BRITISH COUNCIL

The Sustainable Development Goals

Topic

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals

Aims

- To predict and raise awareness of world issues and the Sustainable Development Goals
- To build learners' vocabulary for describing world issues and solutions
- To prioritise and encourage justification of choices
- To develop creativity and design skills

Age group and level

Primary (8–12 years)
CEFR level A2 and above

Time

60–90 minutes approximately or two shorter lessons

Materials

- images showing key world issues, as appropriate for your learners (optional, to display – stage 1)
- matching strips (one copy per class/large group, cut up – stage 3)
- matching worksheet (one copy per learner – stage 3)
- examples of common icons (to display – stage 4)
- icons template (one copy per learner – stage 4)
- official goal icons, available from https://www.globalgoals.org/resources (to display – stage 4)

Introduction

This lesson plan is based on activities from the British Council publication *Integrating global issues in the creative English language classroom*, which provides innovative ideas for teaching while raising awareness of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

In this lesson, which helps introduce the goals, learners think about what goals the world might need. Then they discover what each goal is and what it means, and decide which ones they think are the most important and why. Finally, they design an icon for one or more of the goals, which they share with the class.

Procedure

1. Introducing the topic **(5 minutes)**	• Ask learners what they think are the biggest problems in the world today. Listen to their ideas and feed in any useful vocabulary, e.g. *poverty*, *health*, *hunger*, *war*, etc. – If you think your learners will need support with this question, before the lesson select a few images to display that show some key issues, either from the accompanying 'issues images' document or sourced elsewhere, to help prompt ideas. What images you choose should be appropriate and sensitive to your learners and context.
2. Awareness raising and prediction **(15–20 minutes)**	• Ask learners if they think something is happening to solve the problems. Are they, their family, their school, the government doing anything? Learners may have more ideas around, for example, environmental problems, e.g. recycling. Ask learners if they think it's enough. • Explain to the learners that the United Nations, an international organisation that works to bring peace and help solve world problems, has 17 special goals which all the UN countries agreed to in 2015. The goals are designed to help solve these world problems for everyone, everywhere, by 2030. They are going to learn about these goals today. • Write *To make sure that …* on the board. Elicit an idea for one of the goals, e.g. *To make sure that everyone has enough food.* Ask the learners to work in small groups and give them five minutes to make a list and predict more goals.

3. Matching and prioritising
 	
(20–30 minutes)
	• Tell the learners that you are going to give them a strip of paper with the name of a goal and a description of a goal. Display one on the board as an example. Elicit that they don't match. Tell learners that someone else has the name of the goal that matches their description, and another person has the description that matches their goal. They need to find those people and stand between them. Show the two strips that match your example on the board and elicit which one goes to the left and which one goes to the right.
	
	  – Give out the matching strips randomly and ask learners to stand up and mingle to read and find the matching ones. They will probably make a line, but you can guide them into a circle.
	
	  – If you have more learners, make two groups or some can work in pairs, and with fewer learners, you can give some two (adjoining) strips.
	
	• Ask the learners to go back to their groups and find their list of predictions. As a class, ask *What's Goal 1?* The learners with the two parts of Goal 1 read from their strips. Clarify any language questions. Then ask which groups had it on their list of predictions. Repeat with some or all of the other goals. Did any groups have ideas for goals which weren't on the strips?

	• Give learners the matching worksheet. Ask them to cut up the names and descriptions of the goals, match them and stick them in their notebooks. • Ask learners to think individually and decide what three goals they think are really important and put a star next to them in their notebooks. Ask a few learners what they chose and encourage them to say why, e.g. 'I chose *Goal 1: No poverty* because ...'. Then ask learners to work in small groups and tell each other what they chose and why.

4. Designing an icon
 	
(20–30 minutes)
	• Show the learners the examples of common icons. Elicit what they represent, then elicit some characteristics:
	
	  – Are they simple or detailed?
	
	  – Do they look like what they represent?
	
	  – Which shapes are they, or which shapes do they fit into?
	
	  – Do they use lots of colours or one or two colours?
	
	  – Is there any writing?
	
	  – Are they easy or difficult to quickly recognise and remember?
	
	• Tell the learners that they are going to design an icon for one or more of the goals that they thought were the most important. Brainstorm some ideas as a class.
	
	• Explain to learners that they will work individually and they need to keep their icons secret! Give out the icons template and ask learners to draw an icon in the first square and, next to the square, write what goal it is and why they think it's important. Learners who work more quickly can also do their second and/or third goal.
	
	• When the learners are ready with their icon(s), tell them to fold the paper vertically, so that you see the icons on one side and the writing on the other. Ask them to stand up and walk around the class, holding the paper so that other people can see the icons but not the writing. They should look at each other's icons, say what they see and guess which goals they are, e.g. 'I think it's money. Is it *No poverty*?'
	
	  – Get some class feedback from the learners. What were their favourites? Which goals were the most popular? Did anyone else do the same goals?
	
	  – Show learners the official goal icons. How similar to or different from the learners' icons are they?
	
	• Optionally, make a class poster with all the goals. Learners can cut out their icons and then group all the icons for the same goal together before sticking them on.
	
	  – Invite learners to suggest how they could increase the visibility of the poster. Is there a place in the school that it can be displayed? Can they take a photo to show their family or to be shared by their family?

5. Setting homework **(5 minutes)**	• For homework, learners could choose their favourite goal and find out more about it to tell the class next time. • Alternatively, learners can ask their family members about the goals. Do they know about them? If not, explain what they are. How many goals can their family members remember or guess?
Further ideas and resources	• The publication *Integrating global issues in the creative English language classroom* has additional ideas for creative activities to support the *Good health and well-being* goal as well as all the other United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/integrating-global-issues-creative-english-language-classroom • The 'World's Largest Lesson' promotes the use of the Sustainable Development Goals in learning: https://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/ • The UNESCO website has resources for educators for the early childhood, primary and secondary age groups, listed under each goal: https://en.unesco.org/themes/education/sdgs/material • The United Nations website has further resources for learning about the goals: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/student-resources/

Contributed by

Original activities by Carol Read
Adapted for TeachingEnglish by Rachael Ro