

Fighting For the Planet

On average, global temperatures have gone up almost 2°F in the last century, largely due to human activity. Everyone is affected by changes in our planet, and everyone plays a role in either contributing to or fighting climate change. This text set explores the issues facing our planet, and the people who are taking steps to help.

Essential Questions

1. Why do humans need the Earth?
2. What impact do humans have on the Earth?
3. How does climate change affect the planet? How does climate change affect individuals?
4. Whose responsibility is it to protect the planet?
5. What can be done to help fight climate change on a large or small scale?

Introduction to the Theme

Provide students with a piece of paper. Allow them time to free-write or illustrate things they know about climate change. Then read “[What is Global Warming?](#)” (TFK, August 30, 2018) as a class. Have students share their reactions to the text and compare the similarities and/or differences between what they wrote and what they read. Then discuss as a class why climate change matters.

Informational Text

These *TIME for Kids* articles can be used to discuss the theme of fighting for the planet.

1. “[United Youth](#)” (October 18, 2019) Youth activists from around the world gathered at the first-ever U.N. Youth Climate Summit this year.
2. “[Youth in Action](#)” (October 18, 2019) Read about nine kids who are playing a role in fighting the climate crisis.
3. “[The Future of Food?](#)” (August 8, 2019) Climate change could soon affect the world’s food supply, but taking action can make a difference.
4. “[Planting Seeds](#)” (July 30, 2019) Millions of people in Ethiopia planted trees to help reverse the effects of deforestation and climate change.
5. “[Call to Action](#)” (March 29, 2019) Around the world, young people are rallying to get leaders to act against climate change.
6. “[Climate in Court](#)” (April 13, 2018) In 2015, young people affected by climate change sued the federal government to take action.

Literary Text

These texts can be used to discuss the theme of fighting for the planet.

1. ***The Wump World***, by Bill Peet. The Wumps live happily in their grassy world until the Pollutians come to start a new life.
2. ***The Tantrum That Saved the World***, by Megan Herbert and Michael E. Mann. Containing both a fiction and a nonfiction section, this story follows a little girl faced with an enormous challenge, and it outlines an action plan every person can take.
3. ***The Last Wild***, by Piers Torday. This fantasy novel takes place in a world wrecked by global warming and a disease that has wiped out most animal life.
4. ***Our House Is On Fire: Greta Thunberg’s Call to Save the Planet***, by Jeanette Winter. A story about the 16-year-old activist who sparked a global movement.

Optional Extension

Based on what you read, present the idea of a “change challenge” to students, in which they choose a change they will make for the next 30 days. Start by having students write a proposal that includes what they will do, why they chose that challenge, and what they think the outcome will be. Collect these proposals until the end of the 30 days. Have students journal at least once a week, throughout the process. At the end of the 30 days, have students complete a final journal entry explaining how the challenge went, and how the outcome was similar to or different from what they predicted in their proposals.

Have volunteers share their experiences. Ask: Did others react to what you were doing? How did you feel at the beginning of the challenge? How do you feel now? Then open up a discussion about how individuals are responsible for and can have an impact on the Earth’s wellness.

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