

Fumes or Futures assemblies

These materials are designed to be adapted and used as a resource for either whole school, key stage or class assembly/collective worship.

The materials could be used for a one-off assembly focusing on climate change, or as a series in which the themes are developed over the course of a week. You can use them alone, or as part of the Fumes or Futures pack, which includes games, case studies and teaching ideas.

The introduction could be used in whole school assembly, and the stories from the Philippines used as the basis for a follow-up key stage or class assembly.

Introduction or introductory assembly: community and living well together

The poet John Donne, who lived over 400 years ago, begins one of his poems with these words: 'No man is an island...'

If he was writing today he might say 'no one' or 'no person' is an island, but when he was writing it was common for the word 'man' to be used to describe all humankind. This line of his poem is well known and is often quoted.

I wonder what he meant by these words?

I wonder what you understand by these words?

I wonder if these words are true?

He goes on to say: 'No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.'

Perhaps these words can help us understand the importance of community and living well together. Let's unpack this further by listening to a tale of two islands. Imagine two islands...

Charlie lives on a big island where he enjoys all the abundant resources around him like trees, water, and coal. He has used coal, oil and gas as fuel and energy to run his heater, watch TV, use his computer, his car, and other appliances that make his life so comfortable. He has also cut down trees in order to use the wood for paper.

Some distance away from Charlie, Carla lives on a smaller island. She has fewer resources than Charlie and works hard to grow crops of food

to feed her family and friends, and to sell to make a living.

As Charlie burns coal for fuel, uses gas and oil for energy, cuts down trees for paper, and eats a diet rich in red meat, all of this has an effect on the Earth's atmosphere around him. Carbon dioxide and other gases are released into the air. But these gases hold in heat, causing the climate to get warmer, not just where Charlie lives but across the whole world.

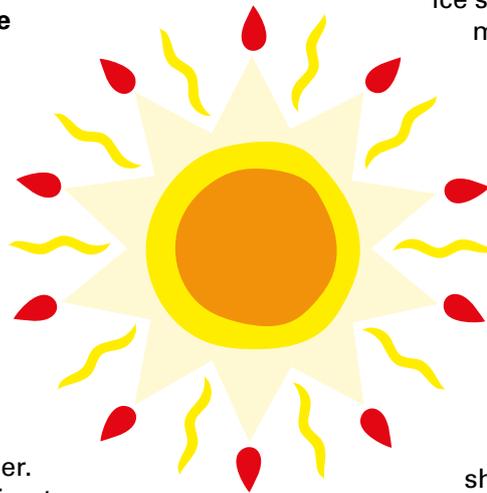
This acts like a greenhouse without fans. The world is heating up, and this means that glaciers and ice sheets in the Arctic and Antarctic start melting quickly. Water from the melting ice falls into the oceans and causes the sea level to rise.

For Charlie, the sea rising is an inconvenience and he has to build some flood defences from his abundant resources – but for Carla the consequences are different.

The sea rises near Carla's island, so much so that she is losing her land on which she grows crops, and therefore she gets poorer and poorer. Eventually the sea level rises so much that her home, her land, her fields are completely flooded. She can't grow any crops and her house is washed away. She has no money to build flood defences to protect her home and her livelihood.

Without making a comment, show pupils a Newton's Cradle and set it in motion so that they can see how the motion of one ball has an effect on the others in the row. You could show this using a YouTube clip.

Everything that happens here affects things in other places.



The opening line of John Donne's poem reminds us that none of us live in isolation [no person is an island]. We share our everyday lives with other people, and our actions and choices often have an impact on them and the world around us. We are part of a community: at school, in our home, in our town, in our country, in our world.

Our two islands are only imaginary places, but the tale tells us something about our world today. I wonder if you recognise the problem that our story describes? **Take some time for paired discussion and then share thoughts.**

Our Earth has its own control system. The oceans, the land, the air, the plants and animals, and the sun's energy, all affect each other to make everything work in harmony. Nothing changes in one place without changing something in another place. The overall effect gives us our global climate.

One of the biggest challenges that our world faces is that of climate change: climate change causes our weather across the world to become more extreme or erratic (**explain that erratic means unusual or unexpected**).

This often makes life harder for people in poor countries, yet it's rich countries that have done the most to cause climate change through the pollution they have created from their use of cars and electricity etc. The actions of a few have a huge impact on the many.

I wonder what we could do to change this? **Share ideas and solutions.**

I wonder what John Donne's poem teaches us about being a good global neighbour?

The charity Christian Aid thinks it's time to bid farewell to the fumes and embrace the future – a world powered on clean energy.

