

OUTDOOR LEARNING LESSON PLAN

THE POWER OF WORDS

Objective: Students learn how to work together to take action on climate change and Canada's role in the Paris Agreement.

Curriculum: This exercise can be adapted for grades 4-6. See cpawsemb.org/curriculum-connections for Manitoba curriculum connections.

Learning Goals:

- Students are introduced to climate change and how to take action for change
- Students use critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork skills
- Students will be able to use scientific vocabulary to describe natural occurrences (climate change)

Resources:

- [NASA Climate Change Resources for Educators](#)
- [WWF: Nature-based Solutions for Climate Change](#)
- [Explaining Climate Change](#)
- [The Teacher-Friendly Guide to Climate Change](#)
- [Earth Day Network Teacher's Guide: The Story of Climate Change](#)
- [The Paris Agreement](#)

Materials:

- Paper
- Tape
- Marker
- String

Time: 20 minutes+

Activate:

1. Introduce the boreal forest in the context of science and/or social studies curriculum; see cpawsemb.org/outdoor-learning-program/boreal-forest/ for resources
2. Introduce students to climate change and how to take climate action
 - Important notes relevant to this activity:
 - The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It has been adopted by 196 countries.
 - Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.

- ❑ To achieve this long-term temperature goal, countries aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible to achieve a climate neutral world by mid-century.

Acquire:

3. Take students outside to participate in the following activity:
 - ❑ Prepare marker and string by taping multiple pieces of string to the same marker as shown in picture below. Add as many strings as people playing the game.



- ❑ Tape a piece of paper to a table
- ❑ Write down a couple secret words on a piece of paper. These words should represent environmental actions students can take at home, at school and/or in their community. Choose a word randomly.
 - ❑ Example words: conservation, composting, recycling, plastic free, zero waste, renewable energy, biodiversity
- ❑ Reveal your word. You have one minute to write down the word as a team. The only condition is: students are not allowed to talk with each other!
- ❑ Try the activity again, but this time you are allowed to talk.

Apply:

4. Run the activity a few times, with and without talking, using a few different words.
5. Debrief with a discussion. The only way we're going to reach our goal of maintaining 1.5 degrees Celsius (i.e. writing the words) is if we're working together and communicating. Students had to rely on each other to keep writing their words. So, Canada needs to do their part in holding their piece of the string (i.e. Paris Agreement) so we don't let the other countries down who are working hard to get to our goal.
6. Use the words you picked for the students to write as a conversation opportunity. You can explain or get the students to explain the word in the context of climate action.
7. Lead the students through additional conversation using questions like the following:
 - ❑ Why was it harder to write the word as a group when you couldn't talk?

- How did the activity change when you could talk?
- Why is it important that we work together when taking climate action?
- Why is talking about climate change important?
- What are things we can do at school to improve climate change?
- What are things we can do at home and in our community to improve climate change?
- How can we convince other people to take climate action?

Conclusion: Evaluate students based on their participation in the activity and discussion. For extended engagement, start a climate action project(s) for your class (school community clean-up, set-up a compost bin, tree planting, plant a pollinator garden, litterless lunches, plastic-free classrooms, etc.). You could also give students a homework assignment to create a “climate pledge” with their family, with a list of actions they are going to take for climate action as a family (i.e. take shorter showers, compost, turn electronics and lights off when leaving a room, recycle old batteries, etc.).