

The Ink Bin- Assembly Notes- A Sensitive Introduction To Climate Change For Primary School Children



Introduce the assembly by asking the children if they enjoy looking at the stars at night. Discuss how the universe is so large and then explain that Earth is part of a solar system. Challenge the pupils by asking if they know how many planets are in our solar system (eight).

Explain that some scientists use the term **The Goldilocks Zone** and that we could, in fact, call Earth **The Goldilocks Planet**. The amount of energy that we get from the sun is just perfect for life. If we were nearer like Venus, we'd burn. If we were farther, like Mars, we'd freeze. We are in the "Goldilocks" zone. Not too near, not too far. It's just right.

At this point, show the pupils **a globe** and explain that we have a layer of gas around the Earth to protect us from the sun's rays (liken this to their sun cream). The layer of greenhouse gases that surrounds our planet keeps the planet from getting too warm or too cold. As long as the amount of gases in the atmosphere are in balance, we are protected from the heat of the sun and from the coldness of space.

What Causes Climate Change?

Our Earth is always going through climate change. 800 to 600 million years ago, the Earth was so cold that it was covered with ice. Every 40,000 years, the Earth changes positions and this cause climate change. The Earth is still in an Ice Age which started 2.5 million years ago!

However, over more recent years scientists have noticed that the Earth's atmosphere is heating up far quicker than it should. Ask the pupils if they have been aware of climate

change in the news (the term is now changing to be known as a Climate Emergency but this may be too sensitive for the children).

The amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is said to be the main driver of climate change. Since the beginning of the Industrial Age, we have invented and manufactured a lot of things that made us more comfortable. We've become technologically advanced. Airplanes, Cars, Ships and other vehicles, they can be found everywhere. A lot of factories sprung up to keep manufacturing the artificial things that we've come to rely on. All of this requires vast amounts of energy, and our main source of energy are fossil fuels, mainly coal.

Burning fossil fuels releases huge amounts of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, causing an imbalance in the amount of greenhouse gases – resulting to the greenhouse effect. More heat is trapped in the planet and our temperature on the surface rises. It's what they call Global Warming.

What Can We Do To Slow Down Climate Change?

We can all make changes which allow us to use less carbon dioxide. McDonalds have now introduced paper straws instead of plastic ones. Many people now choose to take a refillable water bottle out with them. People can share or walk to school or work. By recycling our household waste, we are using less raw materials from the Earth.

Introduce The Ink Bin and explain to the children that 7 out of 10 people throw their empty printer inkjet cartridges in the bin. They take up to 1000 years to decompose. The Ink Bin can send many of these for refilling within the UK (a bit like a reusable coffee cup). The rest, wherever possible, will be recycled. It is one more difference that we can make and all of the small differences add up to larger changes.

Leave the children with some action points which they can achieve to reduce, reuse and recycle both at school and at home.

All Rights Reserved Becky Baines; The Ink Bin







