

Big Ideas that connect to Climate Change:

We've drawn a few examples of Big Ideas from subject-specific curriculum produced by the BC Ministry of Education that link well with climate change. Climate science, climate change and the climate emergency do not need to be limited to science class. These themes are relevant across all subject areas and involve interdisciplinary knowledge that will help strengthen learning and activities of this complex issue. We encourage you to be creative in linking these issues. Here are a few ideas:

BIG IDEA: “Exploring stories and other texts helps us understand ourselves and make connections to others and to the world” (from Language Arts, Grades 4-8).

You could use a story or other text about people directly affected by a forest fire, hurricane or flood to allow your students to better understand what it feels like to be affected by natural phenomena that are becoming more frequent and intense due to climate change. Create questions that will allow students to identify the feelings of the characters as expressed in the text, and then reflect and express their own feelings upon interpreting the text.

BIG IDEA: “Works of art influence and are influenced by the world around us” (Arts Education, Grade 5).

Try searching on the Internet for images of art influenced by climate change. Select some pieces and then learn more about the artists' inspiration (perhaps through their website, a blog, an article or an interview). Discuss as a class what the Big Idea means – how art influences and is influenced by our changing world. You could invite your students to do Internet research themselves, and then create a piece of their own art related to how they understand and process the changes taking place on our planet. Consider how your students will be able to share their art with the larger school community, their families and the broader public community.

BIG IDEA: “Our personal digital identity forms part of our public identity” (Career Education 6).

Explore the online influence that young people have through Instagram, Twitter and other social media platforms. This influence often extends into social and environmental activism. Your students are probably already aware of people with great influence on social media. Check out the Twitter feed of youth climate activist Greta Thunberg for inspiration.

As part of the Science curriculum (Grades 4-8), there is a great **Curricular competency** that could be used as an interdisciplinary activity with a Language Arts class: “Communicating: Express and reflect on personal, shared, or others' experiences of place.” Expression and reflection could take place in several forms, including a journal entry, a poem, a speech or a blog entry. It could be individual as well as group work. Consider the importance of joining with other teachers to address climate change and how your students will benefit from multiple perspectives and spaces in which to explore its implications.