

Embracing Sustainable Development Goals (with Free Resources)

What are the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals?



The UN created these 17 Sustainable Development Goals (also known as Global Goals or SDGs) in 2015 to raise awareness about these important issues.

How can Curriculum Pathways help teachers and students address these goals?

Before students are able to directly tackle the challenges outlined in the 17 Global Goals, they need to build content and skill-related knowledge. Whether you are working to create a global focus in your curriculum or designing a specific PBL or IBL activity for your students, Curriculum Pathways provides both academic content and the skill-based resources you need.

Think of the 17 Global Goals as scaffolding to help students find greater relevance and meaningful applications for their learning. Challenge students to examine scientific concepts, patterns of human injustice, or data analysis skills in a global context. Global goals provide the opportunity to extend the challenges and successes experienced in a local project to similar components found in global issues.

Check out the free Curriculum Pathways resources that provide academic connections to Global Goals for science, math, English, Spanish, and social studies.

GOAL 1: No Poverty

Economic Systems

Identify characteristics of the four economic systems and compare how decisions about production are made under each system; consider how each system impacts issues associated with poverty. (SS 6-12)

Johnson's "Great Society" Speech

Read the primary-source text and listen to the 1964 audio recording of Lyndon B. Johnson's famous declaration of a war on poverty. (SS 6-12)

African GDP/Life Expectancy Map

Create a map that identifies African countries along with their GDPs and life expectancies, and recognize the potential effects of GDP on life expectancy. (SS 6-12)

Stories of the Migrant Experience

Read and analyze "Cajas de carton," by Francisco Jiménez, a short story about a family of migrant farm workers. (Spanish 9-12)

Exploring King's "I Have a Dream" Speech

Explore how events, character, and language motivate individuals and inspire change. (English 9-12)

Reading "The Circuit," by Francisco Jiménez

Create maps and view photographs to learn about migrant farming in California. (English 9-12)

GOAL 2: Zero Hunger

Genetically-modified Foods

Explore the benefits and risks associated with the application of biotechnology and genetic engineering to create genetically-modified foods. (Sci 9-12)

Food Chains and Biological Magnification

Investigate the food chain, track energy loss from the ecosystem, and consider implications on global food sources. (Sci 6-12)

Energy Flow in Ecosystems

Investigate how energy flows through a food chain and consider the implications on global food sources. (Sci 6-8)

Age of Exploration: The Columbian Exchange

Research the effects of the Columbian Exchange, examining how trade impacts societies and the implications for current global exchanges. (SS 6-12)

Photosynthesis

Identify how energy from the sun is captured by plants and converted into food, and consider the importance of this process in the global food supply. (Sci K-5)

GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being

The Human Body: Diseases

Explore the tools necessary to research the symptoms of a hypothetical patient, and consider the implications for global health. (Sci 6-12)

Lab: Simulating Disease Transmission

Explore the mechanisms by which pathogens ensure their survival through a simulation of disease transmission. (Sci 9-12)

Genetic Research & Molecular Medicine

Research the Human Genome Project, its relevance for molecular medicine, and its impact on global health and well-being. (Sci 9-12)

Viruses

Explore viruses, how they infect the body and the implications for global health and well-being. (Sci 6-8)

The Immune System

Explore the body's mechanisms for fighting disease and the implications for global health. (Sci 6-8)

The Kingdom Protista

Compare the characteristics of representative protists to assess the impact protists have on humans and the implications for global health. (Sci 6-12)

Symbiotic Relationships

Examine symbiotic relationships involving plants, animals, and humans to consider the implications for global health. (Sci 6-12)

Medieval Europe: Bubonic Plague

Investigate the physical and psychological effects of the 14th-century outbreak of the bubonic plague and the implications for current and future disease outbreaks. (SS 6-12)

1918 Pandemic: Global Reach of the Spanish Influenza

Identify the global impact of the 1918 pandemic, and create an annotated map explaining the pandemic's impact across the globe. (SS 6-12)

Formal & Familiar Commands

Identify the use and form of regular, familiar, and formal commands using health-related scenarios. (Spanish 6-12)

GOAL 4: Quality Education

Analyzing High School Graduate Data

Analyze high school graduation data and its possible effects on annual wages and juvenile arrests. (Math 6-12)

The Native American Reeducation Movement

Research the government's attempt to assimilate Native Americans through education programs at the turn of the 20th century and the impact of this movement on Native American children and culture. (SS 6-12)

Morrill Act

Explore the 1862 Morrill Act, which laid the foundation for a national system of state colleges and universities. (SS 6-12)

