

Cambridge Assessment
English

B2 First for Schools: Environment poster lesson plan and activities

This lesson plan and two extra activities are designed for use with the B2 First for Schools Environment poster.

Cambridge
English Qualifications

B2 First
for Schools

Environment



*"I thought I couldn't
make a difference
because I was small"*
Greta Thunberg

Lesson plan

Procedure

Time required:

- 60 minutes

Materials required:

- Student worksheet
- Language summary 1 and 2

Aims:

By the end of the lesson the students will have:

- reviewed conditional forms
- reviewed useful phrasal verbs related to the environment
- discussed problems and solutions for environmental issues.

Warm-up (5 minutes)

'I thought I couldn't make a difference because I was small.' Greta Thunberg

Draw students' attention to this quote from the poster.

Ask students to discuss these questions in pairs:

- a) Do you know who Greta Thunberg is and how she made a difference?
- b) Do you think it is difficult for young people to make a difference in the world? Why/Why not?

Elicit feedback and check understanding of *environmental activist*.

More information about Greta Thunberg can be found [here](#).

Options for socially distanced classrooms

Give students time to think and note down their ideas individually before nominating students to share their answers with the class.

Focus on vocabulary 1

Student worksheet Exercise 1 (5 minutes)

Ask the students to talk about the pictures in pairs using the questions on the worksheet as prompts. Then elicit feedback as a whole class.

Exam strategy: Encourage students to compare the pictures as they would in Part 2 of the B2 First for Schools Speaking test. Remind them of useful phrases to do this e.g. *the first picture / all of the pictures show/s x is more serious/likely in this country, x is the most common/unlikely, etc.*

Possible answers to Question 1: global warming, ice melting in the Arctic, deforestation, drought, pollution, plastic waste, endangered species.

Use the second and third questions as an opportunity to feed in any useful vocabulary students need to talk about environmental problems in the community or your country.

Options for socially distanced classrooms

Students work individually to write down as many environmental problems as they can in 2 minutes using the pictures as prompts. Give a point for each correct idea and 2 points if they come up with an idea that no one else thought of.

Discuss the last question as a class. Try the following strategies to increase the chances of a lively discussion:

- invite students to react and respond to each other's ideas
- ensure all students participate
- prompt with ideas to get students started if necessary
- ask for examples and justifications
- reflect on the success of the class discussion with the class.

Focus on vocabulary 2

Student worksheet Exercise 2 (10 minutes)

Students read the statements in Exercise 2. To focus them on the context, ask if the statements relate to any of the pictures.

Students then fill the gaps in the sentences. They must change the form of some of the verbs to do this.

Elicit feedback (see [Answer key](#)).

Additional clarification: You could also check that students understand the difference between *die* and *die out*, make them aware of the phrasal verbs which are separable, and model and drill pronunciation to highlight features of connected speech – see [Language summary 1](#).

Options for socially distanced classrooms

If you have access to mini whiteboards, ask students to write their answers and hold them up. You can also use up A4 scrap paper that's blank on one side for this.

Display the [Answer key](#) to Exercise 2 instead of nominating students in open class.

Focus on grammar – Conditional forms

Student worksheet Exercises 3 and 4 (10 minutes)

In Exercise 3 students work in pairs to match the statements to one of the four options.

Feedback (see [Answer key](#)).

Students complete Exercise 4 to focus their attention on the form of the different 'if' structures.

Compare answers with a partner and elicit feedback (see [Answer key](#)).

Options for socially distanced classrooms

The teacher works through each statement on the board by eliciting answers from students.

The form could also be highlighted to students on the board or using a slide.

Practice 1

Student worksheet Exercise 5 (10 minutes)

Students complete the sentences in Exercise 5 with their own ideas to practise the different forms of the conditional.

Students compare and discuss their answers with a partner.

Exam strategy: To encourage more interaction the teacher could provide some useful language to help the students react to each other's statements e.g. *I agree and I also think ..., I'm not sure I agree but ...*

Options for socially distanced classrooms

Identify and nominate a student who you feel has the confidence to lead the discussion in open class to make the activity more student-centred.

Practice 2

Student worksheet Exercise 6 (20 minutes)

Put the students into small groups. Give them time to discuss and make notes on their ideas.

Feedback – Students present their ideas to the class and vote on which group they think has the best idea.

To round off the lesson, highlight good examples of conditional use on the board as well as any common errors for students to correct.

Options for socially distanced classrooms

Brainstorm ideas as a class – list them on the board under the headings of problems/solutions.

Give students time to choose the problems they think are most important and prepare a short summary of their ideas to share with the class.

Homework

This homework task could be set BEFORE teaching the above lesson – it provides useful inspiration for the final speaking task.

In this [TED Talk video](#)¹, entitled 'Our campaign to ban plastic bags in Bali', the young speakers share how they made a difference by tackling an environmental problem in their community. Watch and listen. Write down your answers to the following questions in your notebook:

1. What inspired sisters Melati and Isabel to start their campaign?
2. What four things did they learn during their campaign?

