

Understanding the climate emergency and the youth-led Global Climate Strikes

A package for BC Educators

Educator Resources for addressing
climate change and the
Global Climate Strikes: September 20-27, 2019



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Why did we create this package? Who is it for?

The growing climate emergency touches us all in ways we feel and process in different ways. By sharing resources, we can encourage the greatest action possible to help reduce our human impact on the planet and slow climate change.

This Sierra Club BC resource is an introductory guide to help support BC educators and students in exploring climate change, climate justice and the Global Strikes for Climate led by school-age youth. It is best suited for BC educators (public, private and homeschool) of students in Grades 4 to 8 (ages 9-14). It can be used to connect discussion and climate action across subject areas. This content can be adapted to fit the needs of your students and community or for use with other groups of people. Contact education@sierraclub.bc.ca for support.

We hope this package will inspire resilience and action in your students and school community, and to see the connections we have with peoples, beings and environments both within and beyond our borders. We encourage you to explore with your students the impacts European colonization has had on the natural environment and the emergence of the climate crisis, and to learn from Indigenous peoples in your community as part of your exploration.

What are the Global Climate Strikes?

The School Strikes for Climate began when then-15-year-old Swedish student Greta Thunberg decided to skip school on Friday August 20, 2018. She sat alone outside the Swedish parliament with a sign that translated as “School Strike for Climate.” She demanded that the Swedish government reduce carbon emissions per the Paris Agreement. She argued that it made no sense for students to learn facts about climate change in school if society wasn’t going to take the bold action needed on climate change.

Initially, no one noticed her, but she persevered with her Friday Climate Strikes, coining the slogan #FridaysForFuture. Her initiative has since gained worldwide attention and has inspired students around the world to organize their own local climate strikes. On March 19, 2019, an estimated 1.4 million students participated in climate strike events across the globe. Adults, including climate scientists, have declared their support for the youth strikers. Youth and adults alike continue to be inspired by Greta’s determination.

What is the Global Week of Climate Action?

From Friday September 20 to Friday September 27, 2019, youth activists are organizing what could be the largest public mobilization in history demanding strong commitment and rapid action from world leaders to address the growing climate emergency.

Youth from dozens of countries are organizing strikes, marches, demonstrations, teach-ins. Dozens of events are being organized in many BC communities. To find an event in your community, organize your own or find free resources, visit GlobalClimateStrike.net.

A Rally and Teach-in for Climate Justice will be organized by the Greater Victoria Teachers Association from 1:30 to 3:00pm Monday September 23 at the BC Legislature. Find info about this and other events happening daily in the Victoria region at the website of Our Earth Our Future, a youth climate strike group.



Above: protesters outside the BC Legislature in May 2019

Why talk to your students about climate change?

The impacts of climate change are all around us, and they're getting worse. We're seeing the lives of countless people around the world impacted severely through devastating hurricanes, typhoons, rising sea levels and the extinction of plants and animals.

In BC, we're seeing more droughts, unprecedented wildfires, floods, struggling salmon populations and starving orcas who depend on salmon for food. More than two dozen BC municipalities have now declared climate emergencies.

The World Health Organization has named climate change the single greatest threat to global health this century. The United Nations has stated that 1 million species are now threatened with extinction and that transformative changes are needed to restore and protect nature, for the benefit of us all. We're facing a climate and biodiversity crisis and we need all hands on deck to respond to it.

Not sure how to talk to your students about climate change?

Where to start? How can a person make an impact as just one individual?

How can kids effect change when it is difficult for adults to do so? Is it already too late?

These are all valid questions and deserve to be explored.

Given how daunting the climate emergency can be, it's common to feel overwhelmed and a sense of grief. Grief and mourning are natural responses to the massive ecological and human loss that humanity is living through. Climate change and its effects are linked to depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, post-traumatic stress, and negative emotions like anger, hopelessness, despair, and a feeling of loss. Researchers have dubbed these feelings “ecological grief,” “eco-anxiety” or “climate grief.”

Yes, this climate emergency is huge and serious. But it also creates an opportunity for us to join together to create meaningful changes in how we live our lives and how we conceive of our human species as part of the diverse, interconnected web of life on planet earth. Artistic expression and conversations with each other about climate change can help transform feelings of overwhelm or anxiousness into inspiration, action and mutual connection. Discussions and content about climate change have a meaningful place in every subject area and should be included across the curriculum.

