

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

TEACHING IDEAS

The beginning of the year, whether it's the calendar or school year, often causes people to reflect on their lives and set New Year Resolutions. The following ideas can be used to help learners aged 7-14 years to reflect on their own role in their classroom, school community and as a global citizen; supporting them to decide on their own resolutions for the coming year.

An ideal future (40 mins)

- Watch Oxfam's 'We Won't Live with Poverty' video: <https://vimeo.com/140403120>
- Ask learners to discuss the following questions in pairs:
 - What was happening in the video? What did you see people doing?
 - What are the people in the video trying to change?
 - How are they trying to make a difference?
- Tell learners that in this video people are working together to end extreme poverty. Explain that living in extreme poverty means that you don't have the basic resources you need to survive; such as food, water and shelter. A person is said to be living in extreme poverty if they have less than US\$1.90 a day to cover all of their needs. Point out that in the video there are people cooking and farming, a large group of people at a rally and marathon runners. All of these are small actions which contribute to a larger movement to end extreme poverty.
- Ask learners to imagine what they would like themselves, their school, their local community or the world to be like in the future. For example, they might wish people to treat one another with more kindness.
 - What is this future like?
 - What is important?
 - What would people need to do to create this ideal future?
- Give each learner an A4 piece of paper and ask them to divide it into four. Tell learners that they can use each quadrant to draw their ideal future using pictures and words, or that they can create a collage using a mixture of drawings, writing and cut outs from magazines or newspapers. Explain that the four quadrants should represent 'me', 'my school', 'my local community' and 'my world'.
- In groups of four, ask learners to share the representations of their ideal futures.
- Invite learners to share some ideas about their ideal future. As a class, discuss whether these are things that individuals can influence or whether they need bigger groups of people to work together to make a change.



What can I do to make a difference? (30 mins)

- Give each learner a larger piece of paper and ask them to divide it into quadrants, as they did in An ideal future. Learners should then place their 'ideal future' representation in the middle of the larger piece of paper.
- In pairs, ask learners to reflect on what they are already doing as individuals to create their 'ideal future'. Explain that these can be small or bigger actions, such as buying Fairtrade products, volunteering in their local community, or being part of the school Eco-council. Use the ideas and questions in the slideshow to prompt discussion. Ask learners to write down their ideas in the quadrants of the larger piece of paper, so that each action corresponds with the quadrant of their 'ideal future' that it is most related to.
- Ask learners to discuss in pairs what other actions they could individually take to contribute to their ideal future. They should each write down these ideas in a different coloured pen in the related quadrants of their larger piece of paper.
- Ask each pair to join with another to form a group of four. Learners should share their ideas of different actions that individuals could take, before discussing the following questions:
 - How would this action make a difference?
 - Is it achievable? What would you need to do to make sure this action takes place?
- Finish by sharing learners' ideas as a whole class.

Creating New Year resolutions (20 mins)

- Organise learners into groups of three or four. Ask learners to choose their nine favourite actions from those discussed in What can I do to make a difference?. They should write each resolution on a sticky note or card.
- Ask learners to rank their ideas in a 'diamond nine' formation based on criteria such as; which actions they feel will have the most impact, which are the most important, and how easy an action might be to do.
- Full details on how to organise a 'diamond nine' ranking are provided in Oxfam's Global Citizenship in the Classroom: A guide for teachers (pg 19): www.oxfam.org.uk/education/who-we-are/global-citizenship-guides
- Allow time for learners to join with another group to discuss their rankings and identify any similarities or differences.
- Ask learners to individually select their top three resolutions to take forward for the next term or year. Ask them to write down reasons for why they have chosen each one. They could use the following key questions to help guide their thinking:
 - What is the purpose of this resolution? What will it achieve?
 - Why is the resolution important to you?
 - What impact will this resolution have?
 - How easy will this resolution be to do?

- Finally, invite learners to share some of their resolutions and the reasons for their choices with the whole class.

Class resolutions (20 mins)

- Using their ideas from *What can I do to make a difference?*, ask learners to work in pairs and pick five resolutions for the whole class to work towards.
- Ask each pair to join with another pair; between them they should have ten resolutions. Ask learners to share their resolutions and discuss why they have chosen them. In their group, learners should then agree on five resolutions for the whole class.
- Each group of four should then find another group and repeat the activity. Display the resolutions on the board and invite learners to give reasons for why they think each one is important. Their aim is to persuade the rest of the group to agree with them. Give each learner five sticky dots and explain that they represent votes. Ask learners to place their sticky dots on the board next to their favourite resolution(s). They can use as many (or as few) dots as they want on each resolution.
- The five resolutions with the most dots will be the class resolutions. Ask learners to create a classroom display so that the five resolutions are visible to all learners.

Reflecting on your resolutions (20 mins)

- This activity could be done periodically or at the end of the school year or term. It would work with both learners' individual resolutions and the whole class resolutions.
- Using their resolutions, learners should take a few minutes to reflect individually on the following questions:
 - What has gone well?
 - What could I/we do differently in the future?
- Organise learners into pairs and ask them to discuss their ideas.
- Discuss as a whole class what has gone well with the resolutions; encouraging learners to provide examples and identify what they could do differently in the future.
- Finally, support learners to create posters to show their achievements, as well as their future intentions.
 - This year I have...
 - In the future, I will...

Useful links

Oxfam has many other education resources which can help learners think about what change they want to see in the world.

- **Oxfam's Guide to Global Citizenship in the Classroom** contains tools which support learners to explore global issues, such as using issue trees and why-why-why chains.
www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship/global-citizenship-guides
- **Schools of Sanctuary** (for 11-16 year olds) helps learners to find out more about refugees and asylum seekers before considering how they can make their school a welcoming community. This resource is also available in Welsh. www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/schools-of-sanctuary
- **Making the change: Female climate change fighters** (for 11-16 year olds) uses a film narrated by poet Roger McGough to look at how women in Bolivia, Philippines, Zimbabwe and the UK have been affected by climate change, and how their communities are responding.
www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/making-the-change
- **Send My Friend to School** explores access to education around the world and supports learners to make their voice heard and share their opinions.
www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship/send-my-friend-to-school

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