

## Topic: Sustainability

<b>Lesson:</b> Individual and group action for the environment	<b>KS or Year Group:</b> Year 11
<b>Resources:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Resource 1 – Key words (for use throughout the lesson)</li><li>2. Resource 2 – What can individuals do to make a difference?</li><li>3. Resource 3 – How can group action have an effect?</li><li>4. Resource 4 – What are the advantages of acting in groups rather than as individuals?</li><li>5. Resource 5 – Answers</li></ol>	<b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students can understand what can be achieved by individual action in terms of the environment.</li><li>• Students can understand what can be achieved by group action in terms of the environment.</li></ul>

### National Curriculum

Key Concepts: 1.1a, 1.3c, 1.3d

Key Processes: 2.1a, 2.1d, 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.3a, 2.3d

Range and Content: 3h, 3i, 3n

Curriculum Opportunities: 4a, 4b, 4c, 4h, 4i, 4j

### Lesson overview

Students find out more about ways in which individual and group action can have a positive impact upon the environment. They have an inter-group competition based upon exploring the benefits of 'Freecycle' and, through circletime, discuss the benefits of individual and group action.

### Starter

- Share lesson objectives with students.
- Ask students to discuss briefly (in pairs) ways in which individuals can have a positive impact on the environment. Encourage feedback and praise those who get involved.

- Show students **Resource 2 – What can individuals do to make a difference?**  
Explain that the green-minded activities below the table need to be put into the table – they must decide which activities are best suited to which boxes. Students might choose to draw an image to represent each activity (rather than writing out all of the phrases).
- Lead a discussion:
  - ▶ Why is it important for young children to be involved in good practice as far as environmental issues are concerned?
  - ▶ Could some of the activities be put into more than one box in the table? Why?
  - ▶ In your opinion, is it more important for households or for businesses to be green-minded? Explain.
  - ▶ How many of the activities do you think that you already do/could commit to doing?
- Some examples of good responses:
  - ▶ ‘Young children definitely need to be involved in green lifestyle choices. If you teach a child to do something from a very young age then (s)he will do it automatically. For example, if children are brought up to say please every time that they ask for something, then they will grow up to do this throughout their lives without even thinking. In the same way, children who are brought up to use separate bins or to switch lights off will stick with these habits forever.’
  - ▶ ‘I think that people of all ages, whether at work or at home, can take their own bags out shopping, so I felt that this could fit into every box. I also reckon that people of all ages are capable of selling things on eBay. In fact, some children probably understand eBay better than a lot of adults!’

## Main activity

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### Activity 1:

- Remind students that Resource 2 was about individual actions and that they will now focus upon group actions.
- Ask a volunteer to read out the information from **Resource 3 – How can group action have an effect?** Explain that there will now be a class competition. Ask students (in small teams) to spend five minutes thinking up ten benefits of using Freecycle. Then ask each group to choose the three most original ideas from their list.

### Activity 2:

- Ask teams to share these three ideas with the class. Award five points for each benefit that no other group thought of, three points for each benefit that one or two groups also thought of, and one point for each benefit that three or more groups also thought of.
- Invite students from the winning group to comment upon whether they have ever used/whether they would consider using Freecycle.
- Some examples of good responses:
  - ▶ 'I use Freecycle quite a lot. My mum said that if we furnished our living room for free through Freecycle then she would have enough money for us to go abroad this summer. It only took us a month to find a sofa, a coffee table and a television.'
  - ▶ 'I haven't used it but I'm thinking about it now because I've got a desk that I want to move out of my bedroom. I can't think of anything that I need, but I would definitely consider giving away my stuff rather than sending it off to a landfill.'
  - ▶ 'If I'm totally honest, I don't think that I would use Freecycle because I don't like second-hand things. I'm one of those people who is more likely to recycle paper or to drive an electric car than to use other people's stuff.'

### Plenary

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- Ask students to fill in the missing words on **Resource 4 – What are the advantages of acting in groups rather than as individuals?** Go through the answers with the class (see **Resource 5 – Answers**).
- Have a circletime discussion (during which students should make notes on **Resource 4**):
  - ▶ Should sustainable development be the responsibility of individuals or groups? Of experts or non-experts? Explain.
  - ▶ The United Nations Environmental Programme has tried to make saving the planet fashionable and has created an attractive website appropriate for teenagers. Would you consider looking at it in your spare time? Why/why not?
  - ▶ The government's Environment Agency encourages and supports community groups that campaign about the environment across the country. What do you think that such community groups might need to target near you?
  - ▶ What kind of green-minded activities, groups or organisations appeal to you? Explain why.
  - ▶ Are you interested in calculating your carbon footprint online? Why/why not?

