



Global Goals Go Local Project - Teacher Guidelines



What this project is

Global Goals Go Local is an active learning project for senior primary classes. Children work in small teams to explore one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, choose a real character with a problem connected to that goal, and design a solution together.

The project supports children to think critically, work collaboratively, and take creative action on global issues that show up in local life. It is designed to be run over several sessions or compressed into one or two full project days.

What children will do

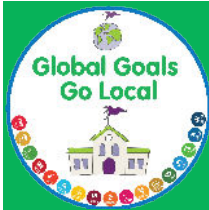
Over the course of the project, children will -

- Explore the 17 Global Goals and decide which one matters most to them
- Choose a character whose life is affected by that goal
- Get to know their character and understand the problem they are facing
- Generate lots of ideas for possible solutions
- Develop and build their best idea as a prototype
- Present their solution and reflect on what they learned

How long does it take?

The project works across five modules. Each module has a suggested time, but you can adjust to suit your class.

Module	Activity	Suggested time
1	Discover the Global Goals	40 - 60 minutes
2	Choose and get to know your character	30 - 40 minutes
3	Define the problem	20 - 25 minutes
4	Generate and choose a solution	45 - 60 minutes
5	Build, present, and reflect	60 - 90 minutes



What you need

Basic materials

- A4 paper or project books
- Pencils, markers, crayons, colouring pencils
- Scissors and glue sticks
- Sticky notes (for ideation activities)
- Blu Tack or tape (for displaying work)

For prototyping (Module 5)

- Recycled materials - cardboard, bottle caps, fabric scraps, paper tubes
- Modelling clay or playdough
- Building blocks, LEGO, or junk boxes
- Old magazines or newspapers

Optional

- Tablets or devices for research
- Digital camera or phone for photos of finished prototypes

Printed templates (included in this pack)

- SDG flashcards (the 17 Global Goals in child-friendly language)
- Character stories (one sheet with all characters)
- Character profile worksheet (one per team)
- Problem statement template (one per team)
- Ideation activity sheets: A–Z and Flower Power (one set per team)
- Idea brainwriting sheet (one per team)
- Prototype sketch sheet (one per team)
- Student reflection survey (one per child, completed at the end of Module 5)
- Teacher Feedback Form (one completed at the end of Module 5)



Module 1 Discover the Global Goals (40–60 minutes)

Children explore the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and decide as a team which goal they want to focus on.

What to do:

- Share the SDG flashcards with the class and give children time to read them in their teams.
- Watch one or two short SDG introduction videos if you have access to a screen (links are in the presentation).
- As a class, discuss which goals feel most urgent to you? Which ones can you see in your own town or community?
- Each team chooses the goal that matters most to them. Give them five minutes to discuss and agree.

Teacher notes

There is no wrong answer here. Let children choose the goal they feel genuinely connected to. Some goals will attract a lot of teams, and that is fine. The same goal can produce very different solutions.

Module 2 Choose and get to know your character (30–40 minutes)

Each team chooses one character whose life is affected by the problem linked to their goal. They then make the character their own before doing anything else.

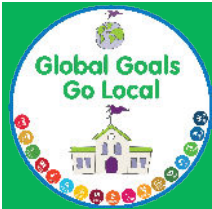
What to do:

- Give each team the character stories sheet. Ask them to read through all the characters and decide together which one they want to focus on.
- Once they have chosen, each team fills in the character profile worksheet. Encourage them to give the character their own name, appearance, and personality - this is important! The character should feel like someone they invented, not someone from a list.
- Teams also sketch their character on the character profile sketch sheet and present their character to the class.

Teacher notes

This is the most important module for engagement. Pilot experience showed that when all teams were assigned the same character without getting to choose, solutions became less varied and children felt less ownership of the process. Each team should choose their own character, and personalising the character - their name, how they look, what they like - makes a big difference to how deeply children connect with the problem they are solving.

Do not give too much input at this stage. The goal is for children to imagine and build on the character themselves, not to get it right.



Module 3 Define the problem (20–25 minutes)

Each team writes a clear problem statement that captures exactly what their character is struggling with and why.

What to do:

- Give each team the problem statement template.
- Ask them to complete each section - who their character is, what their character's problem is, why they cannot solve it on their own, and how they will feel when there is a solution.
- Encourage teams to be as specific as possible. A good problem statement names the character, names the problem, and says something about why it is hard to fix.

Teacher notes

Keep this short. The problem statement is a thinking tool, not a piece of writing to perfect. If a team is spending more than 20 minutes on it, prompt them to move on, the brainstorming stage will help them refine their thinking anyway.

