



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN ENGLISH CLASSES



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MISSION AND VISION



The main mission of our English curriculum is to develop students' language skills while raising them to be conscious, critical thinkers and responsible individuals regarding global issues. We shape our education process with the aim of not only providing our students with language skills but also making them aware of environmental issues worldwide and equipping them with environmental awareness.

With the integration of environmental education in English lessons, students will develop their language skills while also raising awareness on critical issues such as climate change, sustainability, environmental protection and global cooperation. In this direction, students will not only gain language skills and communication skills, but will also develop an understanding of social responsibility and take an active role in society as environmentally sensitive individuals.

Our mission is to establish a strong connection between language skills and environmental education and to raise our students not only in language but also with the awareness of responsible citizenship in a global world.

Our vision is to raise conscious and active individuals who can use the English language effectively and also have deep knowledge in the fields of environment and sustainability. Our aim is to ensure that our students not only complete the language learning process, but also become environmentally sensitive and globally responsible leaders.

Including environmentally themed content in English lessons will encourage our students to learn about environmental problems in the world, develop solutions to these problems and adopt environmentally friendly behaviors. By focusing on issues such as climate change, depletion of natural resources and protection of biodiversity, we contribute to the development of students' not only language skills but also their social responsibilities and ethical values in our lessons.

Our vision is to raise each student not only as a successful language learner but also as a global citizen who is sensitive to social and environmental problems. The main purpose of our curriculum is to equip our students as future leaders and change makers by providing them with the ability to use English with awareness and social responsibility.

OUR PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

ENVIRONMENT AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Main Goals

To provide students with in-depth knowledge about various environmental issues and to enable them to express this knowledge effectively in English.

To support the development of language skills with meaningful and up-to-date content about the environment and to raise students' awareness of sustainable development goals worldwide.

To increase students' linguistic, but also social and ethical responsibilities by providing them with skills such as critical thinking, creative problem solving and global responsibility through English courses.

To encourage students to take an active role in society by developing an environmentally sensitive management and leadership approach.

To develop cooperation and interaction skills focused on solutions to global environmental problems and to ensure that they take part in projects that will create environmental impact at an international level.

Targeted Values and Principles

Sustainability and Environmental Awareness: We believe that every individual should understand the impact they can have on the environment and strive to change this impact positively.

Global Citizenship: We aim to ensure that students have a sense of responsibility on a global scale along with their language skills.

Innovation in Education: We adopt innovative and student-centered learning approaches to increase students' interest in the environment and language teaching.

Critical and Creative Thinking: We aim for environmentally themed content to help students not only acquire knowledge but also develop their thinking and creative skills.

As a result, our environmentally themed curriculum in English aims to provide students with a language and consciousness that makes a difference worldwide. In line with our vision of raising each student as a sensitive individual regarding global issues, a socially responsible leader and a citizen who produces sustainable solutions worldwide, we create a strong foundation that combines the environment and language in education.

AN EVALUATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE IN THE CONTEXT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The global problems of the 21st century include environmental crises such as environmental pollution, climate change, biodiversity reduction and natural resource depletion. In order to overcome these crises, it is not enough for individuals to just be informed; they also need to grow up as individuals who are conscious, critical thinkers, questioners and sensitive to global issues. At this point, environmental education plays a vital role, and English lessons have become a strategic tool in providing environmental education effectively and widely.

English has become a universal communication language used in a large part of scientific publications, international environmental policies, global campaigns and media content today. In this context, students' understanding of environmental issues and their ability to express their opinions on these issues through English lessons make them not only individuals who know the language, but also global citizens who can interact with the world.

When environmental education content is integrated into English lessons, students:

- Learn concepts such as climate change, sustainability and recycling in the context of English,
- Gain the ability to access information from international sources,
- Have the opportunity to understand the approaches of different cultures and societies regarding environmental issues.

This process increases both their language skills and their environmental awareness.

