

5 ways to help stop climate breakdown

New Internationalist Intermediate Ready Lesson

**New
Internationalist**

What's going on in this photo? And why?

Extinction Rebellion activists block a road in Dalston, East London, Britain July 13, 2019. REUTERS/Henry Nicholls



In pairs, discuss what you think this text is about?

Five ways to help stop climate breakdown

Climate breakdown is in the news. Danny Chivers writes about five ways to take action

Here are the 5 subheadings in the text – in pairs, write a sentence about what you think will be in each one:

1. Make it global

2. Support the most important actions

3. Find other ways of doing things

4. Take action against fossil-fuel companies

5. Look after the people who helped us get here

Now skim through the 5 sections of the texts
and make some notes

Afterwards, in pairs, you're
going to write a short article
for a college magazine for
students about what YOU
think about all this

1. Make it global

The latest activist groups like Extinction Rebellion and school strikes and also the Green New Deal, talk to governments in the Global North to ask them to cut their carbon emissions. This is so important. But if a few rich countries change to cleaner energy, it will not be enough to stop climate breakdown. The world has to act together.

Industrialized countries benefited from hundreds of years of imperialism using fossil fuels and the Majority World suffered. So now it's the responsibility of the industrialised countries to pay back the 'carbon debt'. So when we take to the streets and we demand action, we must also demand money and technology for clean energy for the Global South. This is to pay for the change from fossil fuels and to help people out of poverty.

All changes to clean energy, such as the ideas from the Green New Deal, must have a fair and sustainable sharing of resources. There isn't enough land or material to feed our greedy, imbalanced global economy with renewables. And if we're not careful, the minerals needed to build renewable infrastructure, such as cobalt, lithium, silver, and copper will replace oil, gas, and coal as the new way for businesses to destroy the climate. So the Green New Deal policies must insist on rich nations using so much less of the earth's resources so the rest of the world can catch up. And