work on as an entire class by deciding together. For example, a theme of Home, may include many geographic locations.

Student Led Research

The students now need to work together in their teams to start to research how the lands within their theme are impacted by climate change. They will need to do this online from trusted sources. Key research questions to consider:

- How are these lands impacted by Climate Change now?
- What will these lands look like in five, ten, twenty years? Will they have changed? Will they exist?

Note: If you have no computer access you could draw upon information in the “Habitat X Climate Change Matching Card Game” resource. Which sets out how global habitats are impacted by climate change.

- Print out the “Habitat X Climate Change Matching Card Game” resource. Cut out all the images and descriptions. Enough for x1 set between 3-4 students.
- Ask students to match the images with the impacts and then group the images into the distinct habitats.

Power to Help

- **Discuss:** Ask students how these impacts make them feel – give enough time and space in the session to allow them to explore and answer. You may like them to externalise their feelings by drawing a picture or completing some free writing.
- **Explain:** Remind students that major changes need to come from governments and businesses, but scientists say that if we all make small changes to our lives too, together we can have an impact. There are lots of ways we can get involved, again referring to our inspirational athletes. Be creative and follow what interests you or where you think you can make a difference.
- **Discuss:** Ask students to discuss with a partner or with their group what actions they could take to help reduce the impact of climate change on their land(s)? Remind them of the main causes. They may like to write out ideas using paper and pens before deciding on the final idea. Reinforce that climate action we take in our local communities can positively impact our global community.

Note: There are some action cards available to print and share amongst groups to help inspire climate action.

Other ideas may include:

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Fossil Fuels

1. **Reduce Energy Use Campaign** in school or at home: Use energy-efficient appliances and lighting, turn off lights when not in use, and unplug chargers and electronics when they're not in use. You could turn energy conservation into a sports competition. Challenge different classrooms or teams to reduce their energy consumption by turning off lights and electronics when not in use. The group with the most significant reduction could win recognition.
2. **Use Public Transport Campaign**: Encourage students to walk or bike to school instead of being driven in cars. You can create a challenge where classes or individuals receive rewards for the most sustainable commuting habits.
3. **Support Clean Energy Campaign**: Advocate for and support the use of renewable energy sources like wind and solar power in your community.
4. **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Campaign**: Consume less and recycle more to reduce the demand for fossil fuels in manufacturing. Collect old or unused sports equipment and uniform to donate, exchange or recycle. This can help reduce waste and provide equipment for others who may not have access to it.

Plastic:

1. **Reduce Single-Use Plastics** in school or the community: Say no to single-use plastic items like straws, bags, and water bottles, and opt for reusable alternatives. Integrate recycling into sports competitions. Each classroom or year group could be responsible for collecting and recycling a certain amount of plastic bottles or paper. The class with the most recycled items could win a prize.
2. **Participate in Cleanups**: Join or organise local beach, park or school ground cleanups to prevent plastic waste from reaching the environment. You can turn it into a friendly competition to see who can collect the most litter.
3. **Spread Awareness**: Educate your peers, family, and community about the environmental impact of plastic pollution.

1. **Eat Sustainably Campaign:** Choose foods produced using sustainable farming practices, such as organic or locally grown products.
2. **Reduce Food Waste:** Avoid wasting food by planning meals, using leftovers, and composting food scraps. How could food waste be reduced in your school canteen?
3. **Support Sustainable Farming:** Advocate for and support local farmers who use sustainable farming methods and promote responsible land use. Connect gardening with sports and climate action by creating a school vegetable garden. Use the produce to make healthy snacks for sports events or break times.
4. **Learn About Food Labels:** Understand labels like “organic,” “fair trade,” and “sustainably sourced” to make informed food choices.

Deforestation:

1. **Support Reforestation:** Get involved in tree-planting initiatives in your community or support organisations dedicated to reforestation efforts. Connect sports achievements to environmental action, for every goal scored in a football game or point earned in a athletic competition, the school could commit to planting a tree.
2. **Choose Sustainable Wood:** When purchasing wood products, opt for items with certification from organisations like the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).
3. **Advocate for Forest Conservation:** Raise awareness about deforestation issues and advocate for policies and practices that protect forests and their biodiversity.
4. **Reduce Paper Use:** Use digital documents and devices to minimize paper consumption, which can help reduce the demand for timber.

Prompt students to consider what they can do next in terms of climate action

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We'd love to hear what actions your students take after using this resource.

Share their pledges on your school's social channels with the hashtag:

#ProtectOurPitch

Reference: Turner-King, R., Smith, B., Hale-Smith, C., Brown, A.J. and Newbold, L. (2023). Earth Stories: Creative Outputs and Teaching Resources. [online] Acting on Climate. Available at: <https://actingonclimate.world>

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