Traditional English language teaching is often based on artificial dialogues and abstract themes. However, environmental education-based content allows students to establish direct connections with the environment they live in. In this way:

- Students use the words and structures they learn in meaningful contexts,
- Language use turns into 21st century skills such as expressing individual opinions, making suggestions, and solving problems,
- Students understand that learning a language is not only an academic goal but also a means of social responsibility.

Using environmentally themed texts and activities in English lessons not only helps students learn the language; it also enables them to analyze environmental problems, establish cause-effect relationships, and develop solution proposals. This process, Critical thinking: Starts with questions such as "Why is plastic pollution a global issue?", Creativity: Develops with tasks such as "Design your own eco-friendly product and present it in English", Problem solving: Provides the opportunity to develop solutions based on real-life problems. Thus, English lessons also contribute significantly to students' cognitive development.

English lessons offer opportunities such as comparing environmental practices of different countries, examining the work of global environmental organizations and participating in international campaigns. For example: Students can follow the United Nations' "Climate Action" campaigns in English, analyze global youth movements such as "Fridays for Future" within the scope of the lesson, and compare climate policies and public reactions in different countries.

Such activities allow students to look at environmental problems from a multidimensional perspective and gain global citizenship awareness.

Project-based learning activities in environmentally themed English lessons develop both academic and social skills of students. For example:

"Create a campaign to reduce plastic waste in your school"

"Prepare a podcast about climate change impacts in your region" "Write and perform a short play on saving endangered species"

With such tasks, students learn not only English but also environmental responsibility by actively experiencing it.

English lessons do not only teach language, they also raise awareness.

English lessons offer a multi-faceted learning environment in the dissemination and effectiveness of environmental education. Through this course, students become individuals who are sensitive to universal problems, gain the ability to discuss environmental issues from different perspectives, and develop sustainable living habits by blending them with English.

As a result, English is not just a foreign language acquisition; it is the carrier of environmental awareness, global responsibility, and value-based education. Therefore, environmental education should be made an integral part of English courses.

ENVIRONMENTAL THEMED ENGLISH CURRICULUM (AGES 14–18)

Unit Titles and Themes

Introduction to the Environment

Vocabulary: environment, nature, pollution, sustainability

Grammar Focus: Present Simple / There is – There are

Activities: Class survey about nature habits

Reading: “What is the Environment?” (infographic or article)

Speaking: Describe your favorite natural place

Pollution and Its Types

Vocabulary: air, water, soil, noise, light pollution

Grammar: Passive Voice (is polluted by...)

Listening: Short podcast on global pollution levels

Project: Make posters about pollution types

Writing: A letter to the mayor about a local environmental problem

Climate Change and Global Warming

Vocabulary: greenhouse gases, emissions, fossil fuels

Grammar: First Conditional / Cause and effect structures

Reading: Article – “Why is the Earth Getting Hotter?”

Debate: “Humans are responsible for climate change”

Writing: Opinion essay on climate change

Recycling and Waste Management

Vocabulary: waste, recycle, reuse, reduce, compost

Grammar: Modal verbs (should/must for advice/rules)

Activities: School recycling campaign in English

Project: Design a recycling system for your school

Writing: Instructions – “How to separate waste properly”

Ecosystems and Biodiversity

Vocabulary: habitat, species, endangered, extinction

Grammar: Relative clauses (which, that, who)

Reading: “The Amazon Rainforest” (descriptive text)

Presentation: Endangered species in your country

Creative Task: Write a short story from the view of an animal

Sustainable Living and Green Technology

Vocabulary: renewable energy, solar, wind, eco-friendly

Grammar: Future forms (will/going to)

Listening: Video – “Green Cities of the Future”

Writing: Design a green house and describe it in English

Speaking: Group discussion on sustainable habits

Environmental Activism and Famous Figures

Vocabulary: activism, protest, NGO, awareness

Grammar: Reported Speech (Greta said that...)

