

UNIT 13 WILL CHILDREN SAVE THE EARTH?

UNIT OVERVIEW

In this unit, students will:

- 🎧 Listen to and read the conversation between Mrs. Gray and Mr. Wyn.
- Answer multiple-choice comprehension questions to show understanding of the story.
- 🗣️ Consider three alternative opinions about children and the environment and what they should or should not learn in school.
- Study the Opinion Network to learn expressions for different ways of expressing agreement and disagreement, and adding a short explanation.
- Extend the Topic by talking about what we can do for the environment.
- Read a Culture Corner extract about the areas on the Earth that produce the most carbon.
- Share ideas about people who have inspired them.
- Listen to a follow-up video extract from Gillian giving her views about Matthew and his mother, Mrs. Gray.
- Take the Unit Test.

Authors' Introduction

Go to impactseries.com/issues to listen to Richard's unit introduction.

The Issue

In this unit, the mother of a son in the second grade is upset by what her son is learning in school. She complains to the school principal that her son is overly concerned about global warming and other environmental problems. The discussion between the mother and the principal neatly frames the issue: Some people are really concerned about global warming and other environmental issues while others are not. Another issue is that the enthusiasm of teachers and other adults on a particular issue may inspire young people to act. Can this be a bad thing? Another question raised is, To what extent should young children be sheltered from or educated about societal problems?

Questions Raised

- Do parents have a right to control what their children learn at school? If parents are concerned about what their children are learning at school, what can they do?
- Is it a good idea for teachers to instill in their students a sense of activism? Should teachers try to get their students to change the world?
- Where do role models come from? Can teachers inspire their students?

To Keep in Mind

- In some parts of the United States, parents are very concerned about what their children learn in school. Some parents *homeschool* their children—they teach them at home—because they don't like the curriculum at the local schools. In other countries, this may not be an issue.
- The belief that children should become critical thinkers and agents of social change is cultural. In many countries, learning flows from the teacher to the students. Students are empty vessels into which knowledge and information are poured.
- Children are very open to what adults do. They often imitate them. This is especially true of teachers, as students and teachers are in close contact with each other for the better part of the school day.

TEACHING GUIDE

Getting Ready

→ Go over the two questions and then put students in pairs to discuss their answers. Make sure that students understand the terms *global warming* and *extreme weather* as these are both focal points for the entire unit.

🎧 **Teaching tip:** After the students have worked in pairs, ask volunteers for their answers. You could make two lists on the board:

- 1) Environmental problems
- 2) Things individuals can do to help the environment

You may want to refer to these lists later on in the unit. For example, you could add to Matthew's list of advice in the Extending the Topic activity.

Situation

→ Read the introduction to the story to the students. Then have them listen to the conversation between Mrs. Gray and Mr. Wyn with their books closed. Have students read the Check Your Understanding questions and have them listen to the CD a second time. Once you have gone over the answers, have them turn to the Situation page and follow along as they listen again.

🎧 **Teaching tip:** After the students have listened to the CD the first time, you could go over the words and phrases in the Glossary at the bottom of page 58. This will help them understand these vocabulary items when they hear the CD a second time.

Check Your Understanding

Answer Key

1. b 2. c 3. b 4. b

What Do You Think?

→ After you check students' understanding of the story using the comprehension questions, students discuss their opinions of what Ken, Luis, and Yeon-Suk believe. Discussion should be done in pairs.

🎧 **Teaching tip:** First, have the students listen to the CD with their books closed. Then you might want to check on the vocabulary to make sure students understand such expressions as "can make adults wake up," "extreme," and "relax." Finally, have the students listen to the CD and follow along in their books. Students decide if they agree or disagree with Ken, Luis, and Yeon-Suk.

✂ **Culture Point:** In some cultures, children are *seen and not heard*. This means that children should not express their beliefs and opinions to adults. Depending on your students' cultural background, they might think that Matthew is disrespecting his elders or that he is violating cultural norms in general.

Extending the Topic: Matthew's advice to adults

→ Have students work individually when completing Section A. Make sure they know the meaning of these words: *trash*, *politician*, and *demonstration*.

As students finish Section A, place them in pairs or small groups to compare and discuss their answers. You could refer back to your students' answers to the Getting Ready question #2 to add to Matthew's list or to see if students had already come up with the ideas on his list.

Give students plenty of time to complete Section A. The more clearly they have understood these statements and thought of their own ideas, the easier it will be for them to do Section B. To wrap up this activity, you could ask for a few volunteers to contribute their group's ideas.

Culture Corner

Have students work in pairs or groups of three. Students look at the Carbon Footprint Map. Give them an opportunity to ask about unknown terms (for example: *carbon footprint*). Then write a few questions on the board for discussion. For example: Which areas produce the most carbon? Which ones produce the least? Why? This map may be confusing for some students. Be sure to walk around and check students' understanding.

