

Harvest toolkit

Plan and celebrate Harvest in your school

- **Preparing the ground:** Use the 'Harvest Schools Assembly PowerPoint' and accompanying script below. Download the Powerpoint from caid.org.uk/harvest-schools
- **Digging deeper:** Select from our range of teaching and learning ideas (see page 5 onward) to create a Harvest celebration for your class or school.
- **Harvesting your learning:** Consider the ideas for taking action (see pages 4 and 7) – is there something you could do as a class or school?
- **Sharing your learning:** How could you inspire action within your local community?

ASSEMBLY

Introduction

If appropriate, set up a reflective focal area using green, yellow and orange drapes, and a bowl of sunflower seeds angled so that the children can see the seeds clearly. Put the title slide of the PowerPoint onto the screen.

Show the children a single sunflower seed.



I wonder what we can learn from a small seed like this one? Today I want us each to use our imagination, our ability to listen, reflect and question, in order to learn more about the potential of small actions and about how we can stand together as global neighbours across the world.

Pause quietly for a moment and hold up the seed.

What do you think we might learn from a very small seed?

Show slide 1

Now look at the picture on the screen: I wonder... what do you see? *Use another 'click' to reveal the words on the slide.*

On the surface there's little to see... but beneath the soil a wonderful miracle is taking place.

Beneath the soil seeds begin to germinate, spring into life, grow and flourish.

Show slide 2

What do you see now? *Use another 'click' to reveal the words on the slide.*

These sunflowers stand side by side, glorious in colour. As the sun moves across the sky, they turn their heads to follow... absorbing the sun's rays, using it as a source of power and nourishment. Yet these tall, bold flowers began life as a tiny seed, hidden beneath the ground. Each small seed carried the potential of growth and transformation.

These flowers started life as a small seed just like this one – *show the children the sunflower seed as a reminder.* Who would have thought that in such a small seed there is the potential for a huge flower to burst into life!

If you look very closely at the sunflower itself, you will see that it contains hundreds of new seeds – the potential for hundreds of new plants to grow. The miracle of life and potential for growth is ongoing.

Can you tell me what elements are needed to enable a sunflower seed to germinate and grow into a large plant? *Take suggestions from the children.*

Show slide 3

Briefly explain the elements needed for plant growth and development.

The seed is planted in soil, and the action of air, water, and sun together cause germination and growth.

One of the key aspects that enables the seed to grow is the way it uses the sun's light. The seedling uses energy from the sun and turns it into food so it can grow.

Show slide 4

Where would we be without the sun? Without the sun, the seed couldn't grow. Without the sun, we couldn't live on Earth. The sun provides us with light, warmth, energy, night, day and seasons.

Today we're going to hear the story of an amazing group of ordinary women who have come together to make life better for their families and their community. Together, they've found a way to use the sun's energy to transform their lives and to stand up to some of the challenges of climate change.

I wonder if you can describe what is meant by climate change? *Take suggestions from the children and then use the following explanation to summarise if necessary.*

Climate change causes our weather across the world to become more extreme or unpredictable. Pollution, partially caused by people burning fossil fuels, has caused the Earth's atmosphere to trap more of the sun's heat, like a blanket around the world. So, because the Earth has become warmer, the weather is changing and has become more mixed and uncertain.

Now, let's listen to Agar's story.

Show slide 5

This is Agar with her mum and some of her family.

Show slide 6

Agar is 11 years old and she lives in Ethiopia. Can you find Ethiopia on the map?

In the south of Ethiopia, where Agar lives, communities rely on farming to make a living. There is often drought, because of climate change, which means that animals die, and families find it hard to have enough to eat.

Many villages in Ethiopia don't have access to electricity. So families rely on firewood to provide energy in their homes – for light, heat and cooking. This means many trees have been cut down and are no longer a part of the landscape. The women often have to walk long distances to gather wood, which is very heavy and can be dangerous.

Show slide 7

In Agar's village, families have had to adapt to the changing climate and its impact, and also find another way of making money which doesn't just rely on farming.

