

Panasonic Student Eco Citizenship Program



TEACHER EDITION

Climate Change

To share/read with students:

DID YOU KNOW?

Climate change is a long-term change in the average weather patterns that have come to define Earth's local, regional, and global climates. Earth naturally experiences changes to the climate. Since the 1950s, however, these changes to our climate have dramatically increased. Why the sudden rise in changes to the climate? Human activities, like burning fossil fuels for factories, power, and transportation, have quickly and drastically increased the amount of toxic emissions into the air. Those toxic emissions get captured in our atmosphere and increase temperatures around the globe. Increased temperatures, also called global warming, creates change in the weather patterns that make up our climate, also known as climate change.

Droughts, fires, and extreme rainfall are all signs that climate change is happening now. While we can no longer work to prevent climate change, we can make efforts toward lessening our human impact on the climate.

Class discussion:

LET'S THINK ABOUT IT

Climate change is impacting our world in big ways. It can feel like taking small steps cannot make a difference, but they do. We can ALL work to fight against it. Let's think about some of the ways our communities are working to fight climate change.

On a shared screen / white board, ask students to brainstorm and share the different places where they spend their time and list the answers. Next, in a separate column, ask for ways people in these places are already taking small steps to make a positive environmental impact.

Examples:

School: recycling bins, electronics vs paper copies, compost pile

Home: LED lightbulbs, compost pile, use up leftovers, reusable containers for lunches, recycle

Grocery store: incentives for customers to bring their own bags, recycling bins for used grocery bags

Park: recycling bins, park clean up days hosted monthly

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Students' turn:

Think about where you spend your time – home, school, practice, etc. List them here:

PLACE 1	PLACE 2	PLACE 3

How do people in each of these places work to lessen their environmental impact?

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To share/read with students:

When we spend a lot of time in a place, especially one that means a lot to us, we notice the great things about that place. For example, if you are on the basketball team and spend a lot of time playing on a court in a park, you might notice how beautiful the park is, from the surrounding terrain to the thoughtful landscaping to the sweeping views. You will also probably notice the not-so-great things about the place too, perhaps the overflowing trash cans by the benches, the floating trash in the nearby pond, or the gray smoke filling the sky from the nearby factory. When we spend a lot of time in a place, we often feel compelled to make it better when we see something wrong.

Class discussion:

Give an example of a place you spend a lot of time and the good and bad things you notice about this place. Share some of the ideas you have for making a positive environmental impact there.

Students' turn:

CALL TO ACTION!

Think about the three places you listed above. Pick one place and list it in the box below. List some small steps you can make that would positively impact this environment.

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Class discussion:

Read the following with students. Share some ideas that are manageable long term and some that are not.

Examples:

Small step: Ride my bike to and from play practice.

Unrealistic step: Always ride my bike.

SOMETHING TO CONSIDER

Small steps can make big positive impacts on our environment. These steps can make even bigger positive impacts when they are consistent and maintained over the long-term. When you think about a small step to take, ask yourself:

- Can I do this on my own?
- Can I make this a habit or incorporate it into my daily routine?
- Will I be able to do this daily / weekly monthly?

PLACE I CAN MAKE A CHANGE

SMALL STEPS I CAN TAKE

Class discussion:

Encourage the students to put these steps into practice. Set times to check in on the students' goals (next class, next week, etc.) Ask for students to share successes to celebrate! It is also important for students to feel encouraged to share ideas that did not work. Have a class discussion on how that idea can be made more manageable so the student can try again.

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AND GO!

Now it is time to put these small steps into practice! The next time you head to the place you listed above, choose one of the steps listed and put it into action! Share this success with someone you care about, like a parent, sibling, teacher, or coach. Feel pride in the small steps you are taking to help positively impact climate change. In turn, you might just influence that person to take a small step too.

Remember to celebrate the successes and encourage students to think creatively when an idea does not work. You are a role model, and your example is powerful! Share your ideas, steps, successes, and failures!

Information in this lesson was obtained from these sources:

Global Warming vs. Climate Change

climate.nasa.gov/global-warming-vs-climate-change

The Causes of Climate Change

climate.nasa.gov/causes

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