Sharing My Ideas: My inspiration

→ Choose

The topic of Sharing My Ideas shifts from environmental issues to someone who inspires you (as Matthew was inspired by Mr. Phillips). You could start this by brainstorming famous people that your students might have heard of. Put the names on the board. You could then talk about why they are famous. For the second choice, you could give some examples: a parent, a teacher, an older sibling.

→ Prepare and Rehearse

Before the students practice with a partner, go over the Language Hints. Also, you might want to help the students link 4) *What are your goals for the future?* with the person who inspired them. This question encourages students to think about how their inspiration affects their future goals.

As they rehearse, make sure that the partners are doing the Listener task. They should help each other by asking the four questions and the follow-up questions.

Go over the Presentation Tip as a class. Presenters should think of one question they would like to ask their audience (for example: Do you understand why _____ inspired me?).

Sample Presentation

I am really inspired by my Aunt Pat, my father's sister. She is special to me because she taught me how to be patient and calm. For example, one day we were cooking dinner together. She was teaching me how to make her favorite dish. I dropped a dish and it broke. Aunt Pat didn't get upset and didn't tell me I was stupid. Instead, she asked me if I was okay. Then she smiled and we cleaned up the mess. In the future, I want to be like my Aunt Pat. I want to have patience. She is a very special person.

→ Present

Have students change partners, or put them into small groups. Be sure to point out that in this unit the Listener task and the assessment guide overlap. Because the presenter may ask if there are any questions, encourage listeners to take notes during the presentations and to prepare one question for the presenters.

If you are using the assessment guide below, go over each point with the whole class before students begin their presentations. (This could also be done during the Rehearse step so that students have time to prepare for or practice each assessment point.) Be sure to remind your students that communicating their ideas is more important than using perfect English!

Assessing the Activity

Have students judge the confidence in the voice of the person speaking. Create a handout showing a checklist such as the one below, or write it on the board:

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 1 – The presenter's voice was loud enough. | Y N |
| 2 – The presenter made eye contact with the audience. | Y N |
| 3 – The presentation was long enough. | Y N |
| 4 – The presenter was easy to understand. | Y N |
| 5 – The presenter asked for questions or asked a question at the end. | Y N |

When students are working in pairs, have each student evaluate the other. If a student presents in front of the class, have each student grade him or her.

PERSONAL OPINION

→ If you have downloaded the video clip or have access to the Internet in class, play the video clip. The first time, have the students watch with books closed. Ask questions to see if the students have understood the gist of Gillian's opinion. Then have them look at the summary. See if they can fill in the missing words. Play the extract once or twice more. Then check the answers.

Answer Key

Gillian

I would say that the mother does not understand her son. He is definitely not scared. He is taking action. He has decided that he has learned about the environment in his class and he wants to take action. He wants to be an earth-friendly person. And he wants to try at home to be more earth-friendly. So he's turning off lights, he's saving electricity. He's suggesting, let's not drive the car so much because it will reduce air pollution. I think he's ahead of his time. He's only seven years old.

I think the mother ought to embrace her son because he's acting to make his earth, his environment better. Obviously, we have a big problem with air pollution and garbage, and I think we need young people to be future leaders. That's what he's doing. He's taking responsibility for the future of our planet.

Video Script

Well, I think that Mrs. Gray doesn't understand her son. He's definitely not scared. He is taking action. He has decided that he has learned about the environment in his class with Mr. Philips, and he wants to take action. He wants to be an earth-friendly person. And he wants to try at home to be more earth-friendly. He's turning lights off. He's saving electricity. He's telling his parents, he's suggesting, "Let's not drive the car so much, because it will reduce air pollution." I think he's ahead of his time. He's only seven years old.

I wish Mrs. Gray would embrace her son because he's acting to make his earth, his environment better. And I think we have a big problem with air pollution and garbage and acid rain, and I think we need young people to be future leaders, and I think that's what he's doing. He's taking responsibility for the future of our planet.

UNIT TEST

→ Make copies of the Unit Test for each student. Distribute the copies and allow about 15 minutes for the class to complete the Test. Correct the Test in class.

A. **Understanding the Situation:** The focus is on understanding the opinions and reactions of Mrs. Gray and Mr. Wyn when they are talking about Mr. Phillips and his influence on Mrs. Gray's son, Matthew.

B. **Vocabulary:** The focus is on understanding three words or phrases from the Situation or the Extending the Topic sections. Students fill in three missing words of a short paragraph that summarizes the Situation.

C. **Expressions:** The focus is on you check students' understanding of expressions or phrases from the What Do You Think? and Opinion Network sections. Students answer two multiple-choice questions.

Answer Key

A. 1. c 2. a 3. d 4. d 5. c

B. too far, damage, nonsense

C. 1. b 2. c

LINKS

If you would like the class to do additional research on the environment, here are some useful links:

Environmental issues: <http://environment.about.com/>

Some ways to clean up our world: <http://www.cleantogogether.com/?gclid=CN7c54vs9ZMCFRwbewodryMaLa>

How to recycle plastic: <http://environment.about.com/od/earthtalkcolumns/a/recycleplastics.htm>