

Four ideas to integrate the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the language classroom

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Meena Sridharan

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session you will be able to:

- understand the objectives of the SDGs and their implications for your learners
- analyse activities for linking the SDGs to your language classroom
- reflect on future actions which you and your learners can practise inside and outside your classroom.

What are the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations?

- In September 2015, world leaders agreed to 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development.
- The aim was to end extreme poverty, inequalities and climate change by 2030.
- The 17 Goals are broken down into worldwide targets and indicators.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/news/communications-material/>

Four SDG ideas for your classroom

Sample lesson 1

Look at the two pictures. Find four things that are different about these trees and talk about them.

Picture 1
I give you all this

Picture 2
What do you give me?



Suggested lesson plan

Aim

To understand the value of trees and encourage learners to write about it, practicing related vocabulary.

SDG focus

- SDG 15: Life on land
- The activity underlines the value of trees for life on Earth and their impact on climate.

Language focus

- Learners explore forest-related vocabulary and practise writing sentences about the importance of trees;
- Learners practise writing 'concrete' or 'visual' poems.

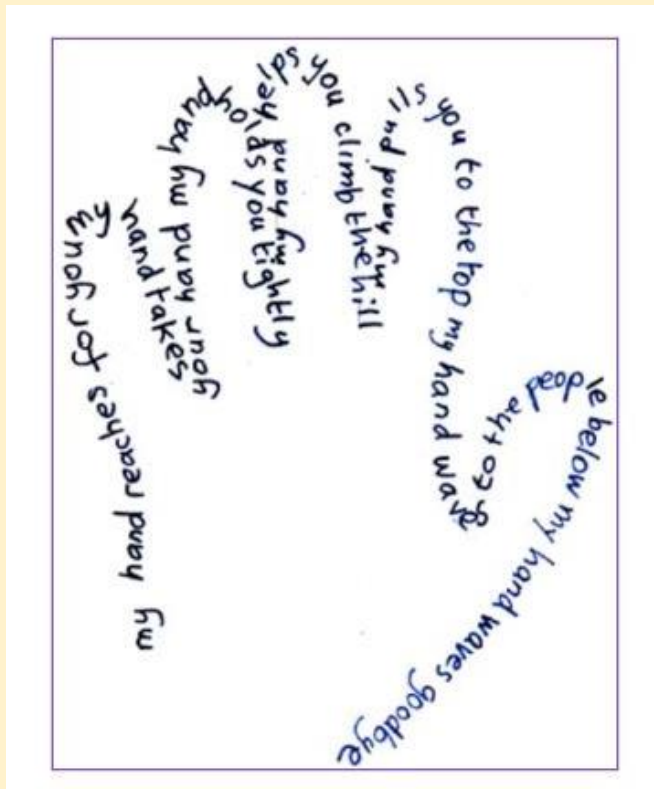
Stage 1 : Pre-writing

1. Make three or four sentences about trees, matching the words in the columns.

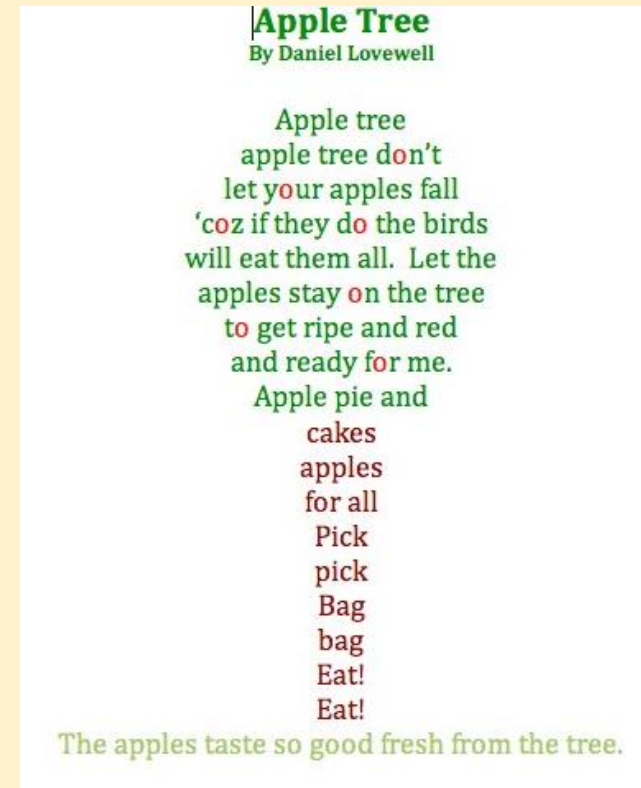
A. give	1. birds and animals
B. clean	2. floods
C. protect	3. oxygen
D. block	4. us shade
E. fight	5. noise
F. produce	6. the air

