Climate Action Toolkit for Educators

Engaging Students through Experiential Learning

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Content List

This toolkit is developed in the framework of the Mediterranean Youth in Action (MYA) programme, grounded in the principle of experiencing through action, empowers young individuals to become catalysts for transformation and advocates for societal progress.

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MEDITERRANEAN YOUTH IN ACTION

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Co-funded by the European Union

1. Purpose of the Toolkit

This toolkit supports educators in delivering experiential, hands-on environmental activities that engage students actively in sustainability topics.

Through a series of interactive workshops, students:

- explore real-world environmental issues such as waste, soil, and mobility
- participate in hands-on activities (e.g. reuse, composting, redesign)
- express their ideas through creative outputs (posters, comics, designs)
- reflect on their everyday habits and environmental impact
- take small steps towards more sustainable behaviors

The activities are designed to connect learning with real life and to encourage students to become active participants in their school and community.

The toolkit is based on activities implemented in school settings, combining environmental education with creative expression and action.

2. How to Use This Toolkit

What Each Section Includes

Learning Objectives

Clear goals describing what students will learn through the activity.

Step-by-step Facilitation

Simple, structured steps to guide the activity in the classroom.

Materials & Setup

A list of materials and preparation needed before the activity.

Facilitator Tips

Helpful guidance to support facilitation and improve the learning experience.

Variations

Suggestions for adapting the activity for **younger** students.

Variations

Suggestions for adapting the activity for **older** students.

3. Core Subjects

Reduce & Recycle
Understanding waste and how to reduce and sort it effectively.

Reuse & Rethink Consumption
Exploring creative ways to reuse materials and rethink daily habits.

Soil & Composting
Discovering soil as a living system and learning how organic waste returns to nature.

Sustainable Mobility
Reflecting on how we move and imagining more sustainable cities.

Reduce & Recycle

***Activity 1:** Recycling Sorting Game*

Learning Objectives

- Identify recyclable and non-recyclable materials
- Understand basic waste categories
- Reflect on their disposal habits

Materials & Setup

- Cards or real objects
- 3–4 categories (Recycling, Compost, etc.)

Facilitation Tips

Encourage reasoning

Allow disagreement

Avoid correcting immediately

Step-by-step Facilitation

1. Set the context
Ask: "What happens to our waste after we throw it away?

2. Introduce the activity
Explain that students will sort items into categories.

3. Run the activity
Invite students to come one by one or in small groups and place items in the correct category.

4. Facilitate discussion
Ask students to explain their choices and respond to each other.

Reduce & Recycle

Activity 2: *Create a Recycling Character*

Learning Objectives

- Understand reuse creatively
- Develop emotional connection with recycling
- Express environmental messages

Materials & Setup

- Collect waste materials
- Provide glue, scissors, markers

Facilitation Tips

- Focus on awareness and small steps
- Encourage participation
- Connect responses with real-life examples

Step-by-step Facilitation

1. Introduce the idea
"You will create a character from waste materials."

2. Add meaning
"If this character could speak, what would it say?

3. Creation phase
Students work in groups

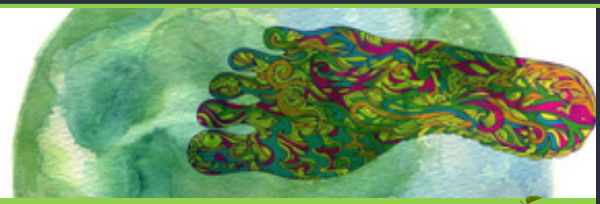
4. Presentation
Each group presents their character.

Reduce & Recycle

Activity 3: *My Waste Footprint*

Learning Objectives

- Understand the concept of waste footprint & reflect on their daily consumption
- Propose simple actions to reduce their personal waste



Materials & Setup

- Printed worksheet (see Annex 1)
- Pens or pencils
- Board or flipchart (optional, for group discussion)

Facilitation Tips

- Focus on awareness and small steps
- Encourage participation
- Connect responses with real-life examples

Step-by-step Facilitation

1. Introduce the concept
"Do you think we all produce the same amount of waste?"

2. Distribute the worksheet (Annex 1)
Students complete it individually.

Small group discussion
"What habits create the most waste?", "What similarities do you notice?"

4. From awareness to action
"What is one small change you can realistically make?"

Variations for Different Age Groups

All activities in this toolkit can be adapted depending on the age, experience, and needs of the students.