Students don't all need to become climate scientists when they grow up. We need people across every discipline working together to find equitable solutions for humanity and all of the beings we share the planet with. We need people passionate about their areas of expertise willing to embrace the challenge of finding solutions by connecting the dots. As adults, we can foster and model healthy relationships and dialogue with peers, children and elders, and learn to listen to different opinions in the process of finding creative solutions. Let's give our youth more opportunities to experience the natural world, encouraging them to love this beautiful planet while nurturing them to learn how to care for it.

Kids and youth are aware of local signs of climate change impacts and adults' reactions to them. We need to allow ourselves to feel (and let our students feel) the impacts of the climate emergency.

We also need to help empower them, and inspire hope that they can be part of the solution—that every individual's experiences count.



Climate change or global warming?

Not long ago, the term ‘global warming’ was more common as it was assumed that a changing climate meant warmer temperatures around the world. While there is a general warming trend, scientists have now shown there are many complex links between broader changes in climate patterns that extend beyond temperatures. These include more frequent and intense weather events and climate patterns such as flooding, monsoons, droughts, hurricanes and typhoons.

Impacts of a warming Arctic can even include harsher, snowier winters farther south, which is why it’s important to understand the difference between climate (average longer term weather patterns) and weather (daily variations in temperature, precipitation and so on).

The importance of place:

Before reading the following suggestions for how Big Ideas from the new BC Curriculum align well with content related to climate change, consider the broad definition of the word ‘place’ (as defined by the Ministry of Education):

“Place is any environment, locality, or context with which people interact to learn, create memory, reflect on history, connect with culture, and establish identity. The connection between people and place is foundational to First Peoples perspectives of the world.”

Key questions about place (from the BC Curriculum):

- How does place influence your ability to plan and conduct an inquiry?
- How does your understanding of place affect the ways in which you collect evidence and evaluate it?
- How do the place-based experiences and stories of others affect the ways in which you communicate your findings and other information?
- Ways of knowing refers to the various beliefs about the nature of knowledge that people have; they can include, but are not limited to, Aboriginal, gender-related, subject/discipline specific, cultural, embodied and intuitive beliefs about knowledge. What are the connections between ways of knowing and place?

Place-based education: more important than ever before

We live in an era where technology is allowing for unprecedented changes in society. Technological innovations offer many opportunities, but increased time spent as individuals in front of personal screens is having detrimental consequences on children, youth and adults in our society.

Within the context of climate and the climate emergency, giving your students opportunities to connect with their local natural environment is a key part of their learning. For them to understand climate change, they should be familiar with local weather and climate patterns, when certain species breed and migrate, etc. It is equally important to partake in physical activity outside, breathing fresh air and consuming fresh foods (local, where possible) that provide nourishment.

Tip: Try obtaining a class set of clipboards for your students so that you can take them outside as part of regular classroom learning, whether that be to write a journal entry about how hearing about logging makes them feel, collecting data on plant species on their school grounds, or doing a reading and discussion about changing climate patterns. Students will appreciate and benefit from this time outside in countless ways!



A few notes on the resources included in this package:

We've included two resources designed for teachers to read themselves. "Big ideas that connect to climate change" provides examples of activities that can connect climate change with the Big Ideas in subject-specific curriculum produced by the Ministry of Education. "Teacher reflection on climate change" is a reflection activity to do alone.

We've also included two resources that teachers can print and share with your students as class activities: a carbon footprint colouring activity, and "Hope is Contagious," a reading comprehension activity for students in Grade 6-8.

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.

Teacher reflection on climate change:

Allow yourself to do this personal reflection while in a comfortable place, ideally outside. Writing down your thoughts, feelings, fears and ideas may help you to process what comes to your heart and mind.

Consider how you are personally affected by climate change. Do you experience climate grief or ecological grief? What are the changes you are witnessing and/or anticipating in the environment and community you live in? These effects may be based in your home community where your school is located, and/or the community or communities you originate from.

Consider how climate change affects different people in different places according to their tangible lived experiences, and the experiences of their family and friends. In many parts of the world, it is primarily rural and Indigenous communities who are fighting to protect the natural environment and all the beings (including ourselves) that the earth supports. The health and wellbeing of us all is inextricably linked to the wellbeing of the natural world around us, however it is often communities whose livelihoods and ways of living are still connected to their natural environment who are on the frontlines of the climate crisis – both in experiencing the impacts and also in advocating for solutions.