Reading: Biography of Greta Thunberg / Wangari Maathai

Project: Prepare a campaign for Earth Day in English

Role Play: Environmental conference simulation

Water and Energy Conservation

Vocabulary: save, conserve, drought, shortage, efficiency

Grammar: Quantifiers (much, many, a lot of, few, little)

Listening: TED-Ed video – “Why fresh water matters”

Writing: A persuasive letter to a company to save water

Speaking: Tips to save energy at home

Eco-Tourism and Environmental Travel

Vocabulary: eco-tourism, carbon footprint, low-impact

Grammar: Comparatives and Superlatives

Project: Plan an eco-tour to a local destination

Writing: Travel brochure with environmental tips

Discussion: “Should tourism be limited in natural areas?”

Your Environmental Action Plan (Final Unit)

Culminating project: Create an action plan in English

Presentation: Share with the school or online

Grammar integration of all units

Writing: Reflective journal entry

Speaking: Presenting solutions and commitments

Learning Objectives

- To develop English language skills with environmental themes
- To gain awareness of sustainable development goals
- To think critically about environmental issues and produce solutions
- To support global citizenship
- To develop collaboration, creativity and communication skills

Additional Resource Suggestions

- National Geographic Learning: “Our World” & “Look” series
- BBC Earth & TED-Ed videos (with simplified content)
- WWF & Greenpeace websites (student-friendly materials)
- Classcraft, Kahoot, Wordwall (for interactive activities)

LESSON PLAN APPLICATIONS

LESSON PLAN 1 – "Climate Change: Causes and Effects"

Duration: 2 class hours

Language Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Goal: Students will understand the causes and effects of climate change and propose solutions.

Activities:

Warm-up: KWL Chart (What I Know / What I Want to Know / What I Learned)

Reading: "The Science Behind Climate Change" (simplified article)

Vocabulary Study: Emissions, fossil fuels, global warming, deforestation

Speaking: Think-Pair-Share – "How does climate change affect your country?"

Writing: Paragraph writing – "What can we do to fight climate change?"

Materials:

National Geographic Climate Article (PDF)

KWL Chart template (PDF)

Vocabulary cards (online or printable)

LESSON PLAN 2 – "Plastic Pollution in Our Oceans"

Duration: 1 class hour

Language Skills: Listening, Writing, Speaking

Objective: Students will understand and propose solutions to plastic pollution in the oceans.

Activities:

Listening: TED-Ed Video – "What really happens to the plastic you throw away?"

Discussion: "Should plastic bags be banned?" (group discussion)

Writing: Letter to the editor – "Ban plastics in our town!"

Materials:

TED-Ed Video

Plastic pollution statistics poster

Writing template: Formal letter template

LESSON PLAN 3 – "Endangered Species Awareness"

Duration: 2 class hours

Language Skills: Reading, Speaking, Presentation

Goal: Students will gather information about endangered animals and present their information.

Activities:

Reading: "Top 5 Endangered Animals" (informational text)

Research Task: Each student chooses a species

Presentation Preparation: Poster, PowerPoint, or Canva presentation

Presentation: 2-minute short presentation

Materials:

WWF Species Page

Canva or Google Slides

Presentation evaluation form

LESSON PLAN 4 – "Green Technology and Innovation"

Duration: 1 class hour

Language Skills: Listening, Speaking, Writing

Goal: Students will learn about green technologies and design their own inventions.

Activities:

Listening: Video – "Green Inventions That Could Save the Planet"

Vocabulary: Renewable, solar, energy-efficient, biodegradable

Creative Writing: "Design a green invention" – short explanation + drawing

Presentation: Students present their ideas to the class (optional)

Materials:

Video: [BBC Reel or YouTube Green Tech Video]

Word matching game (Wordwall)

Design paper template

LESSON PLAN 5 – "Environmental Campaign Project" (Final Unit Project)

Duration: 3–4 class hours

Language Skills: Reading, Writing, Speaking, Research

Objective: Students will plan and present an environmental campaign.

Activities:

Groups are formed: Each group chooses an environmental problem (water waste, plastic, recycling, etc.)