Exam strategy: Predict possible answers to each question before you listen.

Student worksheet

Focus on vocabulary 1

1. Discuss the questions below:

- Which environmental problems do the pictures show?
- How many more environmental problems can you think of?
- Which problems affect your country/your local community?



Focus on vocabulary 2

2. Read the statements from an environmental activist below. Use the correct form of the phrasal verbs in the boxes to fill the gaps.

- | | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|---------|------------|-------------|
| take part in | run out of | die out | chop down | |
| wipe out | cut down on | dry up | dispose of | freeze over |

- Example:** a) If logging companies chop down rainforests, some native species will be wiped out.
- b) Many lakes could _____ if global warming caused more droughts.
- c) A lot of animal, insect and plant species wouldn't have _____ if we had acted sooner.
- d) If we don't stand up for change, we will eventually _____ time to reverse global warming.
- e) If we all _____ a protest, the government would probably change its environmental policy.
- f) If some parts of the Arctic had stayed _____ all year round, polar bears wouldn't be struggling to survive now.
- g) If we _____ waste and find better ways to _____ it, this helps the environment.

Focus on grammar

3. Which of the statements b–g in Exercise 2 suggest the speaker thinks the situation is:

- likely (a)
- less likely
- too late to change
- a fact?

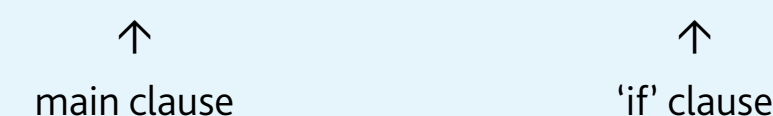
4. Look at the example in the box below. Now underline the 'if' clause in statements c) to g) in Exercise 2.

- Which verb form is used in the 'if' clause?
- Which verb form is used in the main clause?
- Which sentences need a comma?

Example

could (or would) + infinitive simple past

b) Many lakes **could** dry up if global warming **caused** more droughts



Practice 1

5. Complete the sentences with your own ideas then discuss your answers with a partner. Try to use some of the phrasal verbs from Exercise 2.

- If we hadn't invented cars, ...
- If I was responsible for the environmental laws in my town/city, I would ...
- If the temperature became much hotter/colder in my country, people would ...
- People would have to ... if fossil fuels ran out.
- If people cut down on ...

Practice 2

6. Work with your group and look back at the problems you spoke about in Exercise 1.

- Choose one problem.
- Brainstorm what you could do to address your chosen environmental problem.
- Consider possible results of different actions. For example, 'If we get enough people together, we could ...', 'If we persuaded someone famous to support us, it might ...'.
- Make notes and get ready to present your ideas to the class.

Language summary

Language summary 1: Phrasal verbs

Phrasal verbs	Definitions ³ and examples
chop down (separable) /ˌtʃɒp ˈdaʊn/	<i>to cut through something to make it fall down</i> Examples: They have chopped all of the trees down ./They have chopped down all of the trees.
cut down on /ˌkʌt ˈdaʊn ɒn/	<i>to reduce the size, amount or number of something</i> Example: We need to cut down on our use of plastic bags.
die out /ˌdaɪ ˈaʊt/	<i>to become more and more rare and then disappear completely</i> Example: Many animals will die out if we don't act soon.
dispose of /dɪ ˈspəʊz əv/	<i>to get rid of something, especially by throwing it away</i> Example: It's a real challenge to dispose of all of our rubbish.
dry up (separable) /draɪ ʌp/	<i>If a river or lake dries up, the water in it disappears</i> Examples: In a drought, all of the lakes and rivers dry up ./A drought can dry rivers and lakes up .
fight for /faɪt fɔːr/	<i>to try hard to support or achieve something you want or think is right</i> Example: Greta Thunberg fighters for environmental causes.
freeze over /friːz ˈəʊ.vər/	<i>to become covered in ice</i> Example: Parts of the Arctic have stopped freezing over due to global warming.
knock down (separable) /nɒk.daʊn/	<i>to destroy or demolish something</i> Example: We could create more green spaces in urban environments if we were to knock down disused buildings.
run out of /rʌn ˈaʊt əv/	<i>to use something completely so that nothing is left</i> Example: We will eventually run out of fossil fuels.
stand up for /stænd ʌp fɔːr/	<i>to defend or support a particular idea or a person who is being criticised or attacked</i> Example: Many young people stand up for animal rights.
take part in /teɪk pɑːt ɪn/	<i>to be actively involved in something with other people</i> Example: People all over the world have taken part in environmental protests.
wipe out (separable) /ˌwaɪp ˈəʊt/	<i>to destroy something completely or cause something to be completely lost</i> Examples: We must avoid wiping endangered animals out completely./We must avoid wiping out endangered animals completely.

