

Video 24

Climate Conference Day

What is the next step?

After the demonstration on Friday, you return to school on Monday. Do you continue with the same old classes, and the same simplistic, outdated textbook which does *not* address the Big Questions?

Or do you—*you*, the students—create a new form of education?

Consider a **Climate Conference Day**, when ten students make 15-minute presentations about various aspects of climate change, in the morning. After lunch, ten students speak about clean energy in all its forms, about clean energy economics, clean energy laws, and about the new spirit of the 21st Century, in the afternoon.

All of the students help with the research. They divide into 20 groups, share their research and help to write the 15-minute presentation. Each group chooses the speaker who will address the audience in the school auditorium.

Invite your community to join the conference for a full day on Saturday. *Actively* invite them, not just with posters, but with phone calls and personal visits to various businesses, farms, and factories. You will speak about *their* future as well as your own.

On the day of the conference, you must *speak* to your audience. Do not just talk fast with a low voice. Speak with a strong, clear voice, pronouncing every word as if you *care* about every word. You need to grab people in the back row of the audience and shake them by the shoulders.

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But how do you do your own research?

First, consider that if you *don't* do your own research, politicians and business people can lie to you, and can hide from you information which they do not want you to know. The oil companies and their paid politicians lied to us for decades. Your job, as The First Global Generation in Human History, is to *do your own research*.

Second, you are taking charge of your own education. *You* are deciding what you want to learn about. *You* are building a network of colleagues with whom you

will continue to learn for many years. *You* are building the foundation for the rest of your life in the 21st Century.

Even if your school library has limited resources, the internet can provide you with almost limitless information, if you keep searching. If your subject is the *Arctic ice cap*, or *wildfires*, or *hurricanes*, or *drought*, or *climate refugees*, Google your subject, then Google **images**, so that you can look at pictures of your subject. Enlarge some of the pictures to full-screen size, so that you can really look at them. Stare with your eyes and feel with your heart as you look at each picture: your presentation at the conference must be based on *your response* to your subject. First comes your passion, then come the facts and statistics which fill out your presentation.

Read a Wikipedia article, then look at the sources at the bottom for further leads. Click on the links, read the articles, look for great quotes which you can use. Be sure to document your sources so that you can find them again, and so that you can give them credit for the information which you are borrowing from them.

Look for good images, charts and graphs which you can show on a screen during your presentation. Make sure that the text can be easily read by people in the audience; often the text is too small.

After you and your fellow students have written your presentation, practice speaking to an audience of fellow students, with a strong, clear voice. You have fifteen minutes; use your time well.

On the day of your conference, one chosen student will introduce each of the speakers (and will keep track of time limits). This Host or Hostess will make sure that everything runs smoothly throughout the day.

Be sure to move beyond just facts and charts to the **Big Questions**: Should we drill for oil in the Arctic? Are we ready to take care of a hundred thousand climate refugees? By what date—2030, 2030, 2050?—do we need to reach 100% clean energy around the world? How do we make sure that *all people* can benefit from the prosperity created by clean energy?

Before the conference, make a list of the Big Questions. Then be sure that each one is discussed in the course of the day.

Provide time for questions from the audience. The best time may be at the end of the morning presentations (before lunch), and then following the afternoon presentations. The Host or Hostess should lead the question and answer session, *repeating the questions* if necessary so that everyone can hear them.

At the end of your triumphant Climate Conference Day, you can celebrate. You have made an enormous contribution to education in your school, and in your community.

Climate Conference Day should become an annual tradition in every school around the world. Once you learn how to do the research, that skill will serve you well for the rest of your life.

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I would like to recommend a novel to you, **Melting at One End, Bleeding at the Other**, which is available to you as an ebook at no cost on this website.

In the final third of the story, the students at the small school in the fishing village of Henningsvær, in the Lofoten Islands above the Arctic Circle in northern Norway, organize a Climate Conference Day for their community. Old white-haired fishermen listen to the young students as they talk about climate change in the northern seas. The students are sometimes nervous as they make their presentations, but they have prepared well and the day is a magnificent success.

Don't forget to talk with the fishermen themselves as you do your research. And with the farmers and the doctors and the business people, and the grandmothers and grandfathers in your community.

Share the spirit . . . of the Renaissance of the 21st Century.

Thank you.

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John Slade

March 23, 2019.