Stage 2: Writing

Write a 'concrete poem', or visual poem' – a poem written in the actual shape of the topic. Use the sentences from stage 1. Display your poems.



<https://www.orchidsinternationalschool.com/learning-key-concepts/grade-3/english/what-is-a-shape-poem/>



<https://nzpoetrybox.wordpress.com/2014/03/>

Stage 3: Post-writing

Extension activity: Speaking: Think-Pair-Square

1. What is your favourite tree, fruit or flower?
2. What can you do to protect it?

Reflection

What other activities can you conduct in your classroom to raise awareness of life on land, within your classroom, school and community?

Sample lesson 2

“They get it all. They get it by advertisement, not by work. They take it away from us, who love our boots. It comes to this — presently I have no work. Every year it gets less.”

“Ah!” he said, “poor old man starved himself. Slow starvation, the doctor called it! You see he went to work in such a way! Would keep the shop on; wouldn’t have a soul touch his boots except himself. When he got an order, it took him such a time. People won’t wait. He lost everybody. And there he’d sit, going on and on. I will say that for him — not a man in London made a better boot. But look at the competition! He never advertised!”

<https://ncert.nic.in/textbook.php?gehc1=5-8>

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



1 NO POVERTY



Suggested lesson plan

Aim

- to stimulate learners to think about the many forms of inequality through a reading task.
- to promote critical thinking and problem solving.

SDG focus

- SDG 10: Reduced Inequality, No Poverty, underlining the imbalances in peoples' lives and incomes.

Language focus

Functional expressions of comparing and contrasting; expressing opinions; using comparative adjectives

Stage 1: Pre-reading

Here are statements from four activists. Predict whether these might be true or false:

1. Equality includes people from all backgrounds.
2. People with disabilities cannot contribute to society.
3. People of all ages are equally skilled.
4. Women are as equally represented in government and education as men.

Stage 2: While reading

Note key words and phrases related to equality and inequality

1

I believe that equality for people of all backgrounds and ethnicities is important because all people should have the same opportunities in life and know that they will be treated fairly and with respect regardless of where they come from, the colour of their skin or what they believe.

Hetty, Equality Campaigner

2

I believe that equality for people regardless of whether they have a disability or not is important because everyone should be able to go to school and to work and to move freely around their local environment. All people can contribute to our society.

Chuck, Equality Campaigner

3

I believe that equality for people of all ages is important because people of all ages can contribute to our society and economy. Young and old have skills that we need. We need to provide opportunities for all people and make sure no one is excluded.

Sanjay, Equality Campaigner

4

I believe that equality for men and women is important because women make up half of all people but they are often paid less than men, less represented in governments and receive less education than men. Barriers to women's success need to be removed.

Lorenzo, Equality Campaigner

Pre-reading - answers

1. Equality includes people from all backgrounds. **True**
2. People with disabilities cannot contribute to society. **False**
3. People of all ages are equally skilled. **True**
4. Women are as equally represented in government and education as men. **False**

Stage 3: Post-reading

- Select a text. Build a character based on it. Role-play that character, showing *A day in my life*
or
- Create a video on the topic '*A Day in My Life*', based on one of the texts.
- Write a paragraph (or a short poem, or story) about something unfair that has happened to you.

Reflection

How would you raise awareness of inequalities in your classroom, school and community, through your classroom activities?

Sample lesson 3

The only woman in the world who has scaled Mt Everest twice was born in a society where the birth of a son was regarded as a blessing, and a daughter, though not considered a curse, was not generally welcome.