Now, consider how students in your class may be affected in unique ways by climate change, climate grief or ecological grief. These effects may be based in students' home communities where their school is located, or the communities they originate from (different regions of BC, Canada, or other countries).

Consider the varying degrees of agency to effect change that your students may feel. Remember that each student has their own lived experiences and that you cannot truly know how climate change affects them personally.

Carbon footprint colouring activity:

CARBON FOOTPRINT

HEATING & COOLING

- I do not conserve energy
- I try to conserve and do not have a programmable thermostat
- I conserve every chance I get

WATER

- I do not conserve water
- I conserve but still need to shower everyday
- I conserve every chance I get

RECREATION

- I enjoy carbon intensive activities (i.e: boating, quading)
- I often go to movies, restaurants and/or concerts/games
- I usually just hang out with my friends at one of our houses

ELECTRICITY

- I do not conserve electricity
- I think about energy conservation but could do better
- I use energy efficient light bulbs and turn things off every chance I get

FOOD

- I eat meat all the time
- I eat meat sometimes
- I'm a vegetarian

- I do not consider where my food comes from
- I check labels and try to buy local foods
- I eat only the food I grow

CONSUMPTION

- I buy anything I want or need and love to shop
- I am not a big shopper but buy whatever I need
- I am an informed eco-shopper
- I shop as little as possible and am considerate of the environment

DWELLING

- I live in a 3+ bedroom house
- I live in a 1 or 2 bedroom house
- I live in an apartment

TRANSPORTATION

- I drive in a large car everywhere
- I drive in a small car everywhere
- I take the bus to and from school and drive everywhere else
- I try to bike or walk every chance I get
- I walk or bike everywhere

WASTE

- I throw all waste in the garbage
- I recycle everything I can
- I compost and recycle

AIR TRAVEL

- I travel by plane a couple times a year or travel overseas (outline whole footprint twice)
- I travel by plane every year (outline whole footprint once)
- I never travel by plane



Name: _____ Section: _____

Date: _____

“Hope is contagious”



How do you feel when you are working by yourself on something that is important to you? How do you feel when you find someone who is also passionate about the same activity or cause?

Many people tend to feel better when they work on something together with one or more people. Why do you think this is?

Who is Greta Thunberg?

At age 15, Greta Thunberg began skipping school every Friday to stand outside the Swedish parliament, protesting against political inaction over the climate crisis. She started alone with a sign that translates as “School Strike for Climate.” She soon sparked an international movement led by youth, the Student Strikes for Climate and Fridays for Future, which have now taken place in dozens of countries globally.

Greta has been invited to speak at many important events, including at the United Nations.



Who is Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez?



At age 29, the youngest woman ever to serve in the US Congress! She’s the Democratic Representative for New York’s 14th congressional district. She is the youngest woman ever to serve in the US Congress. She has been in office for less than a year and has already generated a huge amount of news coverage.

Her proposed climate change action plan, called the “Green New Deal,” calls for, among other things, the achievement of net-zero greenhouse gases within a decade, a full transition off of fossil fuels, and commitments to ensure all old and new buildings in the US meet new energy-efficient standards.

The following text is a transcript from a video call between two climate activists. One is America’s youngest-ever congresswoman, the other is a Swedish high school student and climate activist.

In this call, two of the world’s most powerful voices on the climate emergency speak for the first time!

Check out a cool podcast with BC youth!
sierraclub.bc.ca/podcast-youth-up-front

Transcript adapted from: “When Alexandria-Ocasio Cortez met Greta Thunberg: ‘Hope is Contagious,’” by Emma Brockes in *The Guardian* (June 29, 2019).

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez It's such an honour to meet you!

Greta Thunberg You, too!

AOC Thank you. I'm so excited to be having this conversation. I remember first hearing your speech a few months ago...and I was thrilled, because here in the United States, even when I was running, people were saying there's no need to convey this kind of urgency [about the climate]. To hear you articulate the belief that I've had as well is so exciting and validating.

GT Thank you so much for standing up and offering hope to so many people, even here in Sweden.

AOC People often say, "Don't politicise young people." It's almost a taboo. I find it very condescending, as though, especially in this day and age with the access to information we have, you can't form your own opinions and advocate for yourself. I'm interested in how you approach that.