Reflection and prayer

In the Bible there are many stories about prophets – people who rose up and spoke out about things that were wrong, and who spoke about how people could show God's love in action. The prophets spoke about God's love for all humankind and for the world. Christians today still read the words of the prophets to help them understand how they should live their lives, and the importance of speaking up for justice and good actions.

The prophet Micah said: 'Hear what the Lord says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice.' (Micah 6:1)

'The Lord has told you what is good. He has told you what he wants from you: Do what is right to other

people. Love being kind to others. And live humbly, trusting your God.' (Micah 6:8)

Listen to the song 'God of Justice', a modern Christian hymn which uses the words from Micah 6. **I wonder, why might Christians include this song in their worship?** How might it help them to speak up about justice and things that affect our world and global neighbours?

As you listen, try to spot the words from the prophet Micah. The values he talks about are important to Christians, but are also shared values important to many people.

As you listen quietly, think: how could you do what is right to help other people or show kindness today?

Optional prayer:

Father God, thank you for our beautiful world. Help us to look after the world well and to act in ways which bless all our friends and neighbours – both near and far. Amen.

Assembly to focus on the work of Christian Aid

The PowerPoint that accompanies this assembly is available to download from caid.org.uk/schools-climate

Show slide 1.

All around the world, people are waking up to the harm that we are doing to the planet by burning fossil fuels and releasing greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. This 'waking up' is happening at every level of society – from politicians to schoolchildren.

Show slide 2.

The charity Christian Aid has been working on climate change for a number of years. It has been doing this in two ways. Firstly, it is supporting people in poorer countries to adapt to the changes that they are facing – like helping them to build flood defences, or plant crops that can cope better with drought. Secondly, it is campaigning on climate change. Campaigning means asking people who make decisions that affect other people (like politicians and business owners) to do things differently. Christian Aid has asked lots of people to do things differently: it has asked politicians to commit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions; it has encouraged churches to switch to green energy; it has persuaded power companies to not build polluting power stations; and it is asking banks not to lend money to companies that cause pollution.

Christian Aid does this work on climate change because it is a Christian organisation that is dedicated to ending poverty and fighting injustice in the world. It is motivated to do that by the teachings in the Bible,

which call on Christians to care for God’s creation – the world – and to look after it and each other. Christian Aid works with people of all different faiths – and no faith at all – around the world. As far as Christian Aid is concerned, everybody is our global neighbour.

Show slide 3.

I wonder, what do all these places have in common? They’re all islands.

I wonder, what is good about living on an island? What is difficult?

I wonder, can you name some of the different islands in our world?

Show slide 4.

Today, we are going to learn about some islands on the other side of the world, and we’re going to listen to the voice of children and young people in these island communities. They are going to help us learn about being good and generous global neighbours.

Let’s travel across the world, let’s go past Europe, past India, until we arrive at the Philippines, a country made up of many island communities. The Philippines is a place of great beauty, but it’s also a place where people face many challenges because of unpredictable weather caused by climate change.

We’re going to meet two climate change activists who want us to hear their story and to rise up with them, and others, to make the world a fairer place.

On the island of Tabugon many people rely on fishing to earn money to help look after their families. Without this income, many families are unable to send their children to school, which means these children miss out on education – and the opportunity to realise their potential and achieve their dreams.

People in these fishing communities deal every day with the consequences of a changing climate: rising and unpredictable seas, intense heat, and storms that are each more powerful than the last. Climate change is making it harder for them to fish and support their families.

Let’s meet Glory and Lanie. **Show slide 5.**

Glory and Lanie live with their parents, Eva and Lope, on the island of Tabugon. In 2013 a terrible typhoon (storm) hit their island.

As the water surged and the terrifying winds pounded the island, the family stayed in their home and prayed for safety; people in the village, with nowhere else to go, crowded into Lope and Eva’s home for shelter. There was barely enough food for the family, never mind all the

neighbours, but somehow everyone was fed and safe. After the terrifying storm, they saw that nearly everything around them was swept away – including precious coral reefs in the sea and mangrove trees which help to protect the environment.

I wonder, how do you think Glory and Lanie and their friends felt when they saw the impact of the typhoon?

How do you think you would feel, faced with such devastation? Maybe you would feel that this was a totally hopeless situation?

I wonder how Glorie and Lanie responded? Well, with great courage they chose to rise up, to take actions to help rebuild their community, and to speak out for climate justice. Working with Christian Aid’s partner, the communities on the islands of Tabugon, Manlot and Polopina faced the challenge of climate change and found solutions to help to transform their lives.

