

**Objective:** We wanted to find out if we could implement a peer learning initiative in our school to promote the teaching and learning involved in aspects of the CC4CA Erasmus plus project.

**Year all classes Long Term Curriculum Plan.**

Topic Title	Peer learning in Climate Change Education
Lesson	Science/Literacy/Art
Topic Summary	<p>We have implemented aspects of peer education in our school in previous years e.g., in buddy reading systems and in aspects of Global Citizenship Education e.g., learning around Fair Trade and in other initiatives by NGOs. It was envisaged that this particular initiative would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer led</li> <li>• Peer organised</li> <li>• Sustainable</li> <li>• Improve all learner`s knowledge of the climate curriculum.</li> <li>• Be rewarding for peer teachers and peer learners.</li> </ul>
Climate curriculum Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils can name some human actions which are damaging the Earth</li> <li>• Pupils understand the speed at which climate change is happening</li> <li>• Pupils understand the need for action now</li> </ul>

## LESSON CASE STUDY EVIDENCE

### **The process**

#### *Data gathering*

*Initial meetings were set up with the sixth-class students and the three second class so they would be familiar with each other and would feel comfortable in speaking with them.*

*Sixth class asked all the students of the three second classes to write down (in twolthree words) or in pictures what they understood by the term “CLIMATE CHANGE”*

*They gathered the pictures and words and then analysed them. The results were as follows.*

*65/72 drew pictures of types of weather, rain, snow, hail, sunny, cloudy etc.*

*2/72 drew pictures of polar bears on ice caps.*

*5/72 drew pictures of before and after weather, rain followed by sunshine, rainbow after rain.*

*Those who wrote words followed the patterns above with the vast majority displaying a lack of knowledge about what climate change was.*

*Sixth class concluded that “They actually know very little about climate change”.*



### **What knowledge do second class need about climate change?**

After a lot of discussion about the amount of scientific knowledge that second class would need, and a lot of agreement and disagreement, we recorded emerging ideas and eliminated them as we moved on with our discourse. It was decided to distil all the ideas around what they would need to know into four basic ideas/concepts.

The earth is overheating rapidly. Carbon dioxide and methane are damaging the atmosphere. Climate change affects everyone everywhere.

We need to act fast.

How will we present these key ideas to second class?

Some wanted to do PowerPoints, but it was felt that this might be rather time consuming.

Others wanted to use picture books to tell a story. Others wanted to use a combination of YouTube videos which they liked and face to face teaching of the ideas.

We finally decided on the idea of a four-page booklet with a picture to explain each of the ideas in an informative and colourful way.

Each member of the class then produced a simple four-page book with these key ideas on it. They then designed a cover for it. We then arranged mutually agreeable times to engage in sharing these books with members of the three second classes in the school.

They engaged in discussion and explanation with the second class and second class had their responses recorded by their teachers.

### **Evaluation of the project**

The peer learning initiative was deemed to be an overall success. Following the sharing of the climate change books, second class were asked to record what climate change meant. Their pictures and words showed a much greater awareness of the realities of climate change and depicted what we can do to “help the Earth” The picture books produced by sixth class impacted their thinking and affected them in their knowledge and depiction of climate change. This is what they recorded in their pictures.

37/72 drew pictures of a world on fire, a very dry world with smoke coming out of it.

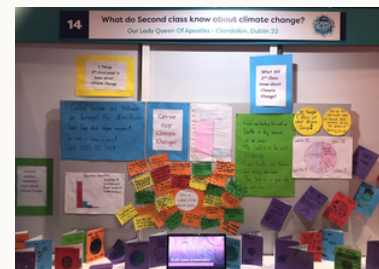
14/72 drew pictures of various forms of transport with smoke rising from them.

16/72 drew pictures of a world with polar bears and ice melting on the top and smoke arising from the bottom.

5/72 drew pictures of people recycling, separating rubbish, cycling instead of driving, walking instead of driving.

Taking a bus instead of driving.

The project was deemed to be a success.



### **Further dissemination**

Sixth class presented this project at ESB Science Blast in the RDS on 28th February 2023 with the title.

“What do second class know about climate change? They were judged on this submission and were successful and awarded a trophy.

They also presented it as a submission for the Irish Aid Our World awards on the 4th of April and have made it through to the finals on 7th June. They titled this submission “Education for future generations” and included a letter to future generations with their climate change books.

### **Recommendations**

That this project be continued and rolled out every year during Climate Action week

That the project be extended to include

- Fifth class to first class
- Fourth class to senior infants
- Third class to junior infants
- That samples of the books are produced on high quality paper and laminated for future use.