GT The most common criticism I get is that I'm being manipulated and you shouldn't use children in political ways, and I can't think for myself and so on. And I think that is so annoying! I'm also allowed to have a say – why shouldn't I be able to form my own opinion and try to change people's minds?

AOC What is the most effective tactic in gaining attention for the environmental movement?

GT I think this whole movement in which I just sat down in front of the parliament, alone had a huge impact, because people saw it and were moved, and became emotional. Millions of children around the world, [are] striking and saying, "Why should we study for a future that may not exist any more?"

AOC A lot of people talk about Sweden and other Nordic countries as an inspiration. People say that [advanced thinking around the climate crisis] could never happen in the US, because of the racial diversity here, and issues with immigration and so on, there's no way we can come together in order to combat this. I'm interested in [your] response to that.

GT Many people see countries like Sweden or Norway or Finland as role models [because] we have such a clean energy sector. That may be true, but Sweden is one of the top 10 countries in the world when it comes to the highest ecological footprints.

In Sweden, the most common argument that we shouldn't act is that we are such a small country with only 10 million inhabitants – we should focus more on helping other countries. That is so incredibly frustrating, because why should we argue about who or what needs to change first? Why not take the leading role?

AOC We hear the same exact argument here. But are we going to choose to lead, or are we going to sit on our hands? It seems as if [many people in the U.S.A.] take pride in leading on fracking, on being the number one in oil, in consumption, in single-use plastics. But they don't seem to want to take pride in leading on the environment and leading for our children.

GT Yes. I mean, countries like Sweden or the US, since we are rich countries, need to go first. Because people in poor countries need to be able to raise their standard of living. We have a duty to lead when we already have, basically, everything.

What makes video calls so awesome?

Video calls make it possible to see and speak to someone on the opposite side of the planet without having to fly there to meet them in person, which creates a significant amount of carbon emissions that fuel climate change. The amount of carbon emissions we create is sometimes referred to as our "carbon footprint" or "ecological footprint." Video calls offer us a fantastic opportunity to collaborate "face-to-face" while barely increasing your carbon footprint, in ways that weren't possible even 10 years ago.

AOC Yes. People think of leadership as this glamorous, powerful thing. Leadership is also enormously difficult. Leadership is a responsibility. Leadership is about doing things before anybody else does them...taking decisions when you don't know 100% what the outcome is going to be.

I'm curious, given how daunting the issue [of climate change] is, why aren't you so filled with despair that you're staying on your couch every day, and just waiting for the apocalypse? [Laughs]

GT Before I started school striking, I was like that. I was so depressed and I didn't want to do anything. But what I find encouraging is having all these people who are fighting on different sides in different ways, to create a better future.

The school-striking children, when I see them – that is very hopeful. [P]eople are very unaware of the climate crisis...people aren't continuing like this and not doing anything because they are evil. We are doing it simply because we are unaware. I think that is very hopeful, because once we know, once we realise, then we change, then we act.

AOC Hope is something that you create, with your actions. Hope is something you have to manifest into the world, and once one person has hope, it can be contagious. Other people start acting in a way that has more hope.

GT Yeah. I know so many people who feel hopeless, and they ask me, "What should I do?" And I say: "Act. Do something." Because that is the best medicine against sadness and depression.

AOC Why do you think young people have been more powerful and persuasive on this issue, in particular?

GT Many reasons, but I think the main one is that...[m]ost of us know that this is going to affect us in our lifetimes...it's already here and it's going to get worse, and...as young people, we aren't as used to the system. We don't say, "It's always been like this, we can't change anything."

AOC [Y]outh is a mindset... we haven't seen the world before, this is our first



Above: protesters outside the BC Legislature in May 2019

path, and so we [tend] to question all the nonsensical things that have just gone on for reasons of outdated logic. You can be much older and still part of a youth movement, if you refuse to do things just because that's the way they've always been done... Social movements, and youth movements in particular, should continue to be the moral compass that guides our vision.

GT Yes, it always reminds me a lot of the Emperor's New Clothes. Everyone believes in this lie, that only a child dares to question.

AOC Right. When I was first running [for office], people often mocked me as a child. I'm much older than you! But I was still very young for someone who was running for such a powerful seat. [People's criticism] was "all veiled ways of saying I was too inexperienced, too naive, too young, and too powerless."

