

ASSEMBLY PLAN: CLIMATE CHANGE

Assembly Plan: Climate Change	
Purpose	To explore, as a learning tool, climate change: understanding facts, emotions, and responsible action: Linked themes: online misinformation, global citizenship, respectful disagreement, digital narratives about climate activism and climate denial.
Time	20–25 minutes
Materials	n/a

1. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the assembly, students will:

- Understand why climate change matters for their lives and communities.
- Recognise that people hold different perspectives and levels of concern about climate issues.
- Know how to question claims, statistics, and online narratives about climate change.
- Reflect on how they can respond respectfully to differing views.
- Know where to go for support or more information if climate-related worries feel overwhelming.

2. Starter Activity (5 minutes)

Value line:

Statement: **“Climate change is the biggest challenge facing young people today.”**

Students position themselves along the spectrum (Agree / Unsure / Disagree).

Teacher prompts:

- “Why did you choose that spot?”
 - “What might make someone stand somewhere different?”
- This sets up the idea that people respond differently to a complex global issue.

3. Core Message (1–2 clear ideas)

1. **Climate change is real and significant, but understanding it involves sorting facts from feelings, headlines, and misinformation.**
2. **People can disagree about solutions without denying the problem. Respectful, informed discussion matters.**

4. Main Content (5–10 minutes)

Option used: Short story + myth-busting + data snapshot

Short story (2 minutes): “Last summer, Aaliyah and her family experienced unexpected flooding that damaged part of their home. When she looked online for explanations, she found everything from scientific reports to posts claiming the floods were ‘fake’, or part of a political plot. She felt confused. She wanted to understand the real reasons and what she could do, but every source seemed to contradict the next.”

Pause and ask:

“What might Aaliyah be feeling? Who or what should she trust?”

Myth-busting: ‘Three claims you may have seen online’ (3 minutes)

1. **Myth:** “Climate change is just natural cycles.”
Evidence: Natural cycles exist, but global temperatures are rising far faster than historical patterns allow.
2. **Myth:** “Individual actions do nothing.”
Evidence: System-level change matters, but small actions contribute to cultural and political pressure.
3. **Myth:** “Scientists don’t agree on climate change.”
Evidence: The scientific consensus is extremely high, across countries and disciplines.

Data snapshot (1 minute):

Show a simple graph (CO₂ levels over time, or recent temperature rise).

Prompt: “This kind of data shows patterns over decades, not isolated events.”

Facilitated question (2 minutes):

“Why do good people get drawn into confusing or misleading climate narratives?”

Possible answers: fear, frustration, social media influence, desire for simple explanations, political identity, or fatigue from constant negative news.

5. Student Interaction/Reflection (5–10 minutes)

Think–Pair–Share:

Prompt: “**Why might people disagree about climate change solutions even if they agree on the problem?**”

Teacher collects a few ideas:

- Different values (economy vs. environment).
- Different experiences (urban vs. rural, global North vs. global South).
- Confusion caused by misinformation.
- Anxiety leading some people to disengage.

If time allows, students write one insight on a post-it for the board: “One thing I learned /one question I have.”

6. Safeguarding Notes

- **Potential sensitivities:** Students who have experienced flooding, heatwaves, displacement, or climate-related anxiety may be particularly affected. Students with SEND may need clear, calm explanations and reassurance.
- **Boundaries for staff to use:**
“We’re here to explore climate change calmly and safely. If anything you hear today feels upsetting, confusing, or personally worrying, please speak to your teacher, Head of Year, or our DSL.”
- **Remind students** of reporting lines for safeguarding concerns.

7. Follow-up Opportunities

- Tutor-time discussion questions:
 - How do you judge whether environmental information online is reliable?
 - What counts as a realistic personal action vs. system-level responsibility?
- PSHE/citizenship lesson: Creating a “critical climate media” guide.
- Small-group follow-up for students showing anxiety or strong interest (eco-club, sustainability projects, wellbeing check-ins).

- Link to geography or science curriculum on climate systems.

8. Suggested Closing Reflection (1 minute)

Ask students:

“What is one thing you will think differently about when you next see a climate-related story or claim online?”

Invite one or two share-outs, then close.