

What is COP26?

Grade Levels:

Middle and High School (grades 6-12)

The lesson can be taught across grade and age levels by modifying the prompts and materials provided.

Time Needed:

One 90-minute class period, plus some additional time beforehand for providing background information.

Lesson Context/Summary:

In this stand-alone lesson, students will learn about the COP26 conference. They will take part in a simulated conference event/debate among Latin American participants, gathering data and determining country information that is pertinent to present at COP26. They will learn the importance of collaboration amongst countries, which is the backbone to COP conferences.

Common Core Standards (Grades 11-12):

Reading: Informational Texts

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.2

Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.3

Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.A

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.B

Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.D

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.2

Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.3

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

Essential Question (EQ):

What was the COP26 conference, what happened during it, and why did it take place?

Learning Objectives (LOs):

Students will be able to explain the origins, role, and impact of the COP26 conference globally, as well as the role of Latin American and Iberian countries within the conference.

Students will be able to identify the achievements and failures of the COP26 conference.

Students will be able to take part in a simulation of the COP26 conference as a participant from a Latin American or Iberian country.

Students will be able to articulate Indigenous climate activism and the issues generating collective resistance.

Key Vocabulary Terms:

Green house gasses

Cop

Negotiation

Paris Agreement

Non-binding national targets

Zero emissions

Global warming

Coal

Carbon dioxide

1.5C

Climate finance

Nature-based solutions

Learning Activities:

Before the lesson – 30min-1hour (can be extended depending on teacher preference)

As homework before the lesson students should read [The Guardian article: "What is Cop26 and Why Does it Matter? A Complete Guide"](#) and review the UK's [Cop26 Explained](#) publication paying particular attention to the main issues addressed at the summit.

Opening - 10 minutes

When students enter the classroom, ask them to answer the lesson's "Do Now" question: "*What was the COP26 conference?*"

After thinking time, students will be prompted to answer the question verbally or in writing (on paper or in the video call chat box).

The teacher will ask two students to share their answers with the class (one volunteer, one cold call).

Provide students with the learning objectives and road map for the lesson ("*What are we doing today and why is it important?*");

- *Students will be able to explain the role of Indigenous activists who attended and protested at the COP26 conferences, their demands, and the reasoning behind those demands.*
- *Students will be able to understand the central issues addressed at Cop26 and how those issues affect certain regions/populations.*
- *Students will be able to articulate the importance of countries working together to combat climate change and global warming.*

Pause for questions.

Direct Instruction and Guided Practice (I Do and We Do) - 30 minutes

Direct instruction on COP26 conference based on the article and publication assigned as homework. Project content and images presented in the UK's publication allowing for discussion and questions.

Split the class into 4 groups giving every member of each group a copy of the same article. After reading the articles, each group will discuss Indigenous concerns, participation, activism and/or demands surrounding Cop26. During group discussions, each should prepare a presentation for the class sharing what they learned in the article they were assigned.

[Combatting The Climate Crisis, Recognizing Indigenous Peoples Rights And Knowledge | International Indian Treaty Council \(iitc.org\)](#)

[Climate justice must include land rights: indigenous leaders at COP26 \(climatetracker.org\)](#)

['A continuation of colonialism': indigenous activists say their voices are missing at Cop26 | Cop26 | The Guardian](#)

[Indigenous peoples had a clear vision for Cop26, but it has not been delivered | Indigenous peoples | The Guardian \(ampproject.org\)](#)

Working in small groups students will do a guided internet search on the Latin American countries of Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, and Ecuador. They will fill in the worksheet provided for their assigned country. This research will prepare students to

act as climate witnesses and world leaders in the following Cop simulation activity (worksheet follows).

Differentiation- Students can work on this before the lesson as homework and come to class with their worksheets complete. They can work in class in any group size or individually. When working in groups students can conduct research on their own and come together with their groups to compare and share the information they find, or they can conduct research as a group.

Names:

Circle your country: Honduras / Mexico / Guatemala / Ecuador

Country Geography:

Example: This country is landlocked and mountainous. It borders X country and Y country and has one large lake that is polluted so it does not provide safe drinking water.

Climate/Natural Disasters:

Example: This country is extremely hot in summer causing all water sources to dry up. Winters have become increasingly cold with freezing temperatures most days of the

winter months. There are tropical storms in spring coming in from the Caribbean coast forcing many to evacuate. Sea level has risen X amount causing homelessness.

Population Demographics:

Example: This country has a population of XX. X percent of the population lives in poverty. Half of the population is older than 60 years. The infant mortality rate is XX%. Most people live in urban centers with less than 30% of the population living in rural areas.

