

Farewell fumes



Farewell
fossil fuels!

Goodbye
greenhouse
gases!

Hello future



Fume Free 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 Fume Free Futures pack, which includes activities, case studies and teaching ideas. The introduction could be used in whole school assembly, and the other parts 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...

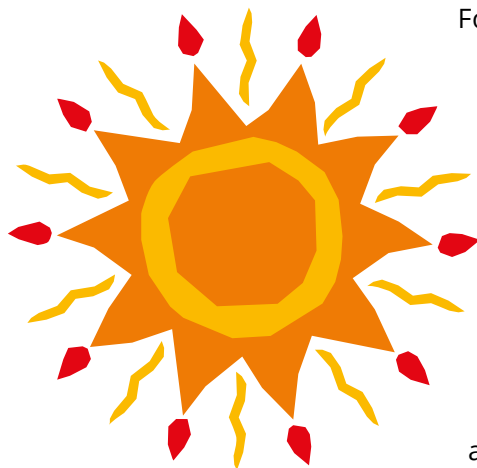
Charlie lives on a big island where he enjoys all the abundant resources around him like trees, water, and coal. He has used coal, oil and gas as fuel and energy to run his heater, watch TV, use his computer, his car and other appliances that make his life so comfortable. He has also cut down trees in 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 and 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 affects the others in the row. If you do not have a Newton's Cradle, you could show this demonstration 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 low income countries, yet it's high income 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) International Children's Bible

Listen to the song [God of Justice](#) [Songwriter: Tim Hughes], 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 also available to download.

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. People are also realising more and more that everyone does not suffer the same consequences of climate change. Some people might experience some hotter or wetter weather, but their lives pretty much stay the same. At the same time, others might be experiencing floods that have swept their homes away or drought that has dried up all their water supplies.

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 the

global South 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 to not 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 Earth – 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.

Optional climate video:
Ask your newly elected MP:
Pay up for climate justice
www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZID1nDUXfo

Today, we are going to learn about someone who saw how parts of her community were affected by climate change and what she did in response.

Show slide 3:

This is Vanessa Nakate, she was born and brought up in Kampala, Uganda. In 2018 she saw how rural communities in Uganda were really suffering because of climate disasters. She learnt about young people doing climate strikes and she decided to start standing with a placard outside the Parliament building in Kampala on Sunday mornings. She wanted the Ugandan government to take action over the climate crisis. For a while she protested alone but then others joined her and she started to attract attention from politicians and media from across the world.

Show slide 4:

In an interview in 2019 she shared her motivation for climate action: ‘My country heavily depends on agriculture, therefore most of the people depend on agriculture. So, if our farms are destroyed by floods, if the farms are destroyed by droughts and crop production is less, that means that the price of food is going to go high. So, it will only be the most privileged who will be able to buy food...whereas

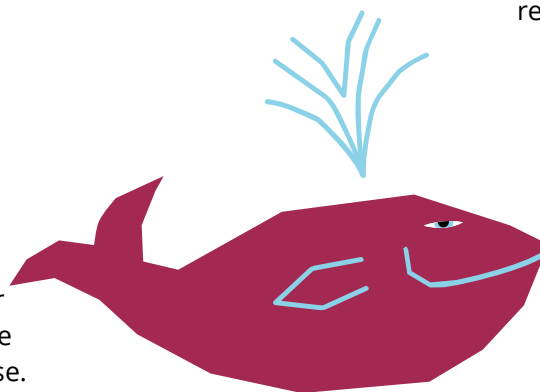
most of the people who live in villages and rural communities, they have trouble getting food because of the high prices.’

Show slide 5:

Vanessa was soon invited along with other young activists to speak at many international climate events including COP (Conference of the Parties). This is a yearly meeting of countries that have agreed to work together on climate change, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). She uses these opportunities to challenge people in power about what they are doing to do.

Show slide 6:

Also in 2019, Vanessa started the Vash Green Schools Project in Uganda. This is a project that involves installing solar panels and clean cooking stoves in rural schools. This provides schools with enough electricity to light up two classrooms and the office and show there is a sustainable way of getting electricity. Using clean cooking stoves reduces the amount of firewood needed to cook which means that fewer trees are cut down to provide this firewood. The project has reached 75 schools which impacts 20,000 children, but Vanessa is not stopping. ‘We hope to reach more schools. We hope to see even the project improve to the place of not just having stoves that reduce on firewood consumption, but actually stoves that eliminate the consumption of firewood,’ she says.



Slide 7:

In 2022, Vanessa joined Christian Aid to call on the UK Government for ‘Loss and Damage finance’ to support the communities living in poverty who were experiencing the worst effects of climate change. The petition was signed by over 150,000 people. Some of Vanessa’s friends were surprised to see and hear her speaking at important meetings and conferences in front of lots of people because she used to be shy speaking in public. Vanessa is a Christian and has shared that she feels God’s strength working through her weakness. Her faith also strongly helps her to imagine and believe that a better world is possible and able to happen. She believes that everyone has a contribution to making the world a better place. In a recent interview she said: ‘There are things that I do that another person may not be able to do, but there are things also that I’m not able to do that someone else is able to do. And when we bring those strengths

together, then it really perfects and grows the work that we are trying to do. Working in unity I believe, is a place of solidarity.'

Show slide 8:

Christian Aid also believes that working together is the best way to make changes. Many supporters of Christian Aid give their time, skills or money, some raise their voice for change and others pray. All of our work in supporting communities living in difficult situations is done through trusted local partners working together with people in the communities themselves.

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. Help us to see that we too are part of your plan for the world. 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, such as:

- 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. Keep in mind that some young people will not be able to choose if they are able to walk to school, for example. It is about encouraging thinking

what we can do in our individual situations.

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, invite children to 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.
- 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: Show The Love — The Climate Coalition
- Get involved with Creative for Climate Justice – Creative for Climate Justice | Christian Aid

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