Research and planning: Slogan, poster, action plan

Campaign Presentation: Poster presentation + speech

Feedback: Peer evaluation

Materials:

Poster template (PDF or Canva)

Slogan creation guide

Campaign presentation evaluation form

WORKSHEETS

1. Worksheet – Climate Change: Causes and Effects

Vocabulary Match

Pair:

Emissions	a) Deforestation
Fossil Fuels	b) Emission of harmful gases
Global Warming	c) Oil, coal, natural gas
Deforestation	d) Earth warming

Reading Comprehension

Read: "Climate change is caused by human activities like burning fossil fuels. This releases carbon dioxide, which traps heat in the atmosphere..."

Questions:

What causes global warming?

What is one effect of climate change?

Writing Prompt

Write a short paragraph (80–100 words):

"What can you personally do to help prevent climate change?"

2. Worksheet – Plastic Pollution in Our Oceans

Vocabulary Focus

Write the meanings of the following words in English:

Microplastics

Recycle

Garbage Patch

Marine Life

Listening Activity

Complete after listening (using information from the video):

True or False?

Most plastic ends up in the ocean.

Plastic takes less than 10 years to decompose.

Marine animals can eat plastic by mistake.

Writing Task

Write a letter to your school principal (100 words):

Ask them to reduce plastic use in the cafeteria.

3. Worksheet – Endangered Species Awareness

Reading & Matching

Match (animal – threat):

Sea turtle →

Snow leopard →

Orangutan →

polar bear →

a) Climate change

b) Habitat destruction

c) Illegal hunting

d) Deforestation

Research Notes

Research one endangered species:

Name:

Habitat:

Why endangered?

What can we do?

Creative Task

Draw and write:

Create a fact poster (Name, picture, 3 facts in English)

4. Worksheet – Green Technology and Innovation

Vocabulary Activities

Fill in the blanks in the sentences below:

_____ energy comes from the sun.

My city uses _____ buses to reduce air pollution.

We need more _____ homes in the future.

Idea Generator

Invent a green product:

Name:

What does it do?

How is it eco-friendly?

Draw your invention.

Speaking Prompt

Prepare a short pitch (2 minutes):

Sell your invention to your classmates!

5. Worksheet – Environmental Campaign Project

Brainstorming Box

Choose an issue:

Water waste Plastic use Deforestation Other: _____

Write your campaign slogan:

Group Task Sheet

Problem:

Solution:

Target Audience:

Materials Needed:

Roles in the group:

Peer Feedback (checklist)

- Clear message
- Good use of visuals
- Use of persuasive language
- Spoke clearly and confidently

THE IMPORTANCE AND EFFECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL THEMED ENGLISH LESSONS ON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

In today's world, the globalization of environmental problems has made environmental education an indispensable element for individuals of all ages. In this context, integrating a universal language such as English into environmental education is extremely effective in terms of developing not only language skills but also students' awareness and sense of responsibility towards the environment.

1. Supports Holistic Learning

Environmentally themed English lesson plans allow students to see language not only as a grammar or vocabulary memorization tool, but also as a meaningful, real-life and social tool. While students are addressing current environmental issues such as the global climate crisis, recycling, plastic pollution or biodiversity, they both learn the language and gain knowledge on these issues. This makes learning multidimensional and permanent.

2. Provides Global Awareness

English is the most widely used language in the world. Learning environmental issues in English allows students to look at global issues from a global perspective. Accessing international resources such as WWF, Greenpeace, National Geographic, comparing environmental policies in different countries, or getting to know young environmental activists around the world allows students to connect not only with their local environment but also with the entire world.

3. Develops Social Responsibility and Active Citizenship Awareness

Environmentally themed lessons, especially designed with a project-based learning approach, encourage active participation of students. Through activities such as preparing a campaign, writing a letter, and starting a recycling application in school, students put the learned information into practice and gain motivation to produce solutions to environmental problems. This supports them to become "individuals who produce and take responsibility, not consumers".