Thunberg says that she is planning to travel to the US in August, so she can attend the UN Climate Action Summit on 23 September.

GT I don't fly for climate reasons so it's not 100% yet, but we are figuring it out. It's very hard, but I think it should be possible.

AOC That's incredible. Let us know how we can help from over here. I think one of the things that we need to start communicating is that this a global struggle, and it's not about what is Sweden doing, and what is the US doing – it's about what are all of us doing, as one movement? I think the power of that is very real. I wish you well.

GT Thank you so much.

AOC Thank you so much, Greta. Be sure to let us know when you have an arrival date. If you land in New York, we will give you a Queens' welcome!

Update: On August 28, 2019, Thunberg did arrive in the US! She chose not to fly in an airplane in order to avoid greatly increasing her carbon footprint. Instead, Thunberg sailed across the Atlantic Ocean for 14 days from Plymouth, UK to New York, US in a 60 foot racing yacht equipped with solar panels and underwater turbines.

While in the Americas, Thunberg will be attending the UN Climate Action Summit in **New York City** (September 23). She will then travel to **Montreal, Quebec** to take part in a major climate strike on September 27. This is mobilization is part of the Global Climate Strike week of events happening around the world from September 20 to 27. Thunberg is also planning to attend the United Nations COP25 climate change conference held from December 2 to 14 in **Santiago, Chile**.

Reading comprehension questions:

1. How do Thunberg and Ocasio-Cortez describe some adults' reactions to their respective efforts to raise awareness about climate change?

- What does she mean when she says people think she is "being manipulated" and that she can't think for herself?
- Have you ever felt as though adults or older siblings thought you couldn't think for yourself? How did that situation make you feel?

2. Thunberg mentions that in Sweden, many people think their country doesn't need to act because it's so small (only 10 million inhabitants), and that it "should focus more on helping other countries." Thunberg says this "is so incredibly frustrating." Why does she believe it is important for people in smaller countries like Sweden to take climate action?

Compared to many countries, Canada's population is small. Our population is 37.4 million inhabitants, Compare this to 329 million people in the USA, 132 million in Mexico, or 212 million in Brazil. There are 1.42 billion people in China, and 1.36 million people in India. **Should only countries with the biggest populations take action on climate change?**

3. Thunberg says people in “rich” countries need to take climate action first. In your own words, what is her argument for this?

- Give an example of something that contributes to the large carbon footprints of many people in Canada as a result of our lifestyles or standards of living. What are some lifestyles/standards of living that some people in “poorer” or less-developed countries may not have?

What are some actions you, your friends and family could take to reduce your carbon footprints?

3. Extension: Thunberg makes a simplified argument that people in “rich” countries already have “basically, everything.” What are some of the inequalities that exist within Canada and within your local community? Discuss with a partner and then as a class.

4. Ocasio-Cortez says, “I’ve always felt that social movements, and youth movements in particular, should continue to be the moral compass that guides our vision.” What do you think she means by this? Explain in your own words and give examples.

5. Does Thunberg believe most people in the world don’t care about the health of the planet and how their actions affect climate change? Is she stressed out or hopeful about the potential of climate action?

Suggested answer key for teachers:

Question 1. Thunberg and Ocasio-Cortez describe many adults' reactions to their respective actions about climate change.

- When Thunberg says people think she is “being manipulated” she means that many adults think her climate action is political, and that children and youth should not be involved in politics. She implies that some people think other people are using or manipulating her to get her to spread a message, when in reality, she is very determined to spread her conviction that all of humanity must take action to address climate change.
- Ocasio-Cortez says many people in the United States think young people should not be involved in politics (“Don’t politicise young people. It’s almost a taboo”). She thinks this is insulting (“I find it very condescending”) because in the digital age young people have access to information that can help them to form their own opinions and advocate for themselves.
- Students should include their own example of a situation when they felt that adults or older siblings thought that they couldn’t think for themselves and how that situation made them feel.

Question 2. Thunberg believes that, even though Sweden has a relatively small population, it is important for people in Sweden to take climate action because “Sweden is one of the top 10 countries in the world when it comes to the highest ecological footprints.” Thunberg says that many Swedes believe that “we should focus more on helping other countries;” she finds this frustrating because she doesn’t believe “[Swedes] should argue about who or what needs to change first.” Her attitude is that her fellow citizens could take a leading role in climate action (“Why not take the leading role?”).

