

Climate change and the importance of our environment

Stage 1 Teacher Lesson Plan

Early Stage 1 - Stage 1 students will hear the story: *Horton Hears a Who!* By Dr. Seuss and will be encouraged to reflect on their own environment and the importance of caring for it.



What does UNICEF do?

UNICEF works around the world to help children and young people reach their full potential by providing access to clean water, lifesaving vaccines, quality education and health care. We ensure every child is safe and protected from harm and we're always there during times of emergency.

UNICEF and Climate Change

Climate change is causing more extreme and regular weather events, like droughts, bushfires and floods. Climate change impacts all children's rights, especially the right to clean water and air, healthy food and a safe environment to live in.

We're there for children and young people impacted by climate change, providing emergency supplies when a disaster strikes, designing programs to tackle air pollution and urging decision makers to create change.

Children and young people have been calling for action on climate change and it's important we listen to their hopes for the future of our planet. In Australia, we have worked with the Young and Resilient Research Centre at Western Sydney University to hear from children and young people on what changes they need to see to limit the impact of climate change and to thrive in their communities.

Our climate change school resources will help teachers continue these important conversations with their students and to hear their views.



Alignment to Curriculum

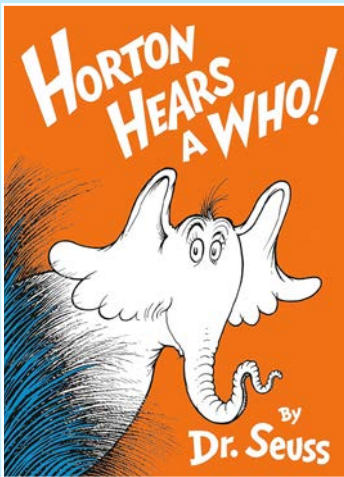
	NSW Curriculum	Australian Curriculum Version 9
Target Audience:	Early Stage 1 – Stage 1	Foundation, Years 1 and 2.
Syllabus Area:	Visual Arts	Visual Arts
Sub-topic:	Appreciating	Presenting and Performing
Syllabus Outcomes / Content Descriptors	<p>A student in Early Stage 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates their ideas about pictures and other kinds of artworks VAES1.4. <p>A student in Stage 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begins to interpret the meaning of artworks, acknowledging the roles of artist and audience VAS1.4. 	<p>Foundation students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share their art works with audiences AC9AVAFP01. <p>Years 1 and 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share artworks and/or visual arts practice in informal settings AC9AVA2P01.
Links to General Capabilities	<p>Literacy:</p> <p>Speaking and listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interacting <p>Personal and Social capability:</p> <p>Social management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication 	
Learning Intention:	<p>We are learning how to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice communicating our thoughts, ideas, and feelings about an artwork or short story. 	
Success Criteria:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can use my imagination to create something unique. I can explain what my artwork or short story means to me. 	

Activity Overview

The class teacher reads the story: Horton Hears a Who! By Dr. Seuss. Students then address the questions and activities at the end of this document. These questions and activities will help Early Stage 1 – Stage 1 students understand the story's message and encourage them to reflect on their own environment and the importance of caring for it.

Activity 1

Horton Hears a Who! by Dr. Seuss



Objective

Listening to a book allows children to ask questions, make predictions, and draw inferences, which are important critical thinking skills.

Materials

The book Horton Hears a Who! by Dr. Seuss

Procedure

Start the lesson by showing the students the front and back cover of the book and asking;

- What do you think the book is going to be about?
- What makes you think this book is going to be interesting?
- Does the book remind you of anything else you've already read or seen?
- What kind of characters do you think will be in the book?
- What do you think is going to happen?
- How does the cover make you feel?
- Who do you see on the cover?

Activity 2

Read Horton Hears a Who! by Dr. Seuss to the class

Activity 3

Horton Hears a Who! Class Discussion

Use the following questions and prompts to inspire a class discussion:

- ① Who is Horton the elephant in the story? What is his special ability?
- ② What do the people of Whoville need to do so that they can be heard by others?
- ③ How did Horton show that he cared about the tiny people of Whoville?
- ④ Why is it important to listen to others and help them, even if they are very small?
- ⑤ Can you think of a time when you helped someone or something in your environment, like a pet, a plant, or a friend?

Write student responses to the following questions (6 and 7) on a whiteboard or screen so the whole class can view them (depending on year level and reading ability). Student responses will be used for inspiration for the Art and Storytelling Activity.

- ⑥ What do you think is important in your environment, like your home, your school, or your neighbourhood?
- ⑦ How can we take care of our environment and make it a better place for everyone?

