



Total time
1 hour (minimum)
Age range
year 6, 7 and 8 (10-13 years)

Engaging with your MP on London's Climate Issues



Context

The week of November 14th – 20th 2020 is London Climate Action Week (LCAW) and all schools are invited to take part. It's a great opportunity to link curriculum-based climate change learning with global and social learning for the Sustainable Development Goals and encourage pupils to practise social action for change. We have created four lessons to follow on a weekly basis in the period leading up to LCAW but all are independent so you can use them flexibly to suit. Lesson plans available here: <http://www.londonsustainableschools.org/london-climate-action-week.html>

Learning objectives

- To take part in local democracy by contacting their local MP
- To use their citizenship knowledge, skills and understanding to try to make a positive difference to Climate Change

Step 1: Making a difference

15
mins

Explain that today they are going to tell the local MP about the work they have been doing on the Global Goals, Climate Change and some of the practical ideas they have to start making a difference. Encourage pupils to think about some of the climate change challenges faced by the communities they live in and what should be done about them. The Global Goals teach us that each one of us has a role to play. What things can be done by students, the school community, local businesses, community organisations, the media, the local council, the local MP, etc.?

Next, watch the video from the World's Largest Lesson - <https://vimeo.com/266852848> and videos from Pupil Parliament <https://litfilmfest.com/shop/pupil-parliament/>

After the videos discuss some ideas that they had to improve their community response to climate change (if you have already used the accompanying lesson plans Weeks, 1, 2 and 3 they will probably have some clear ideas).

In small groups, ask students to:

- Describe the difference between tactics such as protesting, civil disobedience, lobbying and voting for change
- Discuss which are the easiest and which are the most difficult to achieve and why
- Can they think of good examples of how to achieve change and urgent action? For example, in their schools, families or communities.

Step 2: Main activity: Write a letter to your local MP

35
mins

Show pupils this video of New Zealand's PM Jacinda Arden talking about New Zealand banning single use plastic bags: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daNIGBWkbWY>

In this activity pupils are going to write a letter to their local MP. This could be done as an individual, group or whole class activity.

First of all, find out the name and email or address of their local MP then decide how they are going to get your message to the MP. <https://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/mps/>

Once they have found out who their MP is ask some students to research their position on Climate Change and whether they have supported projects connected to Climate Change in the past. Knowing as much as possible will lead to a more impactful letter and meeting. The UK parliament declared a climate emergency on 1st May 2019 so the MPs should be keen to help.

Then they should write their letter. Discuss general letter writing tips with them but they should also do the following:

- Tell the MP who they are (name, school etc as appropriate) and that they are the MP's constituent (if writing individually)
- Tell the MP why they are writing:
 - That between 14-20 November it is London Climate Action Week (LCAW)
 - Tell the MP about the work they have been doing for LCAW on the Global Goals, Climate Change and some practical ideas where they are trying to make a personal difference
 - Ask the MP if they could help the student(s) with their work by doing one or more of these things:
 - i. Could they help in any way with their personal project?
 - ii. Could they help put Climate Change back in the curriculum and into more subjects.

iii. (If this is possible for you) Could they connect in a Covid friendly way with the students to discuss Climate Change on Friday, November 20th* as part of the Student-MP Climate Surgery?

*We have asked all London MPs to do their best to be available to meet students on Friday, November 20th. Fridays are usually Surgery days for MPs when they meet with their constituents.

Step 3: Action: Send the letter and await your reply

10
mins

NB: If you wish, please copy the letter to GLOBE International and we will follow-up with the MP and encourage them to reply to the student and be present for the Student-MP Climate Surgery on Friday, November 20th. Email: secretariat@globelegislators.org