Agar's mum, who is called Aster, and some of the other women in their village have stood up to the challenges of climate change and poverty. These women have found a way to harness sunshine for the good of their families and community – to use sunshine as a source of energy. Together they have found a way to transform their lives.



Show slide 8

With the support of Christian Aid – a charity which helps poor communities to make their lives better – Aster and her friends have set up and now run a shop powered by the sun.

Having solar power means they can have electricity in the shop to refrigerate bottles of water. Aster and her friends sell this water at the shop, which helps them make more money for their families.

Learning to harness the sun's energy has made a difference for work, and it has also made a difference at home.

Let's see how it has made a difference to our friend Agar...

Show slide 9

This is Agar's house. What do you notice? Let's look more closely.

Show slide 10

Agar's home now has a small solar panel. Although the solar panel is quite small, it makes a huge difference to Agar and her family. It's a bit like the small seed we looked at earlier – which uses the sun's energy to help it grow and transform from a seed to a large plant. The small panels absorb the sunlight and sun's energy to generate enough power to light Agar's home.

Agar and her family also now have a solar lamp, thanks to Christian Aid's partner. This is a really good thing, as Agar's mum explains:

'The solar lamp is small but it's completely transformed my life and my children's health and education. Now they read as long as they want to read.'

Show slide 11

Show the image only

Show slide 12

Agar loves to read. Before it was difficult to read, especially in the evenings, as the only source of light was from the firewood, which made her house very smoky.

Now, Agar is able to read using the light generated by the solar lamp. She is able to learn and do her homework – this gives her the chance to grow and develop her gifts and talents as she gets older – to achieve some of her dreams and to reach her potential. Agar puts it like this:

'Before, we used firewood so there was smoke affecting us. Now we are able to do our homework at any time and there is no problem with our eyes. I want to be a teacher and teach maths.'

I wonder... what can we learn from:

- the seed and sunflower?
- Agar and her family?

Give the children a quiet moment of reflection to think about the question followed by a few moments to discuss with the person next to them.

Ask the children to share their thoughts and ideas.

Show slide 13

Agar's story reminds us that, wherever we live in the world, we all live under the same sun – that we are all global neighbours. What happens in one part of the world has an impact on another part – we don't live in isolation from one another.

Climate change is causing unusual weather patterns across the world. This makes life harder for people in poor countries – yet it's rich countries that have done the most to cause climate change, through using too many cars, too much electricity etc.

Show slide 14

Using energy from the sun is good. Instead of pumping harmful fuels into the atmosphere, solar energy is natural and helps to keep our world clean. And as we've just heard, solar energy can also help children like Agar to grow up happily.

Agar, her mum and her friends have stood together to challenge the impact of climate change and to look after our world.

I wonder how we can all make a difference to our world and our global neighbours?

Show slide 15

Perhaps there are choices we could make in school or in our local community which would make a difference to the world as a whole?

Perhaps we could find out more about how we can also use solar energy in our local community?

Perhaps we could think about our school grounds and find ways to make them more eco-friendly?

Perhaps we could make a survey to see how much energy we use in school and to help us think about changes we could make?

Perhaps we could plan an event to raise some money to help more children like Agar have solar lamps?

During the day try to think of actions we could take this Harvest to make a difference to our world and stand alongside Agar, her mum Aster and their friends. Share your ideas with your teacher.

Closing reflection

Show slide 16

Ask the children to imagine holding a small sunflower seed in their hand or, if appropriate, give each child a sunflower seed to hold. Keep the picture of the sunflowers on the screen. Play some quiet music, for example, 'For The Beauty Of The Earth' by John Rutter.

This small seed has the potential to grow into an amazing plant – to be transformed. We all have the potential to take small actions each day that, put together, could transform our world.

I wonder what small actions you could take?

Point of action

Plan an event as a class that will inform people about the challenges that Aster, Agar and their community face and the way that they have stood together to transform their lives.

You could include a fundraising activity so that this Harvest you too can stand together with Agar to make a difference. See page 7 for more fundraising ideas.



CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS



Select from the following teaching and learning ideas:



Science

- Learn about the cycle of growth for plants including photosynthesis. Plant some seeds, care for them and monitor their growth and development.
- Learn about the use of the sun as a source of energy and consider examples of how solar energy is being developed and used.



Maths

- Learn about the Fibonacci sequence and how this pattern is found within the sunflower. Where else can this pattern be found?



Geography

- Learn about climate change and the impact this has on our world. You might like to use our ['Crazy Climate'](#) and ['Window on the World'](#) resources for inspiration.
- Take a survey to measure your carbon footprint.
- Find ways to be more eco-friendly as a class/school. Could you have a class competition to see which class is most careful with using their resources each week?
- Use the ['Global Explorers'](#) resource to learn more about Ethiopia as a country and about the work of Christian Aid.



RE/RME

- Listen to a story about St Francis of Assisi and how he showed respect and care for all of creation. How do Christians try to show respect for creation and care for the world in which we live?
- Learn about how Christians locally, nationally or internationally are seeking to be good stewards of the Earth's resources. For example, consider the work by [Arocha](#).
- Explore beliefs about the place of community and equality within a range of religious traditions and non-religious worldviews. Useful RE subject knowledge information can be found at www.reonline.org.uk/knowning/what-re



Art

- Reflect on the use of light in a series of art paintings eg, paintings by Turner and Van Gogh.
- Create your own painting, focusing on light, in the style of a chosen artist.



SMSC/Social Studies

- Look at or use the 'Prayer Spaces in Schools' resources to create a class or school reflection area this Harvest. Having heard Agar's story, could pupils design and create their own reflection station to use in their class or to share with another class?
- Take a 'senses walk' and, using a digital camera, take photos of your outside environment and make a collage or a music/photo presentation to share with another class.
- Consider 'Circles of Influence' – how can we make a difference in the world – what can we do to make a difference? For example, change our lifestyle, campaign, tell others.
- Thinking skills: using a 'Community of Enquiry' approach, use one of the photos from the PowerPoint or a summary of Agar's story to generate questions and to stimulate discussion about the importance of renewable energy and the impact of climate change.
- Prepare an information/fundraising event. Think about practical arrangements such as making invites and posters.
- Create a music/image presentation to convey the message of how it's important to challenge climate change.



Literacy

- Prepare a presentation for another class – or for parents or members of your local community – on the importance of being a good global neighbour. Share what you have learnt from Agar and her family, and from the women who have stood together to transform their lives.



Dance/drama

- Aster's story is full of hope, and an example of how together people can bring about transformation. Create a short dance/drama based on the theme of transformation.





OTHER SCHOOL IDEAS

Harvest in a day • A cross-curricular themed day for the whole school

Organise pupils in either class groups or mixed-age groups and then use the following pattern to run an off-timetable day:

-  Begin with an assembly/collective worship to introduce the Harvest theme. Download our collective worship sheet at caid.org.uk/harvest-schools
 -  Then divide the day into three sections for workshops. Make sure each group explores one workshop on climate change and one reflecting on an aspect of Agar's story.
 -  End the day by gathering together to share the work and knowledge from the day. Invite the wider school community including parents/carers, governors, and school volunteers.
-  If you want to include a fundraising event for Christian Aid, you could use some of the workshop time to prepare for this eg, make craft items to sell. Alternatively, you could set up an art/poetry exhibition using work produced in a workshop, or deliver a performance of dance/drama and charge an entry fee as a means of fundraising.

See below for what your school could help fund this Harvest.

Fundraise this Harvest!

This Harvest, every £1 your school gives will be worth £5, thanks to funding from the European Union. Here's what your money could buy:

- Your £16 multiplied to £80 can give five women solar lamps for their homes, helping children like Agar to do their homework.
- Your £75 multiplied to £375 can train five groups of women in using solar power to grow their businesses.
- Your £200 multiplied to £1,000 can give five women solar power for their entire home, freeing them from collecting firewood so often.

