

Understanding COP26 and Climate change

Classroom Activity 2: Air Pollution

IN THE CLASSROOM

AIM: To help pupils understand what COP26 and climate change means and why protecting the environment is so important. Making direct links to the benefits of actively travelling school and the impact of air pollution.

OBJECTIVES:

This lesson will enable pupils to:

- Understand the general concept of what COP26 and climate change means and why it's bad for our planet.
- Recognise how the pupils themselves may be more sustainable by actively travelling to school and this might affect climate change
- Consider how reducing our carbon emissions will have a direct impact on the planet and our school environment.

CURRICULUM LINKS:

- ENGLISH/LANGUAGES – writing, descriptive writing.
- ART – drawing
- GEOGRAPHY/SOCIAL STUDIES – local area.
- SCIENCE – plants, animals (including humans), everyday materials.

RESOURCES:

- Drawing paper for each pupil (KS1) / Writing paper for each pupil (KS2)
- Drawing materials (KS1) / Writing materials (KS2)
- Whiteboard or flipchart
- Projector / computer to play video

OVERVIEW:

LESSON 2: What is air pollution and why is it so bad for me?

1. To start the lesson, play one of these videos on what air pollution is and why it's bad:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6XZWRhrUNY> (KS1 and KS2)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/49969669> (KS1 and KS2)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/42601711> (KS2)



2. Ask for some volunteers from the class to talk about what they have just seen on the video and compare it to what they saw on their way into school. Ask questions such as: **What did you see, hear and smell?** Where there lots of **cars** and **buses** on the roads? Were drivers leaving their **engines running** while waiting in traffic? Did you see lots of **rubbish**? **Smell petrol** or **fumes**? Did you see lots of **wildlife** and **greenery** like trees and plants?
3. Follow up by asking **how this affects pupils on their journey to or from school.** Perhaps they need to be extra careful when crossing the road, or can smell exhaust fumes in the air?
4. Now ask children to **imagine that for a whole month no motor vehicles are allowed** on the roads. **No factories are pumping out gases**, no one is **burning fossil fuels** at home or using **toxic chemicals**. No one is **cutting down any trees**. What would the planet look like without air pollution? Would people and animals, such as birds, be happier and healthier? Would there be more trees and plants?
5. Ask them **what they would see, hear, and smell.** Write these on the board. Use the following as conversation starters if you need them:
 - Would the air be cleaner?
 - Is this better for people, plants, and trees?
 - Think about your walk to school, would it be less busy on the roads, more space to walk?
 - Could pupils cross the road or play with their friends more safely?
 - Would it help people to feel calmer and ready for the rest of their day?
 - Would there be more birds and animals?
 - Would there be more plants and trees?
6. **a) EYFS / KS1:** Ask them to draw what their neighbourhood would look like without air pollution? i.e. no cars on the road, no exhaust fumes, more trees, happy birds and people etc..
b) KS2: Ask them to write a paragraph on what their neighbourhood would look like without air pollution. Would it look, smell and sound different? What would the benefits be?

PLENARY:

In pairs ask pupils to discuss the changes they themselves can make to help their local area become less polluted.

