The 3 step guide to hosting a
Climate Conversation
We need to talk about climate change!

It seems so far away. So big an issue it doesn't bear thinking about... The biggest threat to justice & human rights of our time! And let's be real, in many ways it is far away & really big. Yet solutions to this global challenge can be found close to home, in small everyday actions. With this in mind, the aim of a *climate conversation* is to come together with others, for a chat and a cup of tea, and explore how we can take action collectively for climate justice.

Organising a Climate Conversation

Ingredients
Post-it notes, pens, sheets of paper/flipchart, tea/coffee/food, friends and a comfy community space.

Step 1: Collaborate
The most important ingredients in an exciting conversation are its participants. The conversation can be as big or small as you want, but thinking about who you'd like to speak to is the first step. Who could you collaborate with to host a conversation in your school? Do you want it be internal in your class or could you invite local businesses, community members, tidy towns or local college representatives?

Step 2: Create the space
A climate conversation could take place as a coffee morning, a lunchtime gathering or any format that works for the people you are going to chat with. It should be a welcoming, informal and cosy space where conversations can flow and everyone's voices can be heard. It could be useful to have some large sheets of paper to record key points of discussion.

Step 3: Hold the conversation
The aim of the climate conversation is to explore how we can collectively act on climate change. The conversation is a space to reflect personally and together. You can adapt and change the process to suit the group of people who come together for your conversation, but here's what we suggest:

- **Welcome** everyone to the climate conversation. You could introduce the "**Principles of a good conversation**" (below).
- Invite people to spend two minutes **brainstorming** what comes to mind when they think about **climate change**, including knowledge, fears and hopes. If the group is large, ask people to share their thoughts in pairs first to help everyone feel comfortable speaking. Then invite people to share their thoughts together. Record the recurring themes.
- Invite each person to write down an answer to the question '**in your opinion, why is climate change happening?**' Working in **pairs**, each person offers their answer and the other person asks '**But why?**' The person answering should try to answer as many 'but whys' as possible. After each pair has done this, invite them to **share** their thoughts with the whole group and have a chat together. What were peoples starting points? Where did they end up? Record the **root causes** that the group identifies.
- Ask each person to take two minutes to think about where and how they see these roots in their own **life** and in their **community**. Invite everyone to share these **connections** and record them in two columns: 'personal' and 'community'.
- Look at the ways in which the root causes of climate change appear in our own lives, personally and in our communities. What are the **common themes or ideas**? What **actions** could the group take to address some of the root causes they have identified? After a group conversation invite each person to share their final thoughts on the discussion. Is there one thing people are taking away? **Is there one change the group can make?**

Principles of a good conversation
- We acknowledge one another as equals
- We try to stay curious about each other
- We recognise that we need each other's help to become better listeners
- We slow down so we have time to think and reflect
- We remember that conversation is the natural way humans think together
- We expect it to be messy at times

From Margaret Wheatly (2009) *Turning to one another: simple conversations to restore hope to the future,* p.33.

Thanks to the Young Friends of the Earth for sharing this guide on hosting a Climate Conversation!