Lesson Eight: What Next?

About this lesson
In the previous lessons students have researched the achievements and failures of the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and the Rio +20 conference in 2012; they have explored the global challenges facing our people and planet and they have been introduced to the reality of life around the world by focusing on five different children. In this lesson students will be encouraged think about what they want their future to look like and what positive contributions they can make.

Learning Objectives
- Inspire young people to express their hopes and fears for the future
- Encourage students to articulate their ideas to adults and decision-makers
- Inspire students to take action

Resources Required
- Handout 8.1: Sustainable Development Goals

Key Concepts
- Sustainable Development Goals

Lesson plan

5 minutes
Recap key concepts from the past lessons and ask what students have enjoyed learning about the most. As will be clear, there is still a lot of work to be done if human life on our planet is to become sustainable. The main result of Rio +20 was countries’ commitment to establishing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2015. Conversations are currently taking place as to what those SDGs should be. In this lesson, students will be working on creating their own SDGs.

45 minutes
In the next few years, heads of state, companies and NGOs will be discussing what they think the SDGs should look like and what issues should be our priorities. In this activity, in groups, students will be drafting their own SDGs based on what they have learnt in the past lessons and by relating the global issues to activities in their own lives. What issues are they most passionate about and which issues should be prioritized? What action needs to be taken to achieve the goals? Each group will draft their own SDGs using worksheet 8.1. Groups can present their work to the whole class if time allows – the presentation could also be in the form of a role play, interview skit or whichever form they prefer.

10 minutes
Hot seat plenary – ask each student to come up with five questions on what they have learnt in this lesson and throughout the resource. Then ask students to pair up and ask each other the questions. Feed key points back to the whole class if you have time.

Extension Activity
Be inspired by 12-year old Suzuki Severn’s speech at the original Rio Earth Summit, in which she talks about her fears and hopes for the future. Ask students to write their own persuasive essays on what they want their future to look like – and any hopes/fears they have for their future. Alternatively, students could make a collage of what their ideal world looks like using images from the internet, magazines or their own drawings. Or encourage your students to take action on the global issues they have been learning about. Have a look at the Reframe/Take Action section on the Reframing Rio website.
Sustainable Development Goals and the Rio +20 Conference

One thing the Rio +20 conference achieved was commitment from all the countries present to establish a set of Sustainable Development Goals. These goals would follow up from the Agenda 21 action plan and also the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were set in 2000 to tackle the various causes of poverty around the world. The MDGs were eight goals that were set in 2000 to target the various causes of poverty around the world.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were established in 2015 to address the global challenges we face, including those resulting from climate change. The SDGs aim to provide a framework for action that will lead to a sustainable future for all people, now and in the future. They are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

The SDGs are a set of 17 goals, each with a series of targets and indicators. The goals are:

1. No poverty
2. Zero hunger
3. Good health and well-being
4. Quality education
5. Gender equality
6. Clean water and sanitation
7. Affordable and clean energy
8. Decent work and economic growth
9. Industry, innovation, and infrastructure
10. Reduced inequalities
11. Sustainable cities and communities
12. Responsible consumption and production
13. Climate action
14. Life below water
15. Life on land
16. Peace, justice, and strong institutions
17. Partnerships for the goals

These goals are intended to be achieved by 2030, and they are interconnected and interdependent. Achieving one goal can contribute to the achievement of another. The SDGs are an ambitious agenda, but they are necessary to ensure a sustainable future for all.

Quotes from the Rio +20 Conference

"Rio+20 came at a time when the world needs to find both its moral and long-TERM vision and its near-term actions that kick-start the way forward. Governments and private actors alike, we all need to start firming up our next wave of goals to sustainably end poverty."

- John McArthur, Senior Fellow, United Nations Foundation, Washington DC, USA

"When we talk about the poverty goal, it’s really about the economy, and the economy is much about the private sector. Without the private sector buying the outcome of growth, we are not going to get anywhere, but we have to have growth with equity. Without the private sector, we have to have growth that means something to the poor man."

- Oliver Greenfield, the convenor of the Green Economy Coalition

"The conference discussed seven priority areas: jobs, energy, cities, food, oceans, access to water and disasters. The Sustainable Development Goals will build on the MDGs, but also take a new focus. They aim to be more effective and easy to communicate. They need to be universally applicable, taking into account the different realities of countries around the world (from less developed to developed nations).

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How to draft a Sustainable Development Goal:

To make it easier for students to think about what the SDGs should address, divide them into different categories to enable them to relate the issues to their own lives.

Step 1: Start with a whole class discussion to remind students of the priority areas the world needs to focus on and what specific issues need to be tackled. You can use the information in this sheet above.

Step 2: Then divide the class into groups of 3-4 pupils and give each group one of the following categories:
- School activities
- Household activities
- Transportation
- Food and drink
- Fashion

Ask each group to come up with 2 activities or products within their category that contribute to climate change, use natural resources or emit pollution. Some suggestions for household activities include

- Heating
- Lighting
- Paper use
- Furniture
- Food waste

Ask each group to come up with 2 activities or products within their category that contribute to climate change, use natural resources or emit pollution. Some suggestions for transportation include

- Driving
- Public transport
- Bicycles

Step 3: Students will now focus on a specific problem within their category and use the rest of the lesson to research solutions. From here, they will write a goal or mission statement to present to the rest of the class. Their presentation can take whichever form they like. This should produce a set of local to global sustainable development goals.

Example of Sustainable Development Goals drafted by ‘Friends of the Earth’


Here is one possible plan:

- Commit to a Bee Action Plan to protect dwindling bee numbers and safeguard an indispensable pollinator of UK food crops. Research commissioned by Friends of the Earth in 2012 revealed it would cost the UK £1.8 billion every year to hand-pollinate food crops without bees.

- Enable the Green Investment Bank to borrow and lend money from next year in order to kick start a £12 billion diversification of the UK’s energy mix. Energy efficiency will also help protect households from soaring fuel bills caused mainly by the rocketing price of gas.

- Limit the costs in the UK courts of fighting environmental cases to enable communities affected by environmental problems, such as air or water pollution, to bring legal action without financial risk.

- Enforce the carbon price floor, which will cut taxes on carbon-based energy from £18 per tonne to £50 per tonne by 2030. This will ensure a clean, green economy and create tens of thousands of jobs.

- Reduce our reliance on dirty and expensive fossil fuels and slashing energy waste will also help protect households from soaring fuel bills caused mainly by the rocketing price of gas.

- Agree to end fossil fuel subsidies. Governments across the world are handing over almost a hundred billion dollars to oil, coal and gas industries every year.

- Save the UK’s electricity market from carbon-free by 2030. By investing in clean energy from the sun, wind and water, we can reduce our reliance on dirty and expensive fossil fuel and slash energy waste.

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