Language summary 2: Conditional forms

Conditional type	Meaning	Form	Example sentences
Zero	A fact	<i>If + present simple, present simple or can</i>	If we cut down on waste and find better ways to dispose of it, this helps the environment.
1st	Likely	<i>If + present simple, will or may, might, could</i>	If logging companies chop down rainforests, some native species will be wiped out. If we don't stand up for change, we will eventually run out of time to reverse global warming.
2nd	Less likely	<i>If + past simple, would or might, could</i>	Many lakes could dry up if global warming caused more droughts. If we all took part in a protest, the government would probably change its environmental policy.
3rd	Too late to change	<i>If + past perfect, would have or might have, could have + past participle</i>	A lot of animal, insect and plant species wouldn't have died out if we had acted sooner.
Mixed 2nd/3rd	A situation that is too late to change but with a present result	<i>If + past perfect, would or might, could</i>	If some parts of the Arctic had stayed frozen over all year round, polar bears wouldn't be struggling to survive now.

Answer key

✓ Exercise 2

- b) dry up
- c) died out
- d) run out of
- e) took part in
- f) frozen over
- g) cut down on, dispose of

✓ Exercise 3

- likely – a, c (1st conditional)
- less likely – b, e (2nd conditional)
- too late to change – c (3rd conditional), f (mixed conditional)
- a fact – g (zero conditional)

✓ Exercise 4

Highlight the structure of the different conditional forms – See [Language summary 2](#)

✓ Exercise 5

Possible answers

- a) If we hadn't invented cars, we wouldn't have **wiped out** so many endangered animals.
- b) If I was responsible for the environmental laws in my town/city, I would **fight for** more cycle lanes.
- c) If the temperature became much hotter/colder in my country, people would be more likely to **take part in** protests against global warming.
- d) People would have to **dispose of** their petrol cars and use electric cars if fossil fuels ran out.
- e) If people **cut down on** flying, they would reduce their carbon footprint.

Extra activities

🔍 Extra activity 1: Word finder

Time required:

- 10 minutes

Materials required:

- Mini whiteboards if available or A4 paper
- Marker pens

Aims:

- Vary the classroom dynamic
- Boost spelling skills

Set up

This game can be played individually or in pairs/groups if your situation allows.

Write the word 'environment' on the board in large letters.

Set the challenge: According to several websites, it's possible to make more than 250 words using the letters in 'environment' – how many do you think you can make? (Note: A link to one of the websites is available in the feedback section).

Outline the rules of the game:

- Words should be three letters or more and must be in your classroom dictionary or the [Cambridge Dictionary online](#).
- Letters can't be used more than once if they only occur once in 'environment'. For example, there is only one 'i', so it isn't possible to make the word 'mini'.
- Points are given based on the number of letters in each word: 1 point for 3-letter words, 2 points for 4 and 5-letter words and 10 points for 6 letters or more!
- Students should write their words in fairly large letters on a piece of paper or mini whiteboard, so they can be easily checked.

Give students a time limit (approx. 3 minutes).

Activity

Students write their lists – if they struggle to find words of more than four letters you could give them an extra minute.

Feedback

You can find a list of all the possible words that can be made from 'environment' [here](#). Note that some of these words are archaic or are used extremely rarely. Around 20 to 25 words would be a very good result from B2-level students.

To check the answers, first ask students to count up their words. They can hold these up on their mini whiteboard/paper or, if your school's guidelines and safety protocol allow, ask students to exchange their lists of words to:

- check for spelling mistakes
- look up words they don't think exist.

In the event of a draw, the winning teams could be asked to make sentences with some of their words.

Congratulate and reward the winner – this can be with something as simple as a round of applause from the class.



Extra activity 2: Conditional chain game

Time required:

- 10 minutes

Materials required:

- No materials required

Aims:

- To review conditional forms
- To practise using the phrasal verbs from the poster
- To create a comfortable classroom atmosphere through use of humour

Set up

Tell learners they are going to use their imaginations to invent a story as a class (or as a group if your situation allows). The sentences must use a conditional form and they should try to use the phrasal verbs from the poster to earn extra points.

Choose a conditional statement to start them off. For example:

If I hadn't taken part in the competition, I wouldn't have won a million pounds.

If I hadn't won a million pounds ...

Activity

Nominate a student to continue with the next sentence.

To keep the pace, allow no more than 30 seconds of thinking time.

The activity can be made more competitive by awarding extra points when students come up with:

1. a sentence that includes the use of one of the phrasal verbs from the poster:
 - a. half a point for an attempt, even if it is incorrect
 - b. a full point if the phrasal verb is used correctly
2. a sentence that makes the class laugh out loud
3. a sentence that is very imaginative.

Feedback

If you do decide to correct mistakes with the conditional form, maintain rapport by reacting to the content of what the student said first e.g. *great idea, that's hilarious*, etc. before correcting.

Follow-up task for homework

Students could write up a 10-sentence story. The story could be linked to the ideas that the class came up with in the lesson, or it could be based around their own ideas using the original stem 'If I hadn't taken part in the competition ...'.