

Four techniques to bring climate action to your language classroom

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LEARNING
OUTCOMES

- Understand and incorporate key climate action terminology into language teaching.
- Apply four actionable techniques that integrate climate themes into language lessons.
- Develop sustainability and environmental awareness in your language learners.

Why is it
important to
discuss the climate
crisis in the
language classroom?

Adults keep saying: 'We owe it to the young people to give them hope.' But I don't want your hope. I don't want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. And then I want you to act. I want you to act as you would in a crisis. I want you to act as if the house is on fire. Because it is. - **Greta Thunberg, environmental activist**

What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make. - **Dr Jane Goodall, scientist and activist**

Education is critical in helping populations understand and address the impacts of climate change...in encouraging the changes in attitudes and behaviour needed to help them address the causes of climate change. - **UNESCO**

Climate vocabulary

1. We need to try to minimise our carbon footprint.
2. We have moved beyond using the term climate change as we are now facing a climate .
3. By attending this webinar we are committed to working together to take collective climate in our classrooms and communities.
4. As a community we can work towards using energy, instead of depending on fossil fuels.
5. In our everyday lives we can try to use practices.
6. With rising temperatures, natural disasters and unsustainable practices many of us suffer from climate .

Climate vocabulary

1. We need to try to minimise our carbon footprint.
2. We have moved beyond using the term climate change, as we are now facing a climate crisis/emergency.
3. By attending this webinar we are committed to working together to take collective climate action in our classrooms and communities.
4. As a community we can work towards using renewable energy, instead of depending on fossil fuels.
5. In our everyday lives we can try to use sustainable practices.
6. With rising temperatures, natural disasters and unsustainable practices many of us suffer from climate anxiety.

Technique I – Using realia in the primary classroom

What is this?

What colour is it?

What is inside it?

Why is it good for me?

Why is it good for the school?

Why is it good for the world?

NOTE - when you buy a plastic water
bottle you buy plastic not water



Technique 2 – Introducing vocabulary

1. Redu_e

2. Reu_e

3. Recyc_e

4. Rep_ir

5. Refu_e

Technique 2 – Introducing vocabulary

1. Reduce

2. Reuse

3. Recycle

4. Repair

5. Refuse

Understanding the meaning of the 5 Rs



a. Which word means to 'say no' to something you are offered?



b. Which word means to use or buy less of something?



c. Which word means to mend or fix something?



d. Which word means to use something again?



e. Which word means to give something a new or different use?

Understanding the meaning of the 5 Rs



a. Which word means to 'say no' to something you are offered? (**Refuse**)



b. Which word means to use or buy less of something? (**Reduce**)



c. Which word means to mend or fix something? (**Repair**)



d. Which word means to use something again? (**Reuse**)



e. Which word means to give something a new or different use? (**Recycle**)

Don't forget the five Rs: reduce, reuse, recycle, repair and refuse!

	Reduce	Reuse	Recycle	Repair	Refuse
Meaning	Use or buy less of something	Use something again	Give something a new use	Mend something when it breaks	Say 'no' to something
Example 1	Don't buy a book; borrow a book from a library	Use two sides of a piece of paper	Use an old jar to keep pencils tidy	Sew a hole in an old sock	Always carry your own bag for shopping
Example 2	Don't buy a new toy; swap toys with a friend	Use an old comic to wrap a present	Use bottle tops to make a game	Use tools to mend a broken car	Say no to a plastic straw

Technique 3 – Using poetry to teach climate action

NCERT Grade 9 Unit 11

Different strategies to bring climate action through syllabus

Quick questions

What do you do after poetry recitation?

How do we use a literary text to facilitate a mindset that leads our students towards climate action?



On Killing A Tree - Poem by Gieve Patel

It takes much time to kill a tree,
Not a simple jab of the knife Will do it.
It has grown
Slowly consuming the earth,
Rising out of it, feeding upon its crust,
absorbing years of sunlight, air, water,
And out of its leperous hide Sprouting leaves.
So hack and chop but this alone won't do it.
Not so much pain will do it.
The bleeding bark will heal
And from close to the ground
Will rise curled green twigs, miniature boughs,
Which if unchecked will expand again
To former size.

No,
The root is to be pulled out -
Out of the anchoring earth;
It is to be roped, tied,
And pulled out - snapped out
Or pulled out entirely,
Out from the earth-cave,
And the strength of the tree exposed,
The source, white and wet,
The most sensitive, hidden For years inside the earth.
Then the matter Of scorching and choking
In sun and air, browning, hardening, twisting, withering,
And then it is done.

Extension speaking task I – Fatafat debate

Objective:

Fast debate - Enhance critical thinking skills through debate on real-world issues from the poem.

How it Works:

- Divide students into two teams: one supports deforestation for economic reasons, and the other advocates for environmental protection.
- Each team presents arguments using evidence from the poem, real-world examples, and research.

Extension speaking task 2 - Eco drama circle

Objective:

Develop empathy and understanding of different perspectives on deforestation and climate action through theatre in education.

How it Works:

- Split the class into small groups, assigning roles like tree, forest animal, lumberjack, and environmental activist.
- Each group creates a short scene where characters discuss the impact of deforestation, such as the tree expressing loss or the activist advocating for conservation.

How do these tasks help?

CREATE

Create opportunities for students to discuss, express opinions, and analyse climate-related issues.

INTEGRATE

Integrate climate crisis discussions into everyday conversations.

Technique 4 – Persuasive writing

What is persuasive writing and why is it important?

- Letters
- Opinion essays
- Debates
- Speeches
- Editorials

- Advertisements
- Social media - Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, Threads, blogs
- Position papers
- Reviews

Persuasive letter writing

Introduction: Urgency of climate action.

Body: Propose the climate initiative, with supporting evidence. (Logical arguments, emotional appeals, hard data).

Conclusion: End with a clear call-to-action for the recipient. (e.g., tree-planting campaigns, eco-awareness days).

Peer Review: Students review each other's letters for clarity and impact.

Final letters : Students submit the revised letters.

How do we go from persuasive letter writing to climate action?

Submit letters: Letters are formally submitted to the principal, local official, or community leader.

Invite dialogue: Invite school leaders or officials to discuss possible steps inspired by student proposals.

Organise eco-initiatives: Tree-planting or "Green Week."



Reflection

CREATE

Create opportunities for students to discuss, express opinions, and analyse climate-related issues.

INTEGRATE

Integrate climate crisis discussions into everyday conversations.

SHOW

Show students how writing can drive social impact and advocate for environmental sustainability.

Our Green Pledge



I **refuse** to take plastic bags and straws.

I will **reduce** my buying of processed and canned foods.

I will **recycle** old jars and bottles.

I will **repair** my old shoes and watch.

I will **reuse** my shopping bags.

Write five things that you are going to do based on the 5 Rs. <https://padlet.com/bambawale/my-green-pledge-2eap2043q342o7u8>

Four techniques to bring climate action to your language classroom

Climate vocabulary

Realia

Poetry for climate action (fatafat debate and eco drama circle)

Persuasive letter writing towards climate action

Resources

Climate action in language education: Activities for low resource contexts

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/2022-08/CALE_activities_low_resource_contexts.pdf

Climate action in language education online course open till March 2025

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection/get-involved/action-language-education>

Questions

Thank you

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