# CASE STUDY 2- OUR LADY QUEEN OF THE APOSTLES N.S IRELAND

**Objective:** Can we use the creative arts to teach children about climate activism and climate justice?  
Can we teach children to write poetry which will inspire action for climate justice?

## Year 6 Long Term Curriculum Plan.

Topic Title	Poetry for Climate Change Education
Lesson	English/Poetry writing/Art
Topic Summary	<p>How can poetry the oldest form of literature responds to the current climatic crises and provoke activism to deal with them? (Adeline Johns-Putra, 2016)</p> <p>This project was based on a personal disposition towards poetry as a pedagogy for teaching and learning about global justice issues. It is a pedagogy I have used for many years and one which I have found to be engaging with children. It is also a means by which empathy can be explored and children can see things from other perspectives.</p> <p>It had also been explored to a lesser extent in 2021/22 with a fourth class and they had achieved some success with it.</p> <p>In the context of the CC4CA project, it was a means by which children could explore other mindsets and perspectives.</p>
Climate curriculum Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils can describe their own feelings and the feelings of others about climate change</li> <li>• Pupils can feel empowered to take action for climate change</li> <li>• Pupils can raise awareness about climate change and climate action</li> <li>• Pupils can envisage solutions and articulate these</li> </ul>

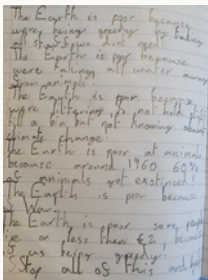
## LESSON CASE STUDY EVIDENCE

### Who will implement the project?

Having engaged with poets through Poetry Ireland and through resources made available by them, it was decided to explore this project with fourth class. The class teacher would teach a series of lessons on poetry using as diverse voices as possible as well as exploring Irish poets.

Diarmuid Fitzgerald, poet and author of “The Singing Hollow” came to the school to do a workshop with my class.

Following this, children were frequently given the choice to write a poem rather than a story or prose on a given topic as part of our literacy programme.



### Progress of the project

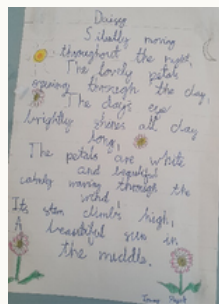
Having implemented the initial stages of the project successfully and with children becoming increasingly confident and competent in their poetry writing skills, it was decided to tailor their writing more specifically to themes suggested by the learning outcomes of the CC4CA.

We explored a number of themes.

- Human activity being the main cause of climate change.
- The urgency of the need for action.
- The destruction of the Earth including deforestation and pollution of the seas.
- Imagining a world where there was no inequality.

Each child wrote, edited, drafted, and redrafted a poem for publication by a local publisher of educational materials. They also did illustrations for their poetry.

These poems were also entered into the Irish Aid Our World awards and their entries appeared in the first edition of Irish Aid Our World Goal Getters magazine.



### Evaluation of the project

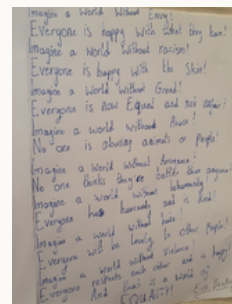
The project was deemed to be a great success with the children's work being lauded by teachers and other educators at a variety of events during the course of this project.

We collaborated with “Fighting Words”, a group ‘which encourages creativity and writing as a powerful means of self-expression’, and they published the children's work in a book called “ Climatry”

It is also hoped that their work might be published by independent publishers pending funding from the Department of Education (Education for Sustainable Development) and that the messages contained in the poems will be used to raise awareness about climate change, climate justice and climate action.

As a means of creatively and innovatively engaging with the climate curriculum, our poetry writing can be considered a successful and engaging methodology.

It is envisaged that it will be continued in the future and will be further developed as a methodology.



**Quotations about the children's poetry** which was published in a book called “Climatry” and presented to educators and other stakeholders at an event in Aras Chrónáin ( Intercultural Centre, Clondalkin) on the 21/06/2023

The book (of poetry) is a wonderful achievement, testament to the importance and validity of incorporating climate education within multiple aspects of the Primary curriculum. A testament to Paula Galvin and her inspirational pupils.

Excellent insight by young people into the issues around climate change

A great presentation which clearly explained the need for a climate curriculum

Poetry is a powerful tool to engage young people in a creative and expressive and will help to engender a spirit of activism in our young people

The children are our future. The children are so much more aware of the need to act on climate change. The future is in their hands. They are so passionate that they are leaders in teaching the older and younger generations about the impacts of climate change.