

Coastal Connections



Philippine
Educational
Theater
Association



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We recommend you check the suitability of links before sharing with your students.

Introduction

We are delighted to share this learning resource with you, which is the culmination of an extraordinary collaboration between the Philippine Educational Theater Association, based in Manila, the Philippines, and Pilot Theatre, based in York, the United Kingdom.

PETA and Pilot are both theatre companies and arts education specialists, working with young people to inspire their creativity and to explore big ideas. Upon meeting each other's artists and teams, we observed many similarities in our work, values and practices. We also learnt that both organisations had a track record of working with young people in coastal communities: in Pilot's case, along the coastlines of North Yorkshire and East Riding of Yorkshire; and, in the case of PETA, a longstanding history of working with communities from Infanta, in the region of Quezon.

We were struck by the similarities and differences between our nations, cultures and communities – and, in particular, we noted how the concerns of young people were shared, especially regarding the impact of climate change.

We identified how climate change would impact the young people we worked with in distinct ways, and recognised that the Philippines is considered to be one of the countries most vulnerable to climate change.

The unique opportunity presented itself to collaborate on an exchange project, which would explore the impacts of climate change on young people in coastal communities, and for arts practitioners to develop creative approaches to exploring these topics in the classroom.

In February 2025, movement practitioner Ayesha Fazal and theatre director Oliver O'Shea travelled to the Philippines to work with young people in Infanta, Quezon. This was followed by Senior Artist-Teachers Ada Marie Tayao and Johnnie Moran visiting the UK in March 2025, and working with young people in Bridlington, in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

During the workshops we delivered, we tested new creative exercises and ideas, in both formal and informal learning settings, which could be replicated by teachers and group leaders with their own participants.

This learning resource presents these creative exercises, accompanied with information and questions, to enable students to explore climate change in an international context.

We are grateful to the British Council's Connections Through Culture programme for supporting this project.

petatheater.com
pilot-theatre.com

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Places

Infanta, Quezon, The Philippines

The Philippines is an archipelago of over 7,000 islands in Southeast Asia. It is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean, West Philippine Sea, and Celebes Sea. The archipelago is divided into three main island groups – Luzon in the northern part, Visayas in the middle, and Mindanao in the southern area. The Philippines is located in the Pacific typhoon belt, making it one of the most vulnerable countries to the impact of climate change.

It is not unusual for the Philippines to experience 20 typhoons every year. However, one of the significant effects of climate change is an increase in the intensity of the typhoons being experienced, which is also due to the rising sea levels worldwide.

The effect of the ferocity of the typhoons do not only cause strong rains and flooding. Its more adverse effects can be seen in the destruction of livelihood and infrastructure, especially in coastal communities, consequently impeding the economic growth of the country.

One of the coastal communities in the Philippines greatly affected by climate change is Infanta. It is a municipality located in the province of Quezon in Southern Luzon.

The municipality of Infanta has a population of almost 80,000 people. It is the largest manufacturer of lambanog, a distilled palm liquor made from fermented sap of coconut. It is commonly known as “coconut vodka” or “palm brandy”. Infanta is also known for many local delicacies such as suman sa gata, a sweet and sticky rice cake; and sinantol, a dish made of minced cotton fruit (santol) simmered in coconut cream.

Infanta is surrounded by fields, mountains, and the sea. It is both a farming and fishing community. It has a dry season from January to June, and a wet season from June to January. Weather in Infanta, despite the wet and dry seasons, is unpredictable and has been exacerbated by the shifting global climate patterns. Within a day, people in Infanta may experience extreme hot, strong rains, gusts of wind, then back to sunny skies. Unpredictable weather patterns, intense heat, and stronger typhoons, have affected both the farming and fishing livelihood in the community.



East Riding of Yorkshire, United Kingdom

Situated in the northwest of Europe, the United Kingdom is comprised of four nations: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. More than 80% of the population live in England, which is on the island of Great Britain. The United Kingdom is part of the archipelago of the British Isles, which is made-up of over 6000 islands, the largest of which is Great Britain.

The UK is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, the North Sea, the English Channel, the Celtic Sea, and the Irish Sea. There are over 7000 miles of coastline in the UK, including beaches, marshes and cliffs. The coastline is impacted by erosion, which is the natural process in which the land is worn away by the sea.