Question 3. Thunberg believes people in “rich” countries need to take climate action first because “people in poor countries need to be able to raise their standard of living. We have a duty to lead when we already have, basically, everything.” By this she is implying that most people in “rich” countries already have housing, clean drinking water, access to food, clothing and schooling, many luxuries, and benefits that people in other countries do not have (protection of basic human rights, freedom from war, access to technology, etc.)

Extension: Thunberg makes a simplified argument that people in ‘rich’ countries already have “basically, everything.” Discuss some of the inequalities that exist within Canada and within your local community. Have students discuss with a partner and then as a class (or perhaps organize a debate).

Thunberg also stated that ‘rich countries’ have the largest ecological footprints in the world (meaning they consume more resources and their actions result in the release of more greenhouse gases than the actions of people in less-developed countries). Some examples of lifestyles or standards of living that many Canadians have that people in less-developed countries may not have are:

- Many Canadian families have one or more personal vehicles per family. Taking public transit helps limit a person’s carbon footprint. It is possible to take public transit instead of using personal vehicles that typically run on gas or diesel.
- Many Canadians take trips by plane each year. When one person flies on a plane from Vancouver to Toronto, about 1 tonne of carbon is released into the atmosphere. This is more than individuals in many countries emit in an entire year! This released carbon contributes to the ‘greenhouse effect’ that causes global warming or climate change. Canada has some breathtaking natural places and fascinating city culture that we could all learn to appreciate more instead of taking so many vacations abroad on planes and cruise ships.

- Many Canadians live in single family homes that offer ample living space per person, increasing the resources and energy required for heating and cooling. Living in an apartment building is often more energy-efficient. It is important for all buildings to have good insulation to reduce the need for heating and cooling.
- Many Canadians use precious water resources to water their lawn to keep it green year-round, although increasingly we are seeing water saving measures mandated by local governments due to drought. Many people around the world lack a reliable supply of fresh drinking water to meet their basic daily needs.

Ask students to suggest some actions that they, their friends and families could take to reduce their ecological footprints and/or climate change. For example:

- Take public transit or ride a bike to work and school, instead of driving in a personal vehicle
- Fly less (or not at all)
- Eat food that is produced close to home (and not shipped from distant continents)
- Better insulate their homes to reduce the energy used for heating and cooling (often there are government programs to help make this more affordable)
- Switch to renewable energy resources (hydro, solar, wind, geothermal, biomass).

Question 4. Ocasio-Cortez says, “I’ve always felt that social movements, and youth movements in particular, should continue to be the moral compass that guides our vision.” Ask students to explain what they think she means by this in their own words and give examples.

- Ocasio mentions that “many of us [young people] understand that [climate change] is going to make our lives much worse...as young people, we aren’t as used to the system,” meaning that youth tend to see when the status quo, normalized systems of society may not be logical or be running with the best interests of the general public in mind.

Some possible answers of how youth have taken action to advance society include:

- High school students David Shepherd and Travis Price of Nova Scotia started a day to raise awareness about homophobic bullying called **Pink Shirt Day** in 2007, now marked across the country.
- **Orange Shirt Day** was started in 2013 to educate people and promote awareness about the Indian residential school system and the impact this system had on Indigenous communities for more than a century in Canada. It is held annually on September 30. Students and staff are encouraged to wear an orange shirt to school that day to honour residential school survivors.
- In June 1903, 100,000 textile workers in Philadelphia (including 10,000 workers under 15) went on strike to demand better pay and a 55-hour work week (rather than 60). They exposed the inhumanity of child labour (common at the time) and furthered the push to ban child labor practices.
- In July 2013, youth across North America began taking part in the **Black Lives Matter** movement to demand equal rights and dignity for African Americans. This built on the legacy of the 20th century civil rights movement.
- In April 2016, Indigenous youth in the US protested at **Standing Rock** in South Dakota to express opposition to the Dakota Access pipeline, fearing it would contaminate drinking water. They gained international attention for their courageous efforts in defending nature and in “reshaping the national conversation for any environmental project that would cross the Native American land.”
- In February 2018, youth in the US created the movement “**Never Again**” to protest gun violence after the Parkland, Florida high school shooting.
- Youth climate activist Greta Thunberg launched the global climate strike movement **#Fridaysforfuture** in 2018. It has now become a worldwide movement.