The girl was given the name 'Santosh', which means contentment. But Santosh was not always content with her place in a traditional way of life. She began living life on her own terms from the start. Where other girls wore traditional Indian dresses, Santosh preferred shorts. Looking back, she says now, "From the very beginning I was quite determined that if I chose a correct and a rational path, the others around me had to change, not me."

At barely twenty years of age, Santosh Yadav scaled Mt Everest, becoming the youngest woman in the world to achieve the feat. If her climbing skills, physical fitness, and mental strength impressed her seniors, her concern for others and desire to work together with them found her a special place in the hearts of fellow climbers.



Suggested lesson plan

Aim

To raise awareness of gender imbalances and women's rights through a listening task.

SDG focus

SDG 5: Gender Equality, focussing on inequalities in civil rights for women.

Language focus

- Using gender neutral vocabulary
- Language of professions, presenting a biography

Stage 1: Pre - listening

You will listen to a talk about women's rights. Before listening, match the words to the definitions.

Vocabulary	Definition
1. A pushback	A. A long search
2. An assault	B. To protect something officially
3. Momentum	C. An opposition to something
4. A quest	D. A violent attack
5. Enshrine	E. The energy that makes a moving object hard to stop

Stage 2: While listening

Many rights for women are mentioned in the talk. Find three correct answers from this list.

1. gender equality
2. fair and equal wages
3. women making decisions about their own bodies
4. access to free transport
5. access to quality healthcare
6. voting rights

Stage 2: While listening (audio)



Stage 3. Post-listening

- Brainstorm the names of three famous people in each category: technology, politics, film, business, art
- Groups compare the lists. Evaluate how many men figure in them, compared to women.
- Repeat the brainstorming, but with names of famous women only. Research women leaders in these fields. What did they do to break the stereotype?
- In groups, prepare posters on these famous women leaders. Present your poster with a talk on how they have contributed to society and history.

Reflection

What steps can you take in your classroom to raise awareness of the civil rights of girls and women?

Sample lesson 4

One of the Germans was waving a bottle above his head. “It is Christmas Day, Tommy. We have schnapps. We have sausage. We meet you? Yes?” By this time there were dozens of them walking towards us across no man’s land and not a rifle between them.

All along their line and ours I could see men walking slowly towards one another, grey coats, khaki coats meeting in the middle. And I was one of them. I was part of this. In the middle of the war we were making peace.

There was a moment when I noticed our breaths mingling in the air between us. He saw it too and smiled. “Jim Macpherson,” he said after a while, “I think this is how we should resolve this war. A football match. No one dies in a football match. No children are orphaned. No wives become widows.”



<https://ncert.nic.in/textbook.php?hehd1=1-8>

Suggested lesson plan

Aim

For learners to find ways to incorporate peace and conflict resolution into their classroom and their communities, through speaking activities.

SDG focus

SDG 16: Peace and Justice within the classroom, ending violence and conflict.

Language focus

- Using the functions of expressing and justifying opinions; negotiating, summarizing, clarifying, praising.
- Using the vocabulary of peace and conflict.