4. Encourages Critical and Creative Thinking

Environmental issues are often controversial and multidimensional. Discussions on climate change, environmental policies, or green technologies develop students' critical thinking skills. At the same time, creative activities such as designing a green invention bring students' problem-solving and innovative thinking skills to the forefront.

5. Aligned with Sustainable Development Goals

Such lesson plans directly align with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In particular, goals such as "Climate Action" (SDG 13), "Quality Education" (SDG 4) and "Responsible Production and Consumption" (SDG 12) are integrated into students' agendas with environmentally themed English lessons. In this way, students have the opportunity to understand how these universal goals can be implemented at the local level.

6. Makes Language Learning More Meaningful and Motivational

Environmental issues are emotionally meaningful to young people. Therefore, addressing these themes increases students' intrinsic motivation to learn the language. Examining the journey of a plastic bottle across the ocean or the struggle for life of an endangered tiger in English is much more striking and memorable than abstract grammar rules..

A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT ON THE INTEGRATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL THEMED CONTENT INTO THE GENERAL ENGLISH CURRICULUM

In 21st century education, not only language teaching but also the development of students as multi-faceted individuals are among the priority goals. In this context, the integration of environmentally themed content into the English curriculum is a powerful approach that can create profound effects both pedagogically and socially. Language education should not only consist of teaching grammar and vocabulary; it should also be an area where students gain awareness of the world, think critically and take action.

Teaching English in a meaningful context, one of the problems frequently encountered in general English curricula is that the content is structured on abstract topics that students cannot connect to real life. Environmentally themed topics are real-life themes that students encounter in their daily lives, are frequently exposed to through the media and can feel their impact on an individual level.

In this context, environmentally themed content:

Attracts students' attention,

Contextualizes learning,

Makes language learning functional, not just academic.

The thematic teaching model, which is frequently used in modern curriculum approaches compatible with thematic and integrative curriculum structures, greatly facilitates the integration of environmental themes. Titles such as "Global Issues", "The Natural World", "Technology and Society", "Health and Environment" are already included in many general English textbooks; however, they are mostly covered superficially.

Environmentally themed content can:

Add depth to these titles,

Can be supported with critical reading and writing skills,

Can be reinforced with oral communication studies.

Environmental topics can be applied in each of the four basic skills of English, namely reading, writing, listening and speaking. For example:

Reading: News articles, scientific reports, case studies

Writing: Informative articles, letters, petitions, project reports

Speaking: Discussions, debates, presentations

Listening: Documentary sections, speeches, podcasts

This variety provides a wealth of material that can be used flexibly in each unit in the curriculum.

Within the scope of values education and integrated learning with 21st century skills, environmental education is effective not only in terms of knowledge but also in terms of developing values and attitudes. One of the main goals of the English curriculum is for students to develop as critical, creative, cooperative and socially responsible individuals.

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Environmental themes support these skills and contribute to the curriculum as follows:

Communication and cooperation: Group projects and campaign designs

Critical thinking: Problem analysis and solution-generating activities

Creativity: Ecological product design, digital poster or video production

Ethical awareness: Consumption habits and environmental responsibilities

Another goal of English education, specifically in terms of intercultural communication and global citizenship, is to raise students not only as language-speaking individuals but also as individuals with intercultural sensitivity. Since environmental problems are global in nature, comparing practices in different countries, examining international initiatives and analyzing global campaigns allow students to:

Understand different perspectives,

Develop global citizenship awareness,

Interact with the world.

This ensures that the curriculum aligns with the principles of multiculturalism and social responsibility.

Environment-themed content can be integrated into existing curricula in different ways:

As a Full Unit: By adding a thematic unit titled "Sustainability" or "Environment"

As a Sub-Theme: Including environmental examples in existing unit content (e.g. adding "Green Technology" to the "Technology" unit)

Project-Based Approach: Students preparing environmentally themed presentations or campaigns as end-of-term projects

Voluntary Additional Content: Assigning assignments related to voluntary environmental activities that interest students

In this way, teachers can easily include environmentally themed lessons in their plans without disrupting the integrity of the curriculum.

