

Sustainability Curriculum

intro unit:
environmental injustice
Information Packet

An SDG-focused Curriculum
for the 21st Century Teacher

grades
9
10
11
12

A special focus
on SDG 11!



*SDG Talks is NOT a UN affiliate

Sustainability Curriculum

intro unit

Environmental Injustice



Brought to you by [SDG Talks](#)

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A holistic curriculum designed to make teaching the SDGs in the classroom easy & fun!

What is SDG Talk's Sustainability Curriculum?

It is a flexible curriculum developed within the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We aim to educate students about environmental injustices in their communities with the goal to inspire individual responsibility and call them to action. The case studies presented in the curriculum represent diverse groups of people at different scales – from local to national – to be inclusive of **all** students.

Why did SDG Talks create the Sustainability Curriculum?

SDG Talks' years of professional experience in sustainability transformed the SDGs into our north star, guiding and driving all that we do. After participating in dozens of UN-led events, it was clear to us that the SDGs are the ideal framework to educate 21st-century students about addressing future challenges in our world – and so the journey began.

Who is the curriculum for?

- New and experienced teachers looking to spur their students' interests in interacting with locally-driven issues
- Students that are hungry to learn about global citizenship


What is the unique value of the curriculum?

- Our carefully curated resources from which teachers can expand
- Our blended focus on content, skills, and project-based learning
- Our adaptable learning roadmap for diverse learners
- Our issue-driven projects for student / community engagement
- Our ample quality resources teachers can easily expand on

What is adaptable?

- Duration: intends to be 3 weeks long with 5 lessons each week (15 lessons total), but the timeframe and lesson selection can be adjusted according to the class' needs
- Optional 1 week extension: students interact with their communities outside of the classroom
- Resources: developed up or down depending on the students' capabilities
- Flexible implementation: Social Studies courses, Civic Engagement electives, etc.
- Modified lesson options: allow for easy accommodation of diverse learners

What standards does the curriculum align with?

- CCSS state standards
 - Supports SAT/ACT learning journeys for college-bound students
 - Our team is available to create the bridge between state and CCSS standards if requested. Please reach out to any member of our team.
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Environmental Injustice

Intro Unit Breakdown



A focus on SDG 11: Make cities & human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient & sustainable

Topic: Environmental Injustice

Week 1: Background	Week 2: Research	Week 3: Presentation
Essential Question: What is environmental injustice?	Essential Question: What environmental injustice issues exist in my community?	Essential Question: How will I engage my community in this environmental injustice issue?
Case Studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals → Youth Activism: India → National Environmental Injustice Issues → North Dakota Access Oil Pipeline → Flint, Michigan Water Quality → Uniontown, Alabama & Coal Ash → Houston, Texas → "Cancer Alley" Louisiana 	Case Studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals → Action Campaigns → Community Research 	Case Studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals
Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4.A CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.B CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.6 	Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.7 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.8 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.9 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4 	Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.2 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.5 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2.E

Unit Assessment: Community Research Project & Presentation



Note from the Authors

Statement of Intention

SDG Talks would like to present secondary educators with the resources to engage their students with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in order to teach youth how to navigate and alleviate community issues. Young people are responsible for the future of our planet and, therefore, require a well-rounded understanding of the layered interactions between the human and natural systems. The SDGs provide a framework for how our human systems can develop in accordance with the sustainable use of our natural systems. We developed this three-week community engagement curriculum to empower teachers with these essential international goals.

Our Sustainability Curriculum exemplifies a fully developed secondary Social Studies course designed to engage learners in environmentally conscious decision-making. Working with experts and partners in various fields, SDG Talks has created a curriculum that is a replica of the materials, processes, routines, and systems that our sample of experienced teachers have put into place for their own students (and would again). Note on limitations: The case studies presented to students derive mostly from North American examples of environmental injustice, limiting the perspectives to those familiar with that region.

This curriculum supplements the fact that group work and decision-making skills are necessary aspects of success in the modern era. Each lesson builds in Common Core State Standards for Social Studies, based on the reading and writing standards of English Language Arts. Similarly, the daily lessons come with leveled accommodation or modified lesson options to empower diverse learners in accessing the same materials as their peers. These are, by no means, cut-outs for your diverse learners as their accommodations should be guided by the learning disabilities outlined in their individualized education plans.

We want to show how a secondary educator would implement the United Nations SDGs in his/her/their classroom on a topic of cultural relevance while focusing on soft skill development that expands their students' level of global competence. Our world needs to inspire curricula that allow students to better their futures, so please feel free to adapt any of the lessons to best fit your students and their communities.

Sincerely, SDG Talks



What Environmental Injustice Issues Exist in your Community?

Research Project and Presentation

70 Assessment Points

Purpose

Students will engage with an environmental justice issue in their community in order to be an active participant in positive change. Students will learn that civic engagement, whether through great or small actions, can have a positive impact on one's community. You and your classmates will research an issue in your community, then present an action plan to educate and/or involve your community in resolving that issue.

What it is

Individual research project culminating in a group presentation of a campaign strategy to best address the community environmental justice issue.

Project Components

- Independent Research
- Project Visual
- Campaign Strategy
- Community Engagement Action Plan

Examples

Poster Creation



Create a Podcast



Organize a Cleanup



Research Project Rubric: My Community's Environmental Injustice Issues

Category	Description	5	4	3	2	1
Independent Research	Quality and quantity of evidence effectively answers each research question					
	At least 3 reliable sources, properly cited					
	Quality of sources used: Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.					
Campaign Visual	Accurate and effective images to support purpose of campaign					
	Sufficient amount of visuals make the campaign easy to understand					
	Fully demonstrates knowledge of topic					
	Effectively and accurately targets specific audience to initiate community action					
Presentation	Presentation Slides Include: Summary of Problem, Visuals + Explanations, Proposed Action Plan and detailed action steps					
	Sites specific evidence from research to support presented information; information demonstrates appropriate and credible research					
	Professional and present throughout presentation; each student has a clear role in execution of presentation; information presented clearly and succinctly to audience					
Creativity	Campaign idea is plausible/realistic and engaging for target audience					
	Plan demonstrates thoughtfulness					
Organization	Group accurately organizes necessary logistics to achieve campaign (ie: finances, media outreach, labor hours, etc.)					
	Each group member contributes equitably to execution of campaign, partially based on peer feedback					

Total _____ / 70 points