



Climate Literate Lesson Guide

Applying the principles of climate change into existing lesson plans

When & What	Guiding Questions Note: Climate specific words are in bold	Lesson Plan Steps of your lesson
BEFORE INSTRUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What skills do my students need to develop?• How will I prevent or address student confusion around climate change using <u>Social Emotional Learning (SEL)</u>?• How will I incorporate climate issues into the lesson?• What will I do to activate critical thinking?	
DURING INSTRUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What objective-aligned tasks and/or questions will I engage students?• How will I incorporate climate justice practices?• How will I provide feedback to facilitate the development of climate optimism?	
AT END OF INSTRUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will I create an assessment that allows for reflection of learning?• How will I help students retain what they have learned? Including skills, strategies, and content.• What opportunities can I present to students to engage in lesson content outside of the classroom?• How can I keep sustained investment in student agency?	
AFTER INSTRUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How can I follow up with students on the skills learned in this lesson?• How can I keep students invested in continued understanding of climate change in their daily life?• Are there resources available to students to continue their learning as it relates to climate change?	



--	--	--

Climate Change Glossary

Climate Change - Refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. *In this guide we explore the many narratives around **climate change**

Climate Justice - Social, Racial, and Environmental Factors that are associated with experiencing and mitigating climate change

Climate Optimism – A sense of hope, positivity, and agency to mitigate the effects of climate change. It can simultaneously exist with climate anxiety and hesitations about the future. *In this guide we look for **climate optimism** to be greater than the anxiety and fears associated with climate change

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) - The act of acquiring the knowledge and skills to develop self-awareness, manage emotions and feelings, build healthy relationships and connections, and problem solve situations around the complexities of **climate change**

Goal of the Climate Literate Lesson Guide:

On behalf of the education team at EARTHDAY.ORG, we hope this climate literate lesson guide can be a starting point for climate education in your classroom. This is designed to show how climate change can be embedded into lesson plans you already have created. We use guiding questions to support you in writing your elevated lesson plan that is climate change conscious. Below you will find 3 examples for Elementary, Middle, and High School.

Additional Resources:

[Video Tutorial](#) for Guiding Questions



Social Emotional Skills and Climate Change [infographic](#)

Elementary School (Grades K-5) Example Climate Literate Plan

	Existing Plan	Climate Literate Plan
objective	Students will be able to identify and describe community helpers	Students will be able to identify, describe, and discuss community helpers within their community. Students will be able to identify themselves as a community helper
before instruction	Talk about different places in your community (grocery store, gas station, park, fire dept, etc.) Who do you see there? Who works there?	Looking at your community, discuss the environment (city, country, etc.) Where do you go besides school and home? Who works there? Read, <i>Why We Live Where We Live</i> by Kira Vermond. Explain how different environments shape the different jobs that the community needs to live. We are part of our community and have special jobs too.



during instruction	<p>Discuss community helper jobs (firefighter, policeman, chef, librarian, doctor, garbage truck driver).</p> <p>Activity: Drag and match. On one side have the community helpers and on the other side have the place they represent. Students will help to drag the community helper to its matching place of work.</p>	<p>Activity: Show a visual display of specific local community places. These should be places where students visit often (park, library, etc.).</p> <p>Students will describe what they notice as they travel to these places using their senses. Where are these places? Who is there?</p> <p>Explain that each place in our community has helpers. These helpers keep these places safe and clean.</p> <p>Connection: Do you help keep any of these places clean and safe? Which ones and how? If not, how could you?</p> <p>Example: Park ranger helps keep the park safe and clean. Is the park clean or dirty? Is there a creek or a pond? What lives there? How do the students interact with that space? Do they help also keep it clean?</p> <p>Students will turn and talk with a partner to share how they are a community helper at one of these places.</p>
at end of instruction	<p>Assessment: Students will draw a community helper and a place they work.</p>	<p>Assessment: Students will draw a community helper and the place they keep safe and clean on one side, on the other, they will draw themselves in a place, keeping it safe and clean.</p>
after instruction	<p>Students will share one thing they learned about a community helper with a partner.</p>	<p>Have students go on a walk around their school and think about how they can help contribute to the community, specifically the school area. Extension: School projects (clean ups, gardens, nature walks). How can they take action in their community.</p>



Middle School (Grades 6-8) Example Climate Literate Plan

	Existing Plan	Climate Literate Plan
objective	Students will be able to compare/contrast the experience of reading a poem to an audio version of the text.	Students will compare and contrast the experience of reading a poem and listening to the audio version. Students will be able to describe their feelings as they read the poem and listen to the poem and describe how they are different.
before instruction	Students will review the vocabulary: compare, contrast, descriptive language.	Students will collectively review the vocabulary: compare, contrast, descriptive language. Emphasize emotional words to create connection with content in the lesson. Words: angry, sad, surprised, confused, upset, etc.
during instruction	Students will read a poem and then listen to an audio version.	Students will read the poem, <i>Whenever You See A Tree</i> *You will need to record the poem for the lesson ahead of time by a student or other young voice
at end of instruction	With students, review the experiences between visual and audio content.	Extend thinking by comparing and contrasting experiences students have with the senses. Ask students what they were feeling and connections they had to the content while they read and listened.
after instruction	Students will write a poem and record themselves reading out loud.	Students will reflect on a climate issue or concern and write a poem. They will record themselves reading the poem out loud for a “class collection” Students will be able to respond to the audio poems of classmates with their own connections.



High School (Grades 9-12) Example Climate Literate Plan

	Existing Plan	Climate Literate Plan
mastery objective	Students will identify and analyze symbolism in a poem, <i>Fire and Ice</i> , by Robert Frost.	Students will identify, analyze, and synthesize the use of symbolism in a poem, <i>Nowhere Else to Go</i> , by Linda Sue Park. *You can substitute this poem
before instruction	Go over the meaning of symbolism. What it means and why it is used in poetry.	Go over the meaning of symbolism. Why do we use it and what are the effects on the readers. Why do writers want to have an effect on the reader. Discuss the importance of thinking about the words that are used to evoke responses from readers. Students should have descriptive language available to work through the poem.



during instruction	Teacher and students will read the poem together. Discuss the poem and what symbols they notice. Together write down the ideas to make a list of symbols.	The teacher will read the poem out loud, and students will follow along. Students should be able to identify and list feelings, thoughts, questions they have while listening. Then, have a couple students read out loud while students and teacher listen. Together, create a map of symbols and what they might represent. Students will explain why and how the symbols are used. In small groups, students should each read the poem to one another. After, they will discuss how reading the poem and listening made them feel and engage with words of the poem. Students will create a list of 5 symbols and what they represent. Additionally, they will write 1- or 2-word phrases that describe how it made them feel.
at end of instruction	Students will write a short poem about a topic they enjoy and incorporate symbolism.	Students will explore a community issue in which they feel connected and write a poem using symbolism. They will be able to not only use symbolism but be able to explain how and why they used those symbols.
after instruction	Students will write a poem of their choice using symbolism.	Students will write a poem using symbolism. Students will have to write a question or comment responding to a classmate's poem.