The integration of environmentally themed content into the English curriculum is not just a teaching technique; it is an educational philosophy. This philosophy is an effort to make language teaching not only communicative, but also a meaningful, effective and responsible action.

Thanks to such integration:

Students do not only speak English, they also speak the environment.

They do not only learn grammar, they also try to understand life.

They do not only make sentences, they also develop ideas that will change the world.

In this direction, environmentally themed content leads the way in re-interpreting the general English curriculum in accordance with the needs of the age.

SUSTAINABLE EFFECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE

The 21st century is recorded as an era in which humanity is faced with one of the most complex and multi-layered environmental crises in history: climate change. Problems such as increasing greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere, rising global temperatures, destruction of ecosystems and increasing frequency of natural disasters have reached a point where they can be overcome not only with scientific or technical solutions but also with social transformation. At this point, environmental education has a key role in combating climate change, not only by creating individual awareness but also by creating collective consciousness and behavioral change.

Environmental education enables individuals to acquire scientific and critical knowledge about nature, ecosystems, climate systems and human impacts. This knowledge base is of vital importance in eliminating myths and false beliefs about climate change and in conveying scientific facts to all segments of society.

However, environmental education does not only provide information; it also creates awareness and emotional commitment. The fact that young individuals feel sad about the loss of a rainforest and worry about the effects of plastic waste on the ocean is an indication that the cognitive and affective dimensions of the education process are processed together. This awareness is one of the strongest bases for behavioral change.

Effective environmental education allows individuals to question and change their habits that directly affect their carbon footprints. Small changes reflected in daily behaviors such as energy consumption, transportation preferences, consumption habits and waste management can make significant differences on a large scale.

For example:

Providing recycling awareness reduces waste.

Preferring local and seasonal products reduces carbon emissions from agriculture.

Awareness of energy efficiency provides both economic and ecological contributions.

Environmental education supports individuals to make such behaviors a lifestyle; therefore, it creates a grassroots movement in the fight against climate change.

Environmental education is a tool that encourages social participation, not only at the individual level. Students, young people and adults become competent and conscious in seeking solutions to environmental problems through education and begin to assume social responsibility in this area.

Climate strikes, school-based environmental campaigns, local clean-up movements and digital activism examples, especially those initiated by young individuals, show that environmental education can be effective not only in the classroom but also in society as a whole.

In this sense, environmental education is a fundamental platform for democratic participation, civil society awareness and social change.

When evaluated in terms of its long-term effects, environmental education has the potential to shape the decision-makers and policy-makers of the future. Individuals who have gained environmental awareness through education will tend to evaluate the decisions they make in terms of their environmental dimensions when they become engineers, teachers, mayors, entrepreneurs or politicians in the future.

This means a long-term and structural change. In addition, thanks to environmental education, wider segments of society can better understand and support the reasons and requirements of climate policies. This increases the social legitimacy and sustainability of climate policies.

Among the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) determined within the scope of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda, environmental education is directly and indirectly related to many goals:

SDG 4: Quality Education: Environmental education supports an inclusive and egalitarian education approach that provides sustainable life skills.

SDG 13: Climate Action: It ensures that individuals are educated, prepared and solution-oriented against the climate crisis.

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production: It contributes to the establishment of consumption habits on sustainable foundations through education.

Therefore, environmental education constitutes the education leg of a systemic transformation in the fight against climate change.

Environmental Education as an Investment in the Future

Climate change is not a problem that can be overcome only with technological solutions; it requires value transformation, increased awareness and sustainable life habits. The starting point of this transformation is undoubtedly education.

Environmental education:

It enables awareness with knowledge,
Behavioral change with awareness,
Social transformation with behavior.

In this respect, environmental education is not only a guarantee for today but also for tomorrow in the fight against climate change. It is widespread at all levels, starting from schools.



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