

Youth Engagement & Taking Action

Teacher Lesson Plan

Introduction

In this lesson, students will learn why youth engagement is so important as well as conduct interviews with local organizations and create their own action project. This type of project brings students' enthusiasm and their learnings out into the community. Community action projects are valuable tools to make students feel energized and know that they can make a difference, and their voices are an integral part of this movement.

The first step to building community resilience is creating awareness of the problem. Your class goal is to design an action project that will build a community understanding of Climate Justice. To inform the design of your action project, reflect on your community interviews, class discussions, and reflections. Have fun, and start real conversations throughout your community!

Key Learnings

Community-based learning is a way to get students engaged in their local community and empower them to become agents of change. By giving them knowledge of a subject and experiences in their own landscape and then empowering them to engage with the local community in conversations, they see that they can be civically active and community change-makers. Building lifelong pro-environmental behaviors in the students will start necessary conversations and actions in your community. Reflect on the action projects. Can any of these be carried out yearly to continue your community's active engagement?

Total Time

The time may vary depending on the students' projects.

This lesson is split up into seven sections:

1. The slideshow/deciding who to reach out to
2. Prep for the interviews (whole class period)
3. The interviews
4. Project Planning
5. Peer Review
6. Creating projects
7. Presenting projects

Materials

- Laptop and projector
- Interview and Action Project Packet

Additional Teacher Prep

- Use the articles listed in Sources & References to get a better understanding of this lesson plan.

Sources & References

Examples of action projects:

[Write our own climate fiction](#)

[Video story](#)

[Poetry](#)

[Tell your own climate story](#)

[Art Projects](#)

[ACE National Strategic Planning Framework](#)

[Justice and Action for Climate Empowerment](#)

[Youth4Climate Manifesto](#)

[Climate stories project/Climate Journal Project](#)

[How to ask questions](#)

Communications from a TCI Ambassador [One](#), [Two](#), [Three](#).

[Explore the Climate Opinion Map](#)

[Climate anxiety after Hurricane Katrina](#)

[George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication](#)

[Intersectional Environmentalist](#)

[EPA's EJ Screen](#)

What is an Action Project?

An action project should involve the dissemination of the information that the students have learned. It should bring the information to the local level, tell a story, and inspire conversations. These action projects should be created and inspired by the students to give them ownership of the problem and empower them to find solutions. The most important piece:

IT IS STUDENT LED and COMMUNITY BASED!

Why is it important to engage youth in climate justice efforts?

- Youth have unique perspectives & new ideas!
- These are issues that directly impact young people
- Youth have extensive social connections
- Can lead to improved social-emotional well-being by connecting with other youth leaders
- Neglecting and excluding youth perpetuates injustice

Step 1: Present the Youth Engagement and Taking Action slideshow

Step 2: Reach out to local organizations

Work with your students to decide what organizations you want to interview. Some organizations you can email are:

JustME for JustUS -

Blue Hill Heritage Trust - info@bluehillheritagetrust.org

Island Heritage Trust -

Step 3: Practice interviewing

Have the students practice introducing themselves and asking questions before they do the actual interviews. This can be done one on one with the teacher or by having students interview each other. Encourage them to practice at home with a family member as well.

Step 4: Conduct the interviews

Have the students interview the organization they chose. Make sure they use the Interview and & Action Project Packet.

Step 5: Design an action project

Have students come up with their own project. They can use their Interview and & Action Project Packet to guide them through this process. Make sure they run their idea by you before they begin anything. Give feedback and suggestions.

- What is your goal?
- What is your message?
- Who is your target audience?
- How will you achieve it?
- Make sure students reflect on the experience, and what they learned. Connect it back to them taking action and being a change agent!

What can you do?

- Create a Petition
- Produce a Community Art Project
- Write an article
- Create a podcast
- Write a poem
- Write Letters
- Share/post on Social Media
- Make Student Presentations to Community Members
- Print flyers, posters and brochures
- Make videos, commercials or movies

Step 6: Peer Review and Feedback

Have students get peer review and feedback on their project idea. The questions to ask their peers are in their Interview and & Action Project Packet.

Step 7: Creating the project

Have students start working on their projects during class time and after school.

Step 8: Share your projects with the community

When students have finished their projects, have them present to the community. This can be done in many different ways. You decide how you are going to show them!