The area of coastline which is most affected by erosion is the Holderness Coast, along the region of the East Riding of Yorkshire. This coastline is considered to be one of the fast eroding coastlines in Europe, and stretches for 53 miles from Flamborough Head to Spurn Point.

The rate of erosion will increase as sea levels rise, owing to the impact of climate change. Expensive coastal management systems, such as seawalls, have been installed to protect coastal resorts along the coastline.

The East Riding of Yorkshire region has a population of around 350,000. The East Riding is a predominantly rural area with over 3000 settlements ranging from large towns to small, isolated hamlets. The largest town in the East Riding is Bridlington, which experiences high levels of deprivation.

The region has agricultural produce, such as sugar beets, cereal crops and livestock, including pigs and poultry. Extraction of North Sea gas and oil has a significant role in the economy of the region.

The area has an ageing demographic, compared with other areas of the country. It takes its name from the East Riding, a division of the historic county of Yorkshire, in the North of England.



Creative Exercises

These exercises are presented as two whole workshop plans as they were delivered in Bridlington and Infanta, but you could also select individual exercises as standalone activities or select a combination of exercises to develop your own plan.

WORKSHOP A

1. TAO, BAHAY, BAGYO (Person, House, Storm)

Duration: 10-20 minutes

Materials needed: N/A

Instructions:

1. Instruct the students to form groups of three. Ask two members in each group to create a house by raising their arms diagonally and joining hands, which creates the shape of a roof. The third member of each group stands beneath the roof, and they will be the Person inside the house.

2. Go through each game command with the students. Repeat the phrase, "person, house, storm" ("tao, bahay, bagyo") several times, selecting one of those three words as the command. For example, "person, house, storm, person, house, storm, person, house, storm... HOUSE". You may do a trial round for each command.

- PERSON command: the person swaps to a different house, the houses in each group do not move
- HOUSE command: the two people forming a house move to another person, the Person in each group does not move
- STORM command: the whole group disbands and they all form a new house with a person inside it

3. After leading a few rounds of these commands, add descriptors to the command words. These descriptors are the effects of climate change either on people, homes, or weather. You may also ask the students to give a descriptor, so that they are able to share their ideas on the effects of climate change in the world.

On the next page are some samples:

- PERSON command: person who is freezing; person who is melting from the heat
- HOUSE command: house that is being flooded; house that is blown away by strong wind
- STORM command: storm with large waves; storm but instead of rain, it is a massive heatwave.

4. You may end the activity once there has been a substantial number of climate change effects shared, or while the students are still engaged in the activity, in order to keep their interest during the discussion.

Additional Notes To The Teacher:

After the game, you may ask the following questions to the students:

- How did you feel about the game? Why?
- What descriptors were added to 'Person'? 'House'? 'Storm'? Have you experienced or observed any of these in your day-to-day life?
- What do you think is causing these changes to people, homes, and weather?



2. KUMUSTA SONG (How are You Song)

Activity Objective: To enable the students to share initial ideas on the effects of climate change (Motivation Activity).

Duration: 10-20 minutes

Materials needed: Visual aid of song lyrics

Instructions:

1. Teach the following song to the students. You may do this through call and response of small sections, using the visual aid of the lyrics as a guide. For melody reference, [this video](#) may help:
Alternatively, you can teach a rhythmic chant without a melody.

How are you?
C'mon let's have some fun
Clap your hands, clap your hands
Point to your feet
Stomp to your right
Stomp to your left
Go around, go around
Find someone new

2. After teaching the song, ask the students to find a partner. Teach actions to accompany each line, or you could ask the students to suggest movements for each line. Ensure that the action for the last line of the song is them finding a new partner.
3. Sing the song with the actions for each round of the game. In-between rounds, set one of the suggested questions for the students to talk about with their new partner. Note that the questions are structured from simple to complex.
 - one getting to know you question (i.e. What is your favourite food?)
 - one getting to know you question (i.e. What's the perfect holiday for you?)
 - What effects of climate change have you personally experienced?
 - What effects of climate change have been causing problems or concerns in your community?
 - What do you think are the effects of climate change in other parts of the world?
4. To end the game, let the students energetically perform the song one last time.