They are rising up to challenge climate change and the actions that cause it by:

Show slide 6.

Rising up to support clean

energy. The communities now use solar lighting which is green and inexpensive. Children use solar light so that they can study and do their homework and have a chance to develop their gifts and skills.

Show slide 7.

Rising up to protect marine

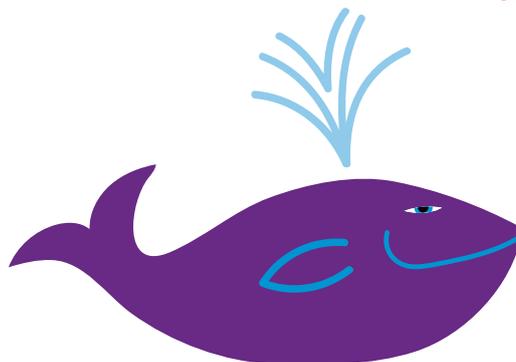
life. Christian Aid’s partner has helped the community to build artificial reefs in the sea, which encourage fish to gather in the waters around the islands. Communities are now able to catch plenty of fish without destroying the environment. People are only allowed to fish near the islands if they’ve been given special permission to do so. This is given if they agree to use fishing methods that protect the sea environment.

The community has been trained to plant mangroves, which help to protect against the effects of storms and protect the marine life. Some people are learning to harvest seaweed as an alternative to fishing. Seaweed can be turned into tasty food and can be used in medicines.

Show slide 8.

Rising up for climate justice. Christian Aid’s partner helps the community to speak up for their rights, particularly on climate change and stopping illegal fishing activities near their islands.

In the Philippines, young and old rise up together against the threat of climate change. Glory and Lanie are still young but they describe themselves



as climate activists – and they want us to be climate activists too! They learned about climate change in school and about how small changes can make a difference.

Show slide 9.

This is what they've learned and what they want to say to us:

Glory:

'In Estancia, where I go to school, there is a lot of garbage and a lack of respect for the environment. We are causing harm with the emission of gases which is bad for humans.

'As young people, we are very aware of needing to separate biodegradables and non-degradable products for instance. We also planted a mango tree to help the environment and sometimes we plant flowers. We should protect nature as it's a source of livelihood for us, for example the sea. We don't need to abuse natural resources.

'We see ourselves as climate change activists!'

Lanie:

'My message to others is to stop throwing rubbish in the sea. Fishermen, don't use dynamite or small-holed nets which can destroy the reefs.'

Reflection

Glory and Lanie remind us that we are all global neighbours; they want us to join them as climate change activists. What actions could we take at school and at home to look after the environment and to speak up for climate justice? How can we be part of a global awakening that bids goodbye to greenhouse gases and says farewell to fossil fuels?

The communities in the Philippines have been transformed through the courage and action of people like Glory and Lanie. How can we help to transform our world, and choose futures over fumes?

Optional prayer:

Father God, help us to take small actions day by day which help to protect our world, and show care for all our global neighbours. Amen.

Ideas for exploring these themes further

Prayer/reflection station: The Ripple Effect

Set up a reflection corner using green and blue drapes and pictures of ripples in water. Have a bowl of water with small stones at the bottom. Display some printed reflection questions:

- Which human actions contribute to climate change?
- What could you do to help reduce the impact of climate change?

Have a set of cards containing suggestions of actions that pupils could take in order to reduce their carbon footprint either in school or at home. Children choose a card and reflect on how they could implement a simple change.

Display words of a prayer, song or inspirational quote, eg: 'Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies.' (Mother Teresa)

Reflect on the theme of community and living well together

- In church schools this could be explored in the context of Christian values: generosity, respect and reverence, compassion, justice, hope and responsibility. This could be through a series of collective worship for whole school or class, and supported by learning and reflection within the curriculum.
- Make a reflection/question board for the classroom. Over a period of time children add questions, reflections and pictures about climate change and the themes you have discussed in assembly/collective worship.
- Create a display showing a large fishing net which paper fish can be attached to. Every time a pupil takes an action which protects the environment, and challenges the effects of climate change, ask them to write their action on a fish shape and add to the display.
- Our neighbours in the Philippines are planting trees and flowers. As a class, plant seeds in recycled plastic pots, and then sell them to fundraise for Christian Aid or plant them in your school grounds.
- Explore the Show the Love campaign resources from the Climate Change coalition: theclimatcoalition.org
- Ask your class to write Letters for Creation – see the Teaching Ideas section of the Fumes of Futures climate change pack.

Christian Aid have several resources related to climate change and global neighbours to support this learning. Visit caid.org.uk/schools