Do not give too much input into what the problem should be. If a team's problem statement is a bit vague, that is fine. They will sharpen it as they start generating ideas.

Module 4 Generate and choose a solution (45–60 minutes)

Teams generate as many ideas as possible, then work together to develop their best one.

What to do:

- Start with the A–Z ideation sheet. Give teams five minutes to write one solution idea for each letter of the alphabet. Speed matters here so there is no time to overthink, encourage 'silly' ideas.
- Then move to the Flower Power sheet. Teams write one idea in each petal. Give ten minutes.
- Gather all ideas (on the worksheets or on sticky notes) and display them so the whole team can see everything. Give the team ten minutes to look through and vote on their favourite.
- If it is hard to pick one, teams can combine two or three ideas. They then use the idea brainwriting sheet to develop their chosen idea further.

Ideation warm-ups (optional)

If your class needs to warm up their creative thinking before the A–Z activity, try one of these -

- Crazy 8s - fold a sheet of paper into 8 rectangles. Each child sketches a different idea in each box, one minute per box, no talking.
- Yes, and - one child shares an idea, the next responds with "Yes, and..." and adds something. Keep going around the team, building the idea together. No saying "no" or "but".

Teacher notes

The goal at the ideation stage is quantity, not quality. Silly ideas are welcome. The more ideas on the table, the better the final solution is likely to be. Encourage children to keep going even when they feel stuck.

The solution shopping step (reviewing all ideas together before picking one) is worth protecting. Children often vote for the most familiar idea rather than the most interesting one. Encouraging them to look for the surprising idea, or to combine two, tends to produce more inventive solutions.



Module 5 Build, present, and reflect (60–90 minutes)

Teams build a prototype of their solution, present it to the class, and complete a short individual reflection.

What to do:

- Give each team the prototype sketch sheet. Ask them to draw their solution first before building anything - this helps them plan.
- Teams then build their prototype using whatever materials are available - recycled cardboard, clay, LEGO, paper, fabric. If the solution is a campaign or an app rather than a physical object, they can create a poster, a storyboard, or a simple sketch of how their campaign would work.
- Each team presents their solution to the class and the Green-Schools Committee. They should explain - who their character is, what problem they solved, what their solution is, and how it works.
- The class gives feedback using two stars and a wish - two things they liked and one thing they would suggest for improvement.
- Children then complete the student reflection survey individually. This takes about five minutes.

Teacher notes

Children often want more time for prototyping than is available. It helps to set a clear time limit at the start and to reassure them that a simple, well-explained prototype is just as valid as an elaborate one. Pilot feedback showed that some children were surprised when their prototypes turned out smaller than they had imagined, this is a good learning in itself.

The reflection survey (found [here](#)) uses a simple before-and-after format. Children rate themselves on five skills at the end of the project, thinking about how they felt before it started and how they feel now. This takes about five minutes and gives you, and us, a record of what children felt they gained from the experience.

Teacher feedback form [here](#), we appreciate your input.

Taking it further

Some classes will want to do something with their solution beyond the classroom. Here are a few ideas -

- Share prototypes at a school assembly or with parents at an open afternoon.
- Write to a local councillor, business, or community organisation about the problem the class identified.
- Choose one solution to actually try to implement - even a small version of it - in the school or local area.
- Share the project with your Green-Schools Committee and see whether it connects to any of your current flag topics.



Global Goals Go Local – Curriculum Links



Curriculum links

This project supports active learning across several subject areas in the Irish Primary Curriculum Framework (2023). It develops the key competencies of communicating, collaborating, being creative, and being a digital learner, alongside subject-specific learning outcomes.

Subject	Curriculum area / strand	What children do in this project
SPHE	Myself and the wider world	Explore how global issues connect to their local community, develop empathy through character work, practise listening and group decision-making
Geography	People, place, and environment	Identify local and global environmental and social issues, explore how people affect and are affected by the world around them
Visual Arts	Construction and design	Sketch, build, and present a model or campaign prototype using a range of materials
English	Oral language, reading, writing	Discuss and present ideas; write a problem statement; create a short narrative from a character's perspective
STEM / Digital Learning	Problem-solving and design	Apply a structured process to explore a problem, develop an idea, and build a solution; use digital tools optionally for research and presentation

Key competencies (Primary Curriculum Framework 2023)

The project develops all four key competencies across its five modules:

Competency	How it shows up in this project
Communicating	Children present their character's problem and explain their solution to the class
Collaborating	All work is team-based, children share roles and make decisions together
Being creative	Brainstorming activities push children to generate many ideas before selecting one to develop
Being an active learner	Children drive their own enquiry - they choose their goal, their character, and their solution