GOAL 5: Gender Equality

Voting Rights for Women

Explore gender inequality in the U.S. voting laws (1868-1920) to answer the focus question: Why did it take so long for women to get the right to vote? (SS 6-12)

Woman Suffrage

Explore excerpts from an article Susan B. Anthony wrote in 1897 advocating for a constitutional amendment giving women the right to vote. (SS 6-12)

Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

Explore the Nineteenth Amendment passed in 1920, finally granting women the right to vote. (SS 6-12)

Rigoberta Menchú

Research the life and work of Maya social activist Rigoberta Menchú, the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner, who rose from poverty and adversity in Guatemala. (Spanish 9-12)

The Influence of the Declaration of Independence on Stanton's Declaration of Sentiments

Explore Elizabeth Cady Stanton's decision to model her statement of women's rights, the Declaration of Sentiments, on Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence. (English 9-12)

GOAL 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

Earth's Water

Use data to evaluate which regions suffer from water shortages, and create a plan for sustainable use. (Sci 6-12)

Water Budgets: Calculations & Graphs

Investigate the effects of precipitation and evapotranspiration rates on the water balance for a given geographic location, and consider the implications for water sustainability issues. (Sci 9-12)

VLab: Stream Ecology

Investigate how pollutants affect a stream's temperature and oxygen levels and consider the implications for water sustainability issues. (Sci 6-12)

GOAL 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

Electric Power & Energy Efficiency

Investigate how electric power costs and energy efficiency impact purchasing decisions. (Sci 9-12)

Natural Resources: Petroleum

Research processes of petroleum formation and consider options for prolonging the world's use of oil. (Sci 9-12)

Analyzing Carbon-Based & Alternative Fuels

Explore the characteristics of carbon-based and alternative fuels through an analysis of composition, thermal value, and emissions. (Sci 9-12)

Nuclear Power: The Pros & Cons

Research the risks and benefits of nuclear power and consider implications for affordable and clean energy needs. (Sci 9-12)

OPEC Oil Embargo

Explore the powerful oil cartel that created an economic crisis in the 1970s and compare it to energy challenges faced across the world today. (SS 6-12)

GOAL 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Stories of the Migrant Experience

Read and analyze "Cajas de carton," by Francisco Jiménez, a short story about a family of migrant farm workers. (Spanish 9-12)

Economic Systems

Identify characteristics of the four economic systems and compare how decisions about production are made under each system; consider how each system impacts issues associated with poverty. (SS 6-12)

The 1894 Pullman Strike

Simulate the positions of company owners, union members, and government officials involved in the Pullman Palace Car Company 1894 to better understand conflicts in labor disputes. (SS 6-12)

Gandhi and the Partition of India

Explore demands for Indian independence and the potential for conflict between Hindus and Muslims in the 1947 debate over the partitioning of India. (SS 6-12)

GOAL 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure

Industrial Revolution: Inventions

Identify inventions that played an integral part in the Industrial Revolution and consider the impact of recent technological innovations. (SS 6-12)

The Progressive Era: The Standard Oil Monopoly

Explore the history and business practices of John D. Rockefeller and the Standard Oil Company in the 1900s and consider parallels in today's global economy. (SS 6-12)

GOAL 10: Reduced Inequalities

The World Trade Organization

Explore the concept of globalization and examine the mission, policies, and criticisms of the World Trade Organization to evaluate the organization's impact. (SS 6-12)

French Revolution: Third Estate

Identify the importance of the Third Estate in pre-revolutionary France and compare this historical issue with global challenges today. (SS 6-12)

Enlightenment Philosophers

Explore which Enlightenment philosopher expressed the most democratic ideas and apply these historical ideologies to global challenges today. (SS 6-12)

A More Perfect Union

Explore primary-source text and audio from then presidential candidate Barack Obama's speech on U.S. race relations in 2008. (SS 6-12)

Writing a Short Story

Examine short stories, by Gregorio López y Fuentes and Juan Rulfo, as inspiration for your own short story on the theme of personal struggles. (Spanish 9-12)

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Voting Rights for Women

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Gandhi and the Partition of India

Explore demands for Indian independence and the potential for conflict between Hindus and Muslims in the debate over the partitioning of India in 1947. As students take a position

and defend it with evidence from primary-source documents, they can compare this historical issue with global challenges today. (SS 6-12)

GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Social Values in More's Utopia

Investigate ideal visions of community by comparing selections from Thomas More's Utopia and The Rule of Benedict, a 6th-century document outlining the rules of a monastic life. (English 6-12)

Crop Recommendations

Research climate and plants to recommend crops that would allow a community to contribute to its own dietary needs, to feed a small dairy herd, and to sell products. (Sci 9-12)