Identify focus point such as sea-level rise or deforestation (there are many more depending on what issues the country faces) and outline what world leaders need to do to address the problem.

Group Work (We Do) - 40 minutes

Each group will act as both climate witnesses and world leaders. Explain to the class the role of a climate witness:

“Your role as a climate witness is to present information and recommendations around your specialist area. Your aim is to guide the world leaders to make decisions that will address your concerns... Presenting information and evidence alone does not always make people want to take action. Try not to blame or preach during your presentation, but project passion and enthusiasm for your specialist area. Your goal is not to tell world leaders off, but to make them care about your specialist area as much as you do. Think about what will make world leaders pay attention. Can you highlight the impact on the economy and the health and wellbeing of the population?”

And their role as world leaders:

“As the leaders of countries across the world, you have the power and responsibility to make big decisions that will shape how we live in the future. When deciding how your country acts, you need to ensure that the people living there today can stay healthy and happy. You also need to consider the impact of lifestyles now on the rest of the planet and on the people of the future... As world leaders you need to think about: What you need to change most urgently to address climate change. How you can make things better for people and the planet now, and in the future. How you can make your plan fair. It should benefit everyone on the planet, not just those in your own country. How you can support people or countries already affected by climate change to overcome the problems that they face now and will face in the future.”

Give each group 10 minutes to prepare their presentation as climate witnesses to their particular country they researched. They will then present an issue giving background on the country and what they identify as action points for world leaders.

The rest of the class will act as world leaders while they listen to each group’s presentation. They will then discuss possible solutions and how to implement them using the guiding question above. For easy reference project the following guiding points on the board:

- What you need to change most urgently to address climate change.
- How you can make things better for people and the planet now, and in the future.
- How you can make your plan fair. It should benefit everyone on the planet, not just those in your own country.
- How you can support people or countries already affected by climate change to overcome the problems that they face now and will face in the future.

Independent Assessment (You Do) - 10 minutes

Ask students to summarize their experience of the activity. Was it easy or difficult to come to a consensus?

Assessment [How will the educator determine students have achieved the EQ and LOs?]

Teacher will determine student mastery by assessing their responses to the assessment assignment above.

Closure - 5 minutes

At the end of class, the teacher brings the students back to ask the closing question – *What were the achievements and failures of the COP26 conference? Is it easy or difficult for governments and institutions to come to a consensus? Why or why not, and why do you think this is so?*

To close, the teacher restates the learning objectives, provides extension resources if students wish to learn more, and answers any last questions.

Lesson Materials:

Most materials are linked in the lesson plan above.

[Let's Go Zero](#) has created excellent resources on climate change for students including the Cop26 simulation activity included in this lesson plan. To expand on the lesson or for more resources including worksheets: [Our Climate Our Future - Global - Dropbox](#).

Differentiation and Modification Options [*How can this lesson be modified to reach all students?*]:

In addition to the below, see differentiation options included in the above lesson plan.

Content: see resources below and above for different forms of content.

Process: students can work individually or with a trusted partner on assignments if they prefer.

Product: students may provide their assessment work in a format that best suits them (PowerPoint, podcast, poster, writing, etc.).

Learning Environment: lesson can be provided in an in-person, virtual, or hybrid format using drawing software such as *Jamboard* or [MS Paint](#).

Extension resources: students may explore the resources provided below for extra content and evidence for their assessment work.

English Language Learners (ELLs): Vocab words defined in detail during direct instruction; can use notes in assessments; extended time.

IEPs and 504s; lesson can be modified in content, process, and product to reflect learning accommodations.

Acknowledgements:

We would like to express gratitude to all the climate activists, especially Indigenous activists whose stories inspire us and provide motivation and relevant content for our lesson plans. Additionally, we would like to thank Let's Go Zero whose Cop26 lesson plans and resources we have adapted part of this lesson from.

Resources Specific to This Lesson Plan

Additional/alternative resources for pre-lesson activities:

[United Nations: COP26: Together for our Planet](#)

[NY Times: What Is COP26? And Other Questions About the Big U.N. Climate Summit](#)

[BBC: COP26: What was agreed at the Glasgow climate conference?](#)

Additional/alternative resources about Indigenous action:

[The struggle for access to clean water in Honduras remains fraught with danger | Global Witness](#)

[Global organisations call for justice as trial for murder of indigenous leader Berta Cáceres begins | Global Witness](#)

[Global Witness demands an urgent investigation into the disappearances of members of the Garífunas community in Honduras | Global Witness](#)

Organizations fighting for climate justice in Latin America:

[Fundación Pachamama - Trabajando por un futuro sostenible](#)

[Amazon Sacred Headwaters Initiative | Permanent protection for the Amazon](#)