Art and Storytelling Activity

These activities are designed to engage and educate young students about their environment while developing their artistic and storytelling skills. They encourage students to connect with and express their care for the world around them, fostering a sense of environmental stewardship from an early age.

Activity 1 Drawing Something Special in Your Environment

Objective

To encourage young students to observe and appreciate their environment by drawing something they care about.

Materials

Students might surprise you with the level of their creativity. If possible, offer a variety of supplies in your classroom such as upcycle (reuse discarded objects or materials) materials including;

- Old newspapers
- Yarn / string
- Buttons
- Egg cartons
- Drawing paper or sketchbooks
- Coloured pencils, crayons, or markers

Procedure

Begin by discussing the concept of the environment with the students, emphasising that it includes everything around us, like nature, animals, and our surroundings.

Ask each student to think about something in their environment that they really care about or find special. It could be a favourite tree, a pet, a flower, a playground, or any place or thing that has meaning to them.

Distribute art/drawing materials and instruct the students to draw a picture of that special thing in their environment.

Encourage them to use colours and details to make their drawings as expressive as possible.

After completing their drawings, have students share their pictures with the class. Ask them to explain why they chose to draw that particular thing and what makes it special to them.

Assessment

Assess the students' ability to express themselves through their drawings.

Evaluate their ability to articulate why they care about the chosen aspect of their environment.

Activity 2 Telling a Short Story About Something Special

Objective

To promote storytelling and communication skills while fostering a sense of care for the environment.

Materials

- Blank sheets of paper
- Crayons or markers
- An audio recording can be completed using voice memos on iPads or other recording devices.

Optional

Storytelling props (e.g., small toys, puppets)

Procedure:

Begin by discussing the importance of storytelling and how stories can help us express our feelings and ideas.

Encourage each student to think about the special thing they care about in their environment (from Activity 1) and come up with a short story about it.

Provide the students with blank sheets of paper and crayons or markers to illustrate their stories. They can use drawings, symbols, or even simple sentences.

Once the stories and illustrations are complete, have the students take turns sharing their stories with the class. You can also invite them to use storytelling props if available.

After each student shares their story, encourage the class to ask questions or offer positive feedback.

Example of feedback prompts for students:

- I enjoyed your story because...
- The best part about your work is...
- The example you chose was awesome because...
- I absolutely love the way...sounds when I read it aloud because...

Assessment:

Assess the students' ability to create and tell a simple story.

Evaluate their capacity to express their feelings and attachment to something in their environment through storytelling.

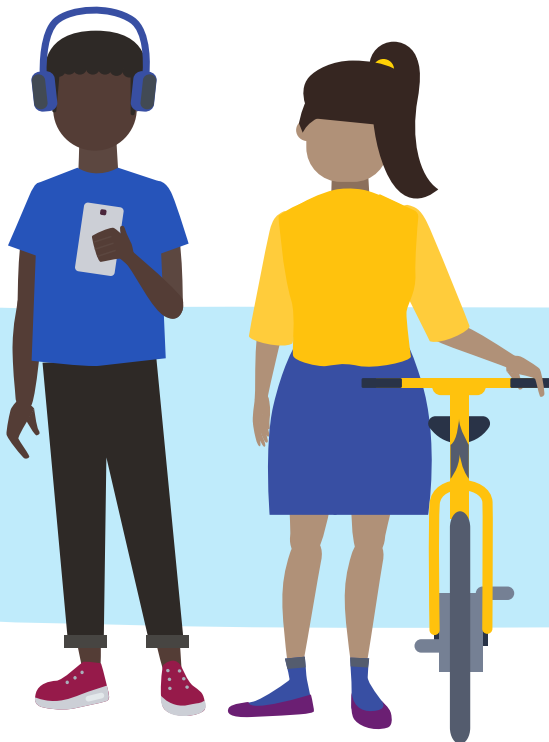
Share student voice

Students share their artwork or short story. Teacher decides on an appropriate audience and ways to share their artworks; for example, sharing with the class a work-in-progress or posting their work on a school learning management system to allow their families to see and appreciate it.



Share with us!

We would love to see your student's work from these activities as hearing and seeing young people's views on climate change is very powerful in the work we do when urging decision makers to create change. Simply scan or take pictures of your student's work and email them, along with your name, class and school to **submit@unicef.org.au** Thank you!



More Teacher Resources and Lesson plans are available on UNICEF Australia's website [unicef.org.au/teacher-resources](https://www.unicef.org.au/teacher-resources)