Younger students

Use more movement and play-based activities

Replace writing with drawing or discussion

Keep instructions short and simple

Focus on exploration rather than explanation

Older students

Include critical thinking and deeper reflection

Connect activities with real-life issues

Combine hands-on activities with discussion

Encourage students to propose solutions

Activities can be modified depending on:

- time
- setting (indoor/outdoor)
- group size
- materials

Reuse & Rethink Consumption

Activity 1: Second Life Challenge

Learning Objectives

- Understand that objects can have multiple uses
- Rethink waste as a resource
- Identify practical ways to reuse everyday items

Materials & Setup

- Everyday objects (e.g. plastic bottle, jar, old clothes)
- Paper and markers (optional, for sketching)

Facilitation Tips

- Balance imagination with practicality in the discussion phase
- Connect ideas with real-life examples

Step-by-step Facilitation

1. Introduce the idea
Hold up an object (e.g. plastic bottle) "What is this used for?", "What else could it become?"

2. Set the challenge
"Every object can have a second life. Your task is to find as many new uses as possible."

3. Group work
Each group: receives an object & brainstorms alternative uses

4. Share ideas
Each group presents: "Our object can become..."

Reuse & Rethink Consumption

Activity 2: DIY Tote Bag from T-shirts

Learning Objectives

- Understand reuse through a practical example
- Reduce awareness of textile waste
- Develop hands-on skills

Materials & Setup

- Old T-shirts (one per student or group)
- Scissors

Facilitation Tips

- Let students observe before explaining
- Keep explanations
- simple and interactive

Step-by-step Facilitation

1. Start with a question & Introduce the activity
"How often do we throw away clothes?"

2. Demonstrate
(cutting sleeves, cutting neckline, tying the bottom)

3. Creation phase
Students create their tote bags.

**__Before the activity__, facilitators are encouraged to watch a short demonstration video on how to create a tote bag from a T-shirt (YouTube)*

Reuse & Rethink Consumption

Activity 3: Redesign the Packaging

Learning Objectives

- Understand how packaging contributes to waste
- Identify unnecessary or excessive packaging
- Propose alternatives that reduce waste

Materials & Setup

- Old T-shirts (one per student or group)
- Scissors

Facilitation Tips

- Let students observe before explaining
- Keep explanations
- simple and interactive

Step-by-step Facilitation

1. Start with observation
Show a product (e.g. snack or plastic bottle) "What parts of this are actually necessary?"

2. Introduce the challenge
"Today, you will redesign this product to use less packaging."

3. Group work
Students work in small groups. Each group: chooses a product, analyzes its packaging & redesigns it. "Why do companies use so much packaging?"

Variations for Different Age Groups

All activities in this toolkit can be adapted depending on the age, experience, and needs of the students.

Younger students

Focus on drawing or simple redesign ideas

Use familiar products (e.g. snacks, juice boxes)

Support with guiding questions

Emphasize observation rather than analysis

Older students

Include discussion on packaging systems and overconsumption

Encourage realistic and applicable solutions

Ask students to consider materials and environmental impact

Connect with real-life examples and products

Activities can be modified depending on:

- time
- setting (indoor/outdoor)
- group size
- materials

Soil & Composting

Activity 1: Exploring Soil as a Living System

Learning Objectives

- Understand that soil is a living ecosystem
- Identify the main components of soil
- Observe differences between soil types
- Explain how soil supports plant growth

Materials & Setup

- Soil samples (e.g. rich soil, sand)
- Water
- Transparent containers or cups
- Jar with soil and water (for layering experiment)

Facilitation Tips

- Let students observe before explaining
- Keep explanations simple and interactive
- Encourage predictions & discussion

Step-by-step Facilitation

1. Explore the concept
"What do you think exists inside soil?" (e.g. fungi, insects, organic matter, water, air)

2. Experiment
"Which soil helps plants grow better?" Pour water into both samples. Students observe: water absorption, texture, differences

3. Discuss results
"What did you notice?"
"Which soil kept more water?"

Soil & Composting

Activity 2: Compost or Not?

Learning Objectives

- Identify compostable and non-compostable materials
- Understand the basic process of decomposition
- Connect organic waste with soil

Materials & Setup

- Cards or real objects (e.g. banana peel, leaves, paper, plastic bottle)
- Space in the classroom divided into: "Compost" & "Not Compost"

Facilitation Tips

- Let students observe before explaining
- Keep explanations simple and interactive
- Encourage predictions & discussion

Step-by-step Facilitation

1. Set the activity
"We will play a game to see what can return to the soil and what cannot." Show how the space is divided (Compost or not compost)

2. Run the activity
Say different items one by one. Students move to the side they think is correct

3. Facilitate discussion" & Connect to real life
"Why did you choose this?" "Composting helps organic materials return to the soil and support plant life."

Soil & Composting

Activity 3: Soil – Creative Workshop

Learning Objectives

- Reflect on their relationship with soil and the environment
- Express environmental ideas through creative means

Materials & Setup

- Paper (A4 or poster size), magazines, scissors, glue (for collage)
- Markers, pens, colored pencils

Facilitation Tips

- Encourage personal and emotional connection
- Support students who feel unsure about creative tasks
- Avoid over-directing, let ideas emerge naturally

Step-by-step Facilitation

1. Introduce the idea
"Today, you will create something that shows your own connection with soil and the environment."

2. Creative phase.
Students create: (posters, comics, short messages, drawings)

3. Sharing Students
present their work (optional or in small groups).

4. Connect to action
"How can we take care of soil in our daily life?"

Variations for Different Age Groups

All activities in this toolkit can be adapted depending on the age, experience, and needs of the students.