Additional Notes To The Teacher:

After the game, you may ask the following questions to the students:

- How did you feel about the game? Why?
- What did you and your partner share about the effects of climate change in your life? In your community? In the world?
- What do you think is causing these effects of climate change?

3a. WAVES APPROACHING GAME

Activity Objective: To introduce the discussion on coastal erosion and its effects on people.

Duration: 10 minutes

Materials needed: sheets of Kraft paper (approximately 90cm x 60cm) – the number of sheets will depend on the class size.

Instructions:

1. Ask the students to form a group with 5 members. You may adjust this number depending on your class size, but 5 to 6 members per group would be ideal.

2. Distribute the Kraft paper to each group and ask them to lay it on the floor. Explain to them that this piece of paper is their group's island and everyone should have space to occupy there.

3. Say the phrase, "waves approaching, waves approaching, all members of the group must [command]". The commands may be as follows:

- Put one foot on the island
- Put two feet on the island
- Put one hand on the island
- Put two elbows on the island
- Put one index finger on the island

4. You may do two to three commands before telling the class that the waves have eaten away at the island, so they have to fold their paper in half.

5. Repeat the process of giving commands and letting the students fold their paper in half. You may repeat some commands or mix it up with new ones.

6. Once the paper has been halved to quarter of its original size, give the final command that everyone must be on the island. Give the students 30 seconds to think how they will develop their own solution to this challenge.

Additional Notes To The Teacher:

- How did you feel about the game? Why?
- Which groups were able to fit on the paper? How so?
- What were the challenges that you faced for the final task? Which group found it difficult?
- How does this connect with coastal erosion? What effects of coastal erosion have you or someone you know experienced?
- Do you think it is important for young people to care about the issue of coastal erosion? Why or why not?
- How could young people here in your community help? What specific actions can young people do in their day-to-day lives?

3b. SYMBOLS OF ACTION

Activity Objective: To enable the students to discuss specific actions to mitigate the effects of climate change

Duration: 20 - 30 minutes

Materials needed: sheets of Kraft paper (approximately 90cm x 60cm) – the number of sheets will depend on the class size; colouring materials, drawing materials.

Instructions:

1. This activity can be done after the Waves Approaching Game, but it may be done independently.

2. Divide the students into groups. If coming from the Waves Approaching Game, let them stay with their existing groups.

3. Distribute the materials to each group. Task them to think of one specific action that they could personally do to address the effects of climate change, and to draw a symbol for that action on their paper. Students may already know about the different effects of climate change and how it affects the world, their communities, and their own lives, whereas others might need to undertake research. You may wish to give some examples to students to support them – for example, reducing emissions by using public transport, or reusing materials.

4. Give them 10 minutes to discuss and work on their group output. If some groups accomplish the task before others, allow them to add more details to their work.

5. Once all groups are done, gather them to listen to the sharing/ reporting of each group. You may ask further questions in order to draw out clear and doable solutions from them.

Additional Notes To The Teacher:

You may use this activity to talk about solutions to a specific effect of climate change– i.e., coastal erosion, extreme weather patterns, flooding, drought.

4. TRAVELOGUE: CLIMATE HEROES

Activity Objective: To enable the students to explore solutions to the different effects of climate change

Duration: 30 - 40 minutes

Materials needed: sheets of Kraft paper (approximately 90cm x 60cm) – the number of sheets will depend on the class size; photos of the 'climate villains'.

Instructions:

This activity is divided into two parts, the pre-exercise and the main exercise. The pre-exercise may range from 5 to 10 minutes, and the main exercise may range from 20 to 30 minutes.

Pre-Exercise

1. Ask the students to walk individually around the space.
2. Tell them to freeze and stop where they are. Instruct them to sculpt their bodies into a piece of stone. Invite them to consider what type of stone they will shape their body into (is it small or large? Pointy or smooth?)
3. Let them walk around the space again, then stop. This time, let them shape their body to become an unlit candle. Next, ask the students to show a newly lit candle; a candle that has been lit for 2 minutes, 20 minutes, 2 hours, 20 hours.

4. Let them walk around the space again, then stop. Ask them to quickly form groups of three and to shape their bodies together to become a chair or bench.

5. Staying with their trio, let them walk around the space again, then stop. Ask them to combine with another trio to become a group of six. As a group, tell them to shape their bodies into their favorite thing in a playground. Remind the students that there should be no 'person' in their pose. Everyone should be the playground item.