VLab: Stream Ecology

Investigate how pollutants affect a stream's temperature and oxygen levels and consider the implications for water sustainability issues. (Sci 6-12)

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GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

The Amazon Rainforest

Explore the relationship between rainforests and climate change. (SS 6-12)

Mapping the Amazon Rainforest

Investigate specific features of the Amazon Rainforest, and make a map identifying its location and importance. (SS 6-12)

VLab: Carbon Cycle

Investigate the carbon cycle so that you can identify the major pools of carbon in the earth's crust, oceans, and atmosphere. Then consider human activities that affect the distribution and flow of carbon among the various pools. (Sci 6-12)

Wild Wool

Explore John Muir's Wild Wool article published in 1875. It explores his belief that nature should not be the victim of human ambitions. (SS 6-12)

Theme and Purpose in Science Fiction

Use the unreal in science fiction to explore real questions about technology, the future, and human nature. (English 6-12)

GOAL 13: Climate Action

Forecasting Earth's Future

Research current geological trends to help forecast the earth's future. (Sci 9-12)

VLab: Carbon Cycle

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VLab: Seasons

Investigate earth's motions and discover what causes earth's seasons. (Sci 6-8)

The Amazon Rainforest

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Mapping the Amazon Rainforest

Investigate specific features of the Amazon Rainforest, and make a map identifying its location and importance. (SS 6-12)

Sahara Desert

Explore how deserts impact the earth's climate. (SS 6-12)

Mapping the Sahara Desert

Identify characteristics of deserts, investigate specific features of the Sahara Desert, and make an annotated map identifying its changing size. (SS 6-12)

El Tiempo

Intended for beginning-level students, this lesson emphasizes the use of weather vocabulary and expressions in Spanish. (Spanish K-12)

GOAL 14: Life Below Water

Analyzing Commercial Fishing Catches

Analyze and compare data on how commercial fishing affects shark, tuna, and cod populations. (Sci K-8)

Causes & Effects of Ocean Currents

Examine the causes of the ocean's vertical and horizontal currents and their effects on the global circulation pattern. (Sci 9-12)

Impact of Ocean & Landmass Distributions

Investigate the impact that ocean and landmass distributions have upon geological, climatological, biological, and sociological processes. (Sci 9-12)

GOAL 15: Life on Land

Earth's Geological & Biological History

Investigate the major geological and biological events in the earth's history. (Sci 9-12)

VLab: Geologic Time

Investigate patterns to determine the relative and absolute ages of trees. (Sci 6-12)

Charles Darwin and Evolution by Natural Selection

Learn about the British scientist Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution. (Sci 6-8)

VLab: Modern Taxonomy

Examine animal traits to determine evolutionary relationships. (Sci 9-12)

Plant Evolution

Learn how plants changed as they moved from water environments to land; identify the structural adaptations plants made to improve survival and reproductive success. (Sci 6-8)

Hardy-Weinberg Equilibrium: Mechanisms for Evolutionary Change

Explore the process of evolution by examining the Hardy-Weinberg law of genetic equilibrium. (Sci 9-12)

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GOAL 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address

Read the primary-source text and listen to the audio recording of John F. Kennedy's speech addressing tensions over civil rights and other challenges facing the U.S. in 1961. (SS 6-12)

The World Trade Organization

Explore the concept of globalization and examine the mission, policies, and criticisms of the World Trade Organization to evaluate the organization's impact. (SS 6-12)

End of the Cold War

Learn about the Cold War's impact on the Soviet Union and compare this historical issue with global challenges today. (SS 6-12)

The Middle East: Suez Crisis

Explore European involvement in the Middle East and the role of the United Nations. As students take a position and defend it with evidence from primary-source documents, they can compare these historical issues with global challenges today. (SS 6-12)

Imperialism: Scramble for Africa

Explore the impact of 19th-century imperialism on native populations and relate your findings to global injustices today. (SS 6-12)

Exploring King's "I Have a Dream" Speech

Explore how events, character, and language motivate individuals and inspire change. (English 9-12)

Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points

Explore Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points written in 1918 to outline the ideals first identified in the Paris Peace Conference negotiating the end of World War I. (SS 6-12)

GOAL 17: Partnerships to Achieve the Goal

Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points

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The World Trade Organization

Explore the concept of globalization and examine the mission, policies, and criticisms of the World Trade Organization to evaluate the organization's impact. (SS 6-12)

NAFTA: Free Trade and the American Economy

Explore the history and controversy behind the creation of a free trade zone between the United States, Mexico, and Canada. As students take a position and defend it with evidence from primary-source documents, they can compare this historical issue with global challenges today. (SS 6-12)