Younger students

Focus on observation and hands-on experience

Use simple language and clear examples

Emphasize play, movement, and visual elements

Focus on basic concepts (soil, plants, food)

Older students

Introduce concepts such as ecosystems and natural cycles

Ask students to justify their answers and observations

Connect activities with real-life systems (e.g. agriculture, food production, waste management)

Include reflection on environmental impact

Activities can be modified depending on:

- available materials (e.g. real soil vs images)
- setting (indoor/outdoor)
- group size

Sustainable Mobility

Activity 1: How Do We Move?

Learning Objectives

- Identify their daily transportation habits
- Recognize different modes of transport
- Reflect on their mobility choices

Materials & Setup

- Open space in the classroom
- Optional: board or flipchart

Facilitation Tips

- Keep it active and inclusive
- Encourage all students to participate
- Connect answers with real-life conditions

Step-by-step Facilitation

1. Start with a question
"How did you come to school today?" Students respond verbally

2. Movement activity
Assign areas in the room: (walking, bus, car, bicycle) Students move to the area that represents them.

3. Observe patterns
"Which group is bigger?" "What do we notice?"

4. Reflection
"What could you change in how you move?"

Sustainable Mobility

Activity 2: Living Posters

Learning Objectives

- Explore how different environments feel
- Express ideas through movement
- Reflect on urban life

Materials & Setup

- Open space

Facilitation Tips

- Encourage creativity
- Keep energy high
- Support shy students

Step-by-step Facilitation

1. Introduce the idea
"You will create a living image using your body."

2. Give scenarios
Groups create scenes: (polluted city, green city, traffic jam, cycling street)

3. Present
Each group freezes. The other students observe and try to guess: "What is happening in this scene?"

4. Reflection
"How does this city feel?"
"Would you like to live here?"

Sustainable Mobility

Activity 3: The City I Dream Of

Learning Objectives

- Imagine sustainable cities
- Apply what they learned
- Propose solution

Materials & Setup

- Paper
- Markers

Facilitation Tips

- Encourage creativity & imagination
- Keep energy high
- Connect ideas to reality

Step-by-step Facilitation

1. Introduce the task
"Design your ideal city."

2. Group work. Students create: (drawings, maps, concepts)

3. Present.
Groups explain ideas.

4. Reflection.
Ask Students: "What makes your city sustainable?", "How do people move?"

Variations for Different Age Groups

All activities in this toolkit can be adapted depending on the age, experience, and needs of the students.

Younger students

Focus on movement and play-based activities

Use simple and familiar examples (e.g. walking, car, bus)

Give clear instructions and guide participation

Emphasize feelings and experience (e.g. "How does this place feel?")

Older students

Encourage critical thinking and deeper discussion

Introduce concepts such as pollution and urban planning

Connect activities with real-life challenges (e.g. traffic, infrastructure

Encourage students to propose realistic solutions

Activities can be modified depending on:

- time
- setting (indoor/outdoor)
- group size
- materials

4. From Activity to Action

These ideas can help extend the activities beyond the classroom and support students in taking action in their school and community.

Create a Class Campaign
Students design and implement a small awareness campaign within the school.
They can:

- create posters, slogans, or short messages
- present ideas in other classrooms
- use creative formats (comics, visuals, short presentations)

Organize a School Challenge
Students work together to design a simple challenge for the school community.
Examples: waste reduction week, “bring your own bottle” challenge, no-plastic day

- They can:
- define the rules
- track participation
- present results

Explore the School Environment
Students observe and reflect on their own school space.
They can:

- identify waste points (bins, packaging use)
- observe mobility patterns (how students arrive)
- explore green spaces or lack of them

Turn Ideas into Action
Students implement a small project in their school.
Examples:
- start a compost system
- create a reuse corner
- plant herbs or small garden
- redesign a classroom practice

Connect with the Local Community
Students extend learning beyond school.
They can:
- interview family members or local residents
- talk to local farmers or shop owners
- explore local environmental challenges

Create Student-Led Solutions
Students work in groups to propose solutions to real problems.
They can:
- identify a problem (waste, transport, consumption)
- propose realistic solutions
- present ideas to teachers or school leaders

Create a Short Video or Digital Story
Students transform what they learned into a short video or digital story.
They can:
- record a short message about soil, waste, or mobility
- create a "before–after" story (e.g. unsustainable vs sustainable habits)
- document their actions (e.g. compost setup, reuse ideas)

Map Our Habits
Students explore and visualize habits within their school or community.
They can:
- create a simple map of the school (waste points, green areas, movement paths)
- identify where changes could happen
- present ideas for improvement

5. Annex

📎Annex 1

🌍 My Waste Footprint

👉 There are no right or wrong answers — just be honest 😊

1. What do I throw away every day? (Write or list:)

_____

_____

_____

2. How often do I use plastic?

□ Very often

□ Sometimes

□ Rarely

3. Do I recycle at home?

□ Yes

□ Sometimes

□ No

4. Do I reuse things?

□ Often

□ Sometimes

□ Rarely

5. Which habit creates the most waste?

_____

_____

🌱 Take Action!

6. My 3 ideas to reduce waste:

👉_____

👉_____

👉_____

7. One thing I will change:

✨_____

_____

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