

SCHOOL STRIKE FOR CLIMATE



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Lesson Summary

In this lesson, students will be introduced to the 'school strike 4 climate' movement which began in Sweden with the work of Greta Thunberg and has since spread to many other countries. Students are encouraged to think about the merits of school strikes and the ways in which support can be built to raise awareness of climate crisis.

Before teaching this session, it is essential that students have a clear understanding of the causes and consequences of climate change. Perhaps show them a clip from David Attenborough's recent programme *Climate Change: The Facts* available at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p076w7g5> as a starter.

Learning Objectives

- To think about why Greta Thunberg's example has been inspirational for so many, and why the movement spread so far.
- To think about the different ways that protestors can be seen, heard, and get their message across.

United Nations Sustainable Development Links

- Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Climate Action

Curriculum Links

Citizenship	Science
Geography	English

British Council Core Skills

- Digital Literacy
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Student Leadership
- Citizenship



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Activity one: Group Discussion

Split the students into small groups and pose the following questions to establish their prior knowledge of the subject. After 5-10 minutes, bring everyone back together to compare answers. The aim of this discussion is to ensure students are familiar with the key facets of climate change, and to encourage discussions about the different ways that climate change can be tackled- both through individual choices and through political campaigns.

- What is climate change?
- What causes it?
- What impact does it have on the world and on people?
- How does it make you feel?
- What can be done to stop it?

Activity two: Presentation

Requires: slides 2-3

Preparation: Set up the slide deck.

Use the following information and the pictures on slides 2 and 3 to introduce students to the 'School Strike for Climate' movement, and Greta Thunberg.

Greta Thunberg was just 15 when she first decided to start a 'school strike.'

In August 2018, just one month before the Swedish general elections, she refused to attend school and instead sat outside the national parliament (the 'Riksdag') with a sign that announced that she was on strike to protect the climate. She said she would refuse to return to school until Swedish politicians passed laws that reduced the amount of carbon dioxide that Sweden would produce.

Since the election she has returned to school, but she still goes on strike every Friday. Her example inspired many other students in Sweden, who began to join her. She was invited to speak to politicians and business leaders around the world, and gained a lot of attention in the media for her actions.

Students around the world decided to follow in Greta's footsteps, and now students from many different countries coordinate their Friday protests. All of these students are demanding a reduction in carbon emissions, but they also focus on issues which are important to them locally as well. Students in Australia, for example, are trying to prevent a new coal mine from being opened.

On March, 15th, 2019, over 1 million people took part in school strikes and protests in over 130 countries. Some people are very critical of these protests as they think students should be in school, and should protest in their own time instead. However the students who are protesting say that it is such an important issue that missing a day of school is justified.

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Activity three: Young People's Role in Protest

Requires: Slides 4 and 5

Preparation: Ensure that the videos from slide 4 can be played

- Show the students the two videos contained on slide 4.
- Put the students into different small groups than they were in for activity one, and ask them to move to different parts of the room.
- Ask them to look at the questions on slide 5, and discuss these for a few minutes.
- Bring the entire group back together, and go through each of the questions seeking answers from different students. Encourage students to respond to one another, and explore any disagreements using sentence stems such as:
 - I understand your point of view, but have you thought about...
 - I disagree with you because...
 - Can you explain a bit more about...

Activity Four: Other Ideas

- **Make a sign** calling for whatever you want your leaders to do on climate change. It could be "100% clean energy!" or "listen to science!" It's your call -- be creative!
- **Talk** to your schoolmates, families and teachers - tell them why you care about climate crisis.
- **Create** artworks and live events to spread the word.
- **Discuss** what you can do as individuals to make contributions to prevent climate change in your community.
- How does this have an impact - **share** photos and videos on social media, and tag your leaders.

Partner School Activities

If you are working with a Partner School:

- Exchange views about the Climate Change Strikes and images of the activities or signs you create to promote awareness of climate change in your locality.



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Source 1

SCHOOL #CLIMATESTRIKE

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

WHAT

Students are walking out of school and going on #ClimateStrike to call on governments to keep warming below the unacceptably dangerous level of 1.5 degrees Celsius and protect our future.

WHY

Heat waves, floods, and hurricanes are killing hundreds and devastating communities across the world. Climate change is already a deadly reality. The latest stark warning from climate scientists suggest that we have only 12 years to reverse course. Greta and her fellow students are walking out of school and asking what use is it learning facts if adults ignore them?

WHEN

Every Friday.



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Further information about Climate Crisis and how young people are responding can be found at:

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-24021772>
- <https://group.sciencemuseum.org.uk/project/climate-science/>
- A full version of Climate Change – The facts can be found at:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m00049b1>
- The British Council resource Commonwealth Science Class explores the impact that climate change is having on rising sea levels and food security around the world. You can find out more at:
<https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources/find/classroom/rising-sea-levels>

THANKS TO FUNDERS AND PARTNERS:



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



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