

Tool 4.1

Exploring futures through art

CLARITY Competence Area:

Opening up to diverse climate-resilient and regenerative futures

GreenComp Competence Area:

Envisioning sustainable futures

Why use this tool?

The world we live in today first existed in the imagination. The cities we live in, the smartphones we hold in our hands, the eco-villages we created... were first a vision, science-fiction, or a dream in people's minds. Numerous artists and designers have explored and experimented with different visions of the future at all times. They venture into different possible futures, without being limited by what the world looks like today. Expanding imagination is essential to bring to life a more climate-resilient and regenerative world, while fostering joy and excitement when working on addressing climate change impacts.

Activity 4.1.3

Exploring parallel worlds

Overview

In this activity, learners are invited to explore how a parallel climate-resilient world might look and function. Learners will have the opportunity to experience, describe, and engage in storytelling about this parallel world, and consider what strengths and skills they possess and can use in this world. The fact that we are not asking learners to consider a 'future world' can free their imagination and creativity. This activity is inspired by a tool developed by former teacher Wolfgang Brunner.

Curriculum linkage

Language & Literature, Civics & Social Studies and Natural Sciences.

Competences built

Imagination, exploratory thinking, perspective-taking and active hope.

Prep Work

See below.

This activity can be used in relation to tool 3.5 and especially activity 3.5.3. "Finding your ikigai" – as it can support learners in exploring their meaning and purpose in relation to the future worlds they may want to help shape on planet Earth.

Steps in the activity

1. Preparation
2. Exploring parallel worlds



BASIC INFO

Age range:

12+

Duration:

A set of 2-3 40-minute lessons

Group size:

Flexible

Level of difficulty:

Intermediate

Materials/space required:

Invitation Card(s), whiteboard and/or large piece of paper, markers, art supplies (as needed)

Location:

Indoors

Engagement of external stakeholders:

No



Step 1: Preparation

Print or make an adaptation of the following prompt. You may choose to turn this into invitation card(s), or to display it somewhere for the entire class:

"You have been cordially invited by the Planetary Council to participate in a brand-new learner exchange and storytelling program! Your task is to create a story that reflects your lived experience on planet _____, a climate-resilient planet that has achieved a sustainable balance between humans and nature.

As you do so, we would like you to carefully imagine, explore and describe the planet, with particular consideration given to both the climate and the climate between beings. These stories will be collected and displayed in a showcase of stories about life on parallel worlds."

Step 2: Exploring parallel worlds

1. Introduce learners to the concept of parallel worlds. Explain to them that parallel worlds are worlds and existences that we can imagine as having developed alongside – or parallel – to our own. Many novels and films take place in parallel worlds, and learners might have already 'daydreamed' about parallel worlds. Encourage questions, sharing, and curiosity on the topic.
2. Present the invitation/prompt from Step 1: Preparation, and explain the structure of the activity. More specifically, tell learners that during this activity, they will imagine a parallel world where, instead of living on the earth, they are now living on a climate-resilient planet that has achieved a sustainable balance between humans and nature, which they themselves will conceptualize.
 - a. In case the learners are not familiar with the concept of *climate resilience*, it is important to explain it to them before they engage in the storytelling exercise. Feel free to provide as much or as little information about climate resilience before the exercise as you wish, since this exercise can also serve to discuss climate resilience in more details throughout the session.
3. Let the learners know that their task is to convey their experience within this parallel world through storytelling. This storytelling can be done through



written word, song, art, or any other medium that is possible within the classroom. The focus for this activity should be more on learners conveying their experience within the parallel world through storytelling, and less on the specifics of how that world works.

4. Allow learners as much time as they need to envision their experience of this parallel world. Then, allow time for learners to craft their stories. They may craft their stories individually, or after group discussions. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to portray their experience. As they craft their stories, encourage learners to be as creative as they wish with their storytelling. Some things they can consider for inspiration:
 - a. What do you do in this parallel world?
 - b. How do you live in this parallel world?
 - c. What are your strengths in this parallel world? How do you use your strengths?
 - d. How does this world work? How do you feel about it?
 - e. What are your connections and relationships in this world?
 - f. What are the values that matter to you?
5. When learners have finished crafting their stories, invite them to share their stories with the class. Encourage curiosity and self-reflection at this stage. Some questions you can ask them to reflect on:
 - a. How did this activity make you feel?
 - b. What does it reveal about your perspective?
 - c. Were there any similarities or differences you noticed between your experience in this parallel world and your experience here on Earth?

Dos and don'ts



Do

Do use this as a stepping stone for a longer learning journey - exploring how amazing the Earth can seem if you look at it as a spaceship travelling through space.

Don't:

Don't expect your learners to be experts in resilience from the start, the activity is about exploring and imagination. And sometimes what seems to be ridiculous suggestions for a long lasting resilient life might be expressed. In those cases keep asking questions and you will have started the process. Sometimes the most important thing is to ask the question.



Adaptations:

- Some learners might find it difficult to conceptualize a parallel world, as it relies heavily on imagination. A different and more hands-on option is to create a biosphere together with the learners, and encourage them to imagine they are tiny creatures and/or humans living within that biosphere. To get inspiration to create a biosphere take a look [here](#).
- We invite you to adapt this activity to the specific needs of your learners, including by taking into account their neurodiversity. When adapting tools and activities for neurodivergent learners, please note it is not about treating others how *you* want to be treated, but how *they* want to be treated. Ask, listen, and stay open to different ways of learning and engaging.

References

This activity is adapted from the [Re-Imaginary resources](#) by One Resilient Earth.

- Finnegan, W. (2022). 'It's beautiful, living without fear that the world will end soon' – digital storytelling, climate futures, and young people in the UK and Ireland. *Children's Geographies*, 21(5), 898–913. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2022.2153329>
- Glaw, X., Inder, K., Kable, A., & Hazelton, M. (2017). Visual Methodologies in Qualitative Research: Autophotography and Photo Elicitation Applied to Mental Health Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917748215>



A biosphere.

Picture by Andy Faeth, Pixabay



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