- Some examples of good responses:
  - ▶ ‘Before we had this lesson I wasn’t all that bothered about the environment, but now I feel interested in becoming a bit more proactive. I’m not saying that I’d stay in on a Friday night to look at the UN’s website, but I’d really like it, for example, if our form tutor gave us some time to look at it next week.’
  - ▶ ‘I suppose that every area in the country is different, but what our area needs is really obvious. We have none of the amazing recycling bins that you get in Japan. Bins on all of our street corners should have five or six different sections. For example, there could be a hole for cans, one for paper, another hole for plastic and so on. This would mean that local people could recycle without going to any effort.’
  - ▶ ‘I am definitely interested in finding out what my carbon footprint is so I’m going to get my stepmum to look it up with me tonight. She has the heating on all of the time and always throws away loads of food. Her carbon footprint is going to be really high, I reckon!’

### Aim high

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- During the starter, high-achieving students should refer to the key words from Resource 1.
- During the main activity, high-achieving students should aim to deliver a five-point answer for their team.
- During the plenary, high-achieving students should volunteer comments during the circletime discussion.

### Check the web

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[www.facebook.com/pages/Environmental-Working-Group/7962229886](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Environmental-Working-Group/7962229886)

[www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org)

[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

### Summary of key learning

- Students understand what can be achieved by individual action in terms of the environment.
- Students understand what can be achieved by group action in terms of the environment.

Resource 1 – Key words

air travel

car share

council

charity shop

‘Facebook’

‘Freecycle’

individual

group

inspiration

internet

landfill

local project

motivation

packaging

plastic bag

protest

support

**Resource 2 – What can individuals do to make a difference?**

<b>Child</b>	<b>Teenager</b>
<b>Adult at home</b>	<b>Adult at work</b>

**Take own bags to shops**    **Have showers instead of baths**    **Avoid vehicle use where walking/cycling is possible**    **Wrap up warmly instead of putting on the heating**    **Avoid purchasing products with excess packaging**    **Check ‘green guides’ before buying electrical equipment**    **Donate to environmental charities**  
**Use recycling bins**    **Insulate a building**    **Give employees who car share a bonus**  
**Lobby MP about environmental issues**    **Boycott non-green products**    **Buy fewer plane tickets**    **Use eBay rather than landfills**    **Play games on the internet that teach about environmental awareness**

**Make sure that you add some of your own ideas too.**

### Resource 3 – How can group action have an effect?

‘Freecycle’ is an innovative organisation with millions of members. It operates in nearly 90 countries. It works on the premise that most people own items that they no longer have a use for, but which others would love to get their hands on. Freecycle allows such people to communicate online so that ‘everyone’s a winner’. Someone who does not want to list dozens of baby items on eBay, yet is not keen on throwing them away can make contact with a delighted new parent who will pick up the free bundle that morning. A family who does not want to spend Saturday morning queuing to dump a sofa at the local tip might bring a smile to the face of a local first-time house-buyer.

Freecycle was invented in 2003 in America and operates through Yahoo Groups. It was inspired by a waste reduction project. It encourages people to avoid landfill use with the added bonus of providing free goods for needy people in their area. If there is not a Freecycle group in your area, why not start one this week? Make your neighbours and your planet happy!

#### Our ten benefits of using Freecycle

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

#### The three most original benefits from our list

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

#### The points that we won

#### Winning group:

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### Resource 4 – What are the advantages of acting in groups rather than as individuals?

Individuals can and do make a difference to the environment, but never more so than when they join forces with \_\_\_\_\_ people. Like slimmers who are desperate to lose weight but who just can't resist the biscuit tin, many green-focused citizens find that the likelihood of their making the right decisions is \_\_\_\_\_ unless they make regular \_\_\_\_\_ (to discuss successes and \_\_\_\_\_) with others who have the same aims. Another benefit of groups is that people can mingle with environmental \_\_\_\_\_ rather than trying to find out all of the answers themselves. Groups are available for citizens with all sorts of green \_\_\_\_\_. For example, 'The Countryside \_\_\_\_\_', 'Earthwatch' and 'The Wildlife Trust' all welcome new members. There are also hundreds of internet-based groups such as local \_\_\_\_\_ projects, 'Ecofriendly \_\_\_\_\_' and various \_\_\_\_\_ networks.

leanings council experts decreased kids  
strategies Alliance like-minded Facebook contact

Notes from circletime...

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### Resource 4 – Answers

Individuals can and do make a difference to the environment, but never more so than when they join forces with **like-minded** people. Like slimmers who are desperate to lose weight but who just can't resist the biscuit tin, many green-minded citizens find that the likelihood of their making the right decisions is **decreased** unless they make regular **contact** (to discuss successes and **strategies**) with others who have the same aims. Another benefit of groups is that people can mingle with environmental **experts** rather than trying to find out all of the answers themselves. Groups are available for citizens with all sorts of green **leanings**. For example, 'The Countryside **Alliance**', 'Earthwatch' and 'The Wildlife Trust' all welcome new members. There are also hundreds of internet-based groups such as local **council** projects, 'Ecofriendly**kids**' and various **Facebook** networks.