6. Staying with their group of six, ask them to shape their bodies into a majestic tree. Explain to the students that when they create images as a group using their bodies, this is called a 'tableaux' or 'freeze frame'

7. Lastly, still with their group of six, ask the students to pose in a family picture.

Main Exercise

1. Tell the students to imagine that this family has a range of superpowers. Let them modify their family picture accordingly. Tell the students to remember their superhero family pose, as they will return to it from time to time.
2. Give each group one to two minutes to think of a superhero family name and a tagline. Ask each group to do their pose and say their group name and tagline.
3. Distribute the Kraft paper to each group and ask them to lay it on the floor. Explain to the students that this is their headquarters and ask them to stand inside it.
4. Begin the travelogue with the following narration points:
 - There is a league of climate crisis villains called Toxic Earth Society and Company.
 - You, the superhero groups, have to defeat the main villain, The Cliff Eater, but you also have side quests to complete.
 - You are already in your first location (which is the paper they are standing on).
5. Show the photo of Floody Freddy on the next page. Tell the students that he has been wreaking havoc in communities, drowning their crops and washing away their homes. Explain to them that their task is to create

a tableaux showing how they can defeat Floody Freddy. They may add movement to their tableaux.

6. Ask each group to show their tableaux. Tell the other groups to watch each tableaux to gain insight on what other superheroes are doing.

7. Ask each group to do their pose with name and tagline. Tell them that they are now going to their next location for their next side quest. They will do this by moving to the Kraft paper of the group to their right.



8. Continue the travelogue with the following narration points:

- As you were travelling, The Cliff Eater attacked and ate away half of the headquarters.
- You now have to fold your paper in half and stand on your new smaller headquarters to receive your next mission.

9. Show the photo of The Twins: Hot 'n Cold.

Tell the students they have been making the weather very hot, then very cold.

Explain to them that their task is to create a tableaux showing how The Twins have been affecting people, and what people have been doing to cope with these sudden temperature shifts. They may add movements and sound to their tableaux.



10. Ask each group to show their tableaux. Tell the other groups to watch each tableaux to gain insight on what the other superheroes are doing.

11. Ask each group to do their pose with name and tagline. Tell them that they are now going to their final location for their next side quest. They will do this by moving to the Kraft paper of the group to their right.

12. Continue the travelogue with the following narration points:

- As you were travelling, The Cliff Eater attacked and ate away half of the headquarters.
- You now have to fold your paper in half and stand on your new smaller headquarters to receive your next mission.

13. Tell the students that this is the final mission and that they are ready to face The Cliff Eater. Show the photo of The Cliff Eater.

Tell the students that The Cliff Eater has been eating away at the land that we live and work in, and has affected not just people, but even animals and plants.

Explain to them that their task is to create a tableaux depicting the following elements: (1) how The Cliff Eater attacks the land, and (2) how the people on the land become The Cliff Eater's victims, or conquerors (their choice). They may add movements and sound to their tableaux.



14. Ask each group to show their tableaux. Tell the other groups to watch each tableaux to gain insight on what other superheroes are doing.

15. Ask each group to do their pose with name and tagline one last time.

16. Wrap-up the activity with a discussion:

- How did you feel when you were superheroes? Did you feel that you could do anything to defeat the 'climate villains'?
- How did you feel about returning to yourselves?
- Which did you prefer? Why?
- Do you think that even without superpowers, we can still do something to address the 'climate villains' that we experience?
- What are the small things we can all do individually?

Additional Notes To The Teacher:

- You may change the items in the pre-exercise as deemed necessary.
- You may modify the ‘climate villains’ to make it more specific to your community’s context.
- Should there be time constraint in your class, after the pre-exercise, you may choose to focus on only one ‘climate villain’.

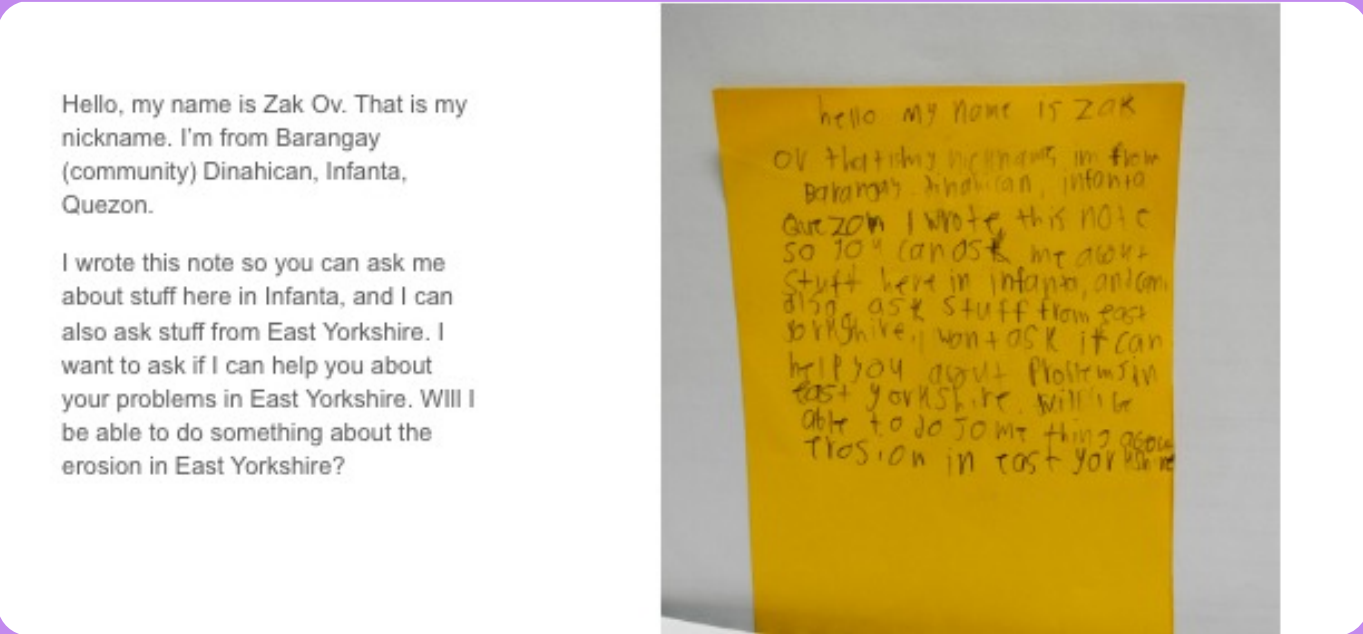
5a. LETTER-WRITING: CLIMATE HEROES

Activity Objective: To enable the students to articulate personal commitments with action points to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Duration: 10 - 20 minutes **Materials needed:** paper for each student, writing materials, drawing materials

Instructions:

1. This activity can be done towards the end of the workshop on climate change and its effects. In your class discussions on the topic, make sure to show students photos or videos of how climate change is affecting young people in other places around the world.
2. You may also show this letter from Infanta, Philippines, which was created during the Coastal Connections project:



Highlight that this is a young person from Infanta, Quezon in the Philippines expressing concern for young people in another part of the world. Emphasise that thinking of specific actions to mitigate climate change is not just about one’s own immediate community, but of the whole world.

3. Ask the participants to reflect on whether they can also do something that will positively impact the lives of young people in other countries. Remind them that these do not have to be grand gestures, and can be everyday actions.
4. Give the students time to work on their letter. Give the following format:
 - I am (NAME)
 - I am from (PLACE)
 - ACTION THEY WILL UNDERTAKE
5. If there is still time left, allow a number of volunteers to share their letters.

Additional Notes To The Teacher:

- These letters could form a school exhibit.
- If the school has partner schools from other places, you may also use this as a letter exchange programme on how young people from different places come together to think of ways to mitigate the effects of climate change.

5b. SHARING OF LETTERS - COASTAL CONNECTIONS

Activity Objective: To provide students with a space to share their thoughts

Duration: 10 - 20 minutes **Materials needed:** visual aid of their own community, and the community they wrote letters to (can just be paper cut-outs); students’ own letters (written during the previous activity); sound system for music playback

Instructions:

1. This may be the concluding part of the Letter-Writing activity, or continued and done in the next class session.

2. Ask the participants to form groups of 5 or 6. If the students already have existing groupings, you may use this.
3. Place the visual aids in the centre of the room. Explain to the students that in the world, we are all connected by coasts, by water.
4. Ask each group to think of a movement that represents water, which also incorporates their letter.
5. Once they have chosen their movement, play some music. Instruct each group, one by one, to travel to the centre of the room while doing their movement, then place their letters in the centre.
6. Once all groups are done, gather the students around the 'installation' of their letters. Ask them what they think of it and what it means in relation to climate justice.
7. If there is still time left, allow a number of volunteers to share their letters.

Additional Notes To The Teacher:

You may also ask each group to choose a word or phrase to say while putting down their letter on the installation. This word or phrase may be something striking in one of the letters among their group, or a common message among their letters.

WORKSHOP B

1. Agree/Disagree

Activity Objective: To gain an understanding of different perspectives on climate change issues

Duration: 10-20 minutes

Materials needed: N/A

Instructions:

1. Ask students to imagine that there is an invisible line, running across the length of the room. The wall at one end of the line represents 'Strongly Agree', and the opposite wall, at the other end of the line, represents 'Strongly Disagree'. The imaginary line represents a spectrum of opinions ranging from 'Strongly Agree' and 'Strongly Disagree', with 'Neither agree nor disagree' in the middle of the line. By positioning yourself on the line, you can express an opinion in relation to a statement.

2. To begin, you can choose a statement which is likely to generate a lively response from the students – you can tailor these to your group. For example, 'Adobo is the national dish of the Philippines'. Give the students 30 seconds to each decide where on the line they would like to position themselves.

3. Invite some students to share why they have positioned themselves where they have, ensuring that a range of opinions are heard.

4. You can now move onto statements specifically relating to climate change, each time inviting students to share the reasons for their position on the line in relation to these statements. The statements can be tailored to your group:

- 'Taking care of our coastline is worth doing'
- 'Nothing I do will make an impact on climate change.'
- 'Taking care of the environment should be a priority of the government'
- 'Kaliwa Dam should not be built'

Additional Notes To The Teacher:

- Ensure that students are respectful of each other's views and listen to each other's opinions
- You can shorten or lengthen this exercise depending on how much discussion each statement generates
- This exercise can also help you gauge the level of understanding and interest your group has towards action towards climate change

2. Objects of Infanta

Activity Objective: To develop an appreciation of place, community and identity; to encourage self-expression; to develop confidence in movement.

Duration: 10-30 minutes

Materials needed: Objects belonging to the participants; music and sound system.

Instructions:

In advance of the session, invite students to bring a belonging which is important to them, and represents something important about their experience of life in their area.

1: Each participant should be holding their belonging, and the group should be seated in a circle.

2: With suitable music playing (calm and slow tempo), invite one student to travel to the centre of the circle, and place their object on the floor in the middle. Students should be encouraged to move in a creative way, exploring how they and their object 'travel' through space, and how the object is placed on the floor with care. Their movement should be intentional, and they could explore levels with their body (high / middle / low). Their movement could be abstract or could represent how their object is typically used.

3: Once a participant has placed their object in the centre, they select the next person in the circle, by tapping their shoulder. The exercise continues until everyone has placed their object in the centre.

4: With the music turned off, ask each student to tell you why the object represents something important about their experience of life in their area. This could take the format of: 'My object is _____. It is important to me because _____'

5. At the end of the exercise, reflect on how these objects collectively tell the story of this place and community. Invite the students to consider how their area could be impacted as a result of climate change.

Additional Notes To The Teacher:

- Ensure that you have a long music track so the music does not cut out during the exercise
- If a student has forgotten to bring their object, encourage them to improvise using a belonging they have with them, or alternatively which they can borrow from the classroom.
- It is helpful if you also bring an object with you and demonstrate how you might move with the object into the centre of the circle.

3. Devising from Images

Activity Objective: To develop an understanding of the impacts of climate change on communities

Duration: 20-30 minutes

Materials needed: Photos as devising stimuli

Instructions:

1. As preparation for the workshop, you should research and select some photos which show the impact of climate change on communities. Examples could include: flooded homes, typhoons destroying buildings, flooded agricultural crops, collapsed roads / homes owing to coastal erosion, blocked roads and such like. Avoid photos which would be distressing for young people.
2. Present each of the photos to the participants and ensure that they understand what is being depicted in the image
3. Divide the class into groups of around six, and give each of the groups one of the images. Invite each of the groups to devise their own mini performance, inspired by the image. The performance could take any form: for example, a series of tableaux / freeze-frames; a television news report; movement piece; and dialogue scene.
4. Ask each group to share back their performance with the rest of the groups, and invite the students to reflect on the performances they have seen

Additional Notes To The Teacher:

- You could choose to give students a particular performance style, such as movement or television news report, or you could let them decide for themselves
- Although the subject matter is serious, you can advise the students that their performances can be playful and humorous

4. Movement Exploration

Activity Objective: To gain an understanding of the impact of climate change for humans and the natural world; and to develop confidence in movement.

Duration: 20-30 minutes

Materials needed: Music and sound system.

Instructions:

1. After a thorough physical warm-up and general movement exploration, line students up on one side of the room. Invite the students to cross the space, embodying each of the four elements:

- Water
- Fire
- Earth
- Air

2. Divide the participants into two groups. Each group selects three words for the other group, inspired by the themes, discussions and topics explored so far. For example, 'destruction, justice, and nature' or 'hazard, darkness and peace' These words are written on sheets of paper and handed to the other group.

3. One group creates an audience and the other group performs. Using the three words as a stimulus, the group improvises a movement sequence inspired by these words, with music playing underneath. After their improvisation, invite the group watching the performance to share what they observed. The other group then performs their improvisation, with the first group becoming an audience, as above.

4. Establish the next set of improvisations, with one group watching and the other performing. This time, one group will represent the impact of climate change on the natural world. And the other group will represent the impact of climate change on humans. They can incorporate their own sounds into the performance too.

5. Once each group has performed, now combine the two groups into one, and ask them to collectively improvise the impact of climate change on humans, and also on the natural world, by combining their two improvised performances.

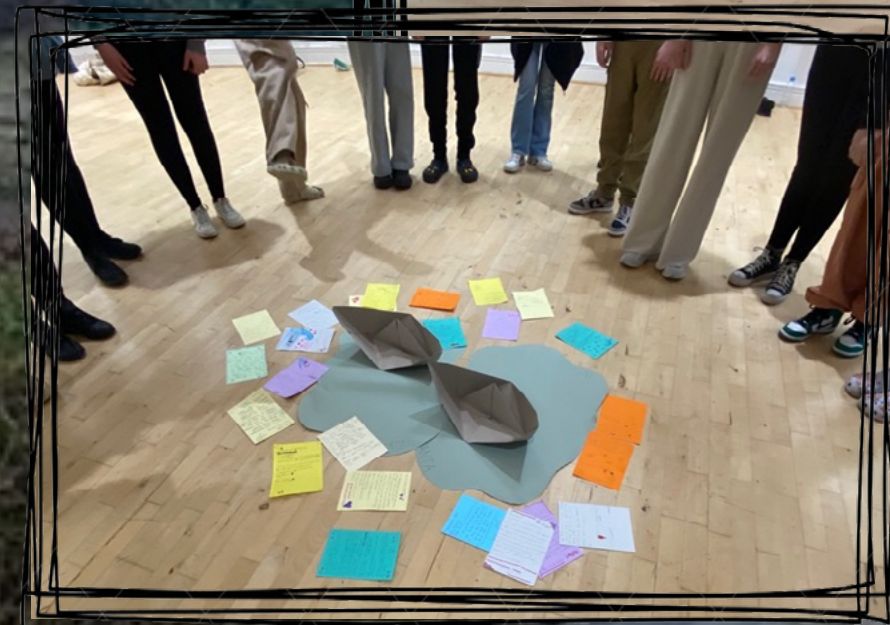
Additional Notes To The Teacher:

- Choose a range of suitable music for the exercises, supporting students to embrace expressive movement.
- If you have access to some light fabrics or cloths, the participants could use these in the group movement improvisations.
- The students could also use objects in the group improvisations

Photos

Photos from our workshops and exchange in Bridlington, East Riding of Yorkshire and Infanta, Quezon.

Bridlington



Infanta



Credits

Learning resource written by Oliver O'Shea and Ada Marie Tayao

Learning resource designed by Sam Johnson

Photos by Ayesha Fazal, Johnnie Moran, Oliver O'Shea, Ada Marie Tayao, Athina Tirones

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