Stage 1: Before speaking



istockphoto



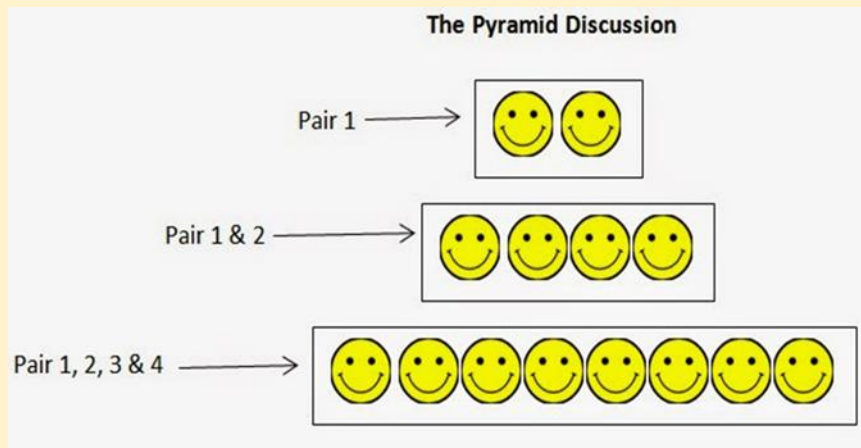
istockphoto

Vocabulary for peace: Answer Garden link

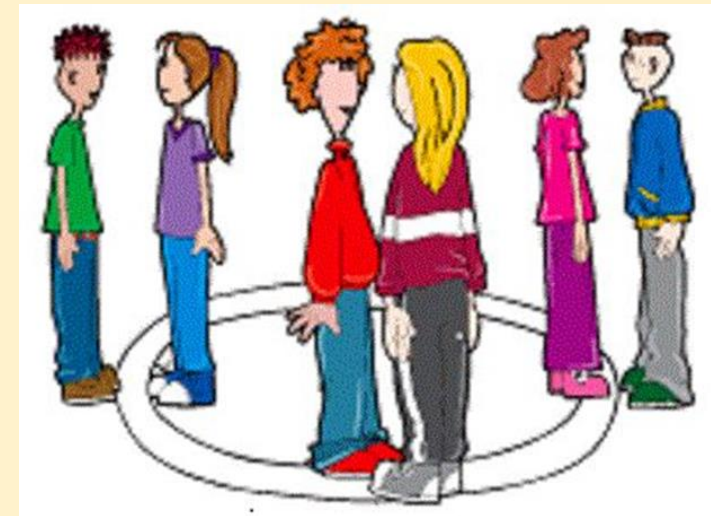
<https://answergarden.ch/3321025>

Stage 2: Speaking task

Learners conduct a discussion based on the images, using circle talk or the pyramid technique, to arrive at solutions.



<http://ettpwkcbrighton.blogspot.com/>



Circle Talk

[https://in.pinterest.com/pin/527695281320085036/-](https://in.pinterest.com/pin/527695281320085036/)

Stage 3: Post-speaking

1. Learners vote to decide on the top five actions in Question C and produce a manifesto for change in their community. They decide the medium in which to present this manifesto.
2. Learners script a street play or short film, based on their discussion and solutions. This could be multilingual, to reach all members of their community.

Reflection

Think of other ways to raise awareness of conflict and peace within your class, school and community.

Actionable measures for teachers

How can you use multi-lingual approaches to promote empathy and rapport?

1. How do you support gender equality and equal decision-making for boys and girls
2. What essential questions might you ask, which stimulate critical thinking and problem-solving?
3. In what ways can you encourage learners to develop intercultural tolerance and global awareness?
4. How can you share your skills and knowledge with professional and other communities of practice?

Link for Padlet

- Open the link and click on the plus sign to type your response, then click 'Publish'.
- Do Question 1 first.
- Do not answer the other questions until instructed.
- You may comment on other posts after you have written your own post.
- Keep your comments relevant and respectful.



<https://padlet.com/meenamikata/our-reflections-padlet-6bi3ddsjiightda0>

Credits and sources

- <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/sustainabledevelopmentgoals>
- <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/news/communications-material/>
- <https://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/>
- https://catalogue.unccd.int/1200_GlobalGoalsComic.pdf
- <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/teachers/knowing-subject/n-p/pyramid-discussion>
- <https://highlandliteracy.com/reading-2/de-bonos-six-hats/>
- <https://poetry4kids.com/lessons/how-to-write-a-concrete-poem/>
- <https://ncert.nic.in/>
- <https://www.britishcouncil.in/programmes/english/research-publications/mle>
- https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/sites/default/files/pdf_files/eym_in_out_circles.pdf
- <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/general-english/video-zone/against-pushback-we-pushforward>

Further resources

- <https://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/The-Tree-of-Hope.pdf> - story
- <https://quizlet.com/6712073/sustainability-vocabulary-flash-cards/> -
- <https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20230702-four-cities-putting-disabled-travellers-first>
- <https://youtu.be/RpqVmvMCmp0> - We the People – for the Global Goals
- <https://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/WLL-India-SDGs-Overview.pdf>
- <https://go-goals.org/> - for SDG games
- https://www.un.org/en/udhrbook/pdf/udhr_booklet_en_web.pdf - Human Rights
- https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf

Thank you

“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights