

**Tool 4.2**

Growing Futures Literacy

CLARITY Competence Area:

Opening up to diverse climate-resilient and regenerative futures

GreenComp Competence Area:

Envisioning sustainable futures

Why use this tool?

Futures Literacy and future thinking are rarely taught in schools and teacher training, although it is critical to discussing climate change, sustainability, resilience, regeneration, and transformation. Futures Literacy provides critical information and competences to reflect on our use of “the” future and make better-informed decisions in the present. It is not about creating a desirable vision of the future and defining steps to get there. Futures Literacy is about exploring how our different visions of the futures reveal what matters to us in the present and values we can embody today more courageously.

Activity 4.2.1

Envisioning the most beautiful future

Overview

A simple exercise can be to imagine the most beautiful climate-resilient and regenerative future individually, and represent it (e.g. text, collage, drawing) before sharing it and reflecting with a group. The teacher can ask questions to help learners identify their assumptions and biases about the future, building on convergences and divergences between future visions. This activity can also help learners reflect on what they can learn from this beautiful future and do differently in the present.

Curriculum linkage

Arts, Language & Literature and Civics & Social Studies.

Competences built

Imagination, exploratory thinking and active hope.

Prep Work

- Select images or multimedia material that could be evocative of a beautiful future for inspiration.
- Have learners select images or material that is evocative of the most beautiful future for them.

Levels in the activity

1. Exploration

2. Project



BASIC INFO

Age range:

6+

Duration:

45-60 min. to a longer term project

Group size:

Flexible

Level of difficulty:

Basic

Materials/space required:

Writing/drawing materials or material to do collages and sculptures

Location:

Flexible

Engagement of external stakeholders:

Not necessarily. A local artist could be engaged.



Level 1: Exploration

1. The activity can be done individually or in small groups. Decide between one or the other.
2. If you would like your learners to only consider climate-resilient and regenerative futures, you may need to give a few pointers now. However, you can also let the learners represent any future they find beautiful.
3. Invite each learner to take a few minutes to reflect on the most beautiful future they would like to experience. Invite learners to reflect on how the future would look for them, for their community, for the local ecosystem and for the Earth ecosystem. Their visions can focus on the scale they feel most comfortable with. The future they imagine can be in a decade or as distant in time as they wish. You can share some images or multimedia material for inspiration if you wish.
4. Invite learners to materialize their vision of the most beautiful future either through a written description or through drawings, collages, or sculptures.
5. Invite learners who feel called to do so to show their visions of the future to the other learners, and describe what they are most excited about in their vision, and/or what would inspire them to turn this vision into reality.
6. Invite learners to reflect on the visions of other learners by focusing on what they did not expect, had not thought about and on what makes them excited.
7. Invite learners to reflect on how it makes them feel to explore a beautiful, dream-like future and whether it gives them energy to take action.
8. If you choose to let learners explore any beautiful future, without a specific connection to climate resilience and regeneration, you can take a moment to reflect on the values that underlie some of their futures and could be relevant to climate resilience and regeneration. You can also suggest revisiting their images of the future, or do the exercise again after they have learnt more about climate-resilience and regeneration.

Level 2: Project

1. Turn the exploratory activity into an individual or group project that can span a few weeks or months. In that case, learners need to focus on visions of the future that contribute to a more climate-resilient and regenerative world.
2. You can focus the project on a specific topic or area when learners have more time to prepare. This could mean focusing the project on the most beautiful future of their city or village, the most beautiful future of their school, the most

beautiful future of energy, the most beautiful future of relationships between animals, plants, fungi and humans...

3. Encourage learners to research existing arts, design, science, Indigenous Peoples' practices, existing grassroots projects... to gain inspiration for the design of their most beautiful worlds.
4. Offer learners to work on a joint vision that emerges from the most exciting elements of individual or group visions.
5. Invite older learners to explore the ecological, social and economic costs and benefits associated with their visions of the most beautiful worlds, as compared with the costs and benefits of today's structures and systems.
6. Encourage older learners to reflect on the levers of action they can activate now to materialize certain dimensions or components of their visions of the most beautiful world. What are the low-hanging fruits? What is likely to require deeper cultural change?



Dos and don'ts

Do

- Encourage imagination and creativity, even if the visions are not plausible, probable or implementable.
- Encourage learners to ask questions and be curious about each other's visions, including by reflecting on some projects, buildings, and art they know and think could be of interest to the creators of a specific vision.

Don't:

- Don't compare or grade the visions.
- Don't encourage learners to criticize each other's visions.

Adaptations:

- Depending on the resources available, offer learners the opportunity to use a variety of means and art forms to materialize their visions.
- The exploratory level of this activity can be integrated into a Futures Literacy Lab 4.2.2) when exploring desirable futures, particularly if the Futures Literacy Lab is done over several days.
- 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

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- Nalau, J., & Cobb, G. (2022). The strengths and weaknesses of future visioning approaches for climate change adaptation: A review. *Global Environmental Change*, 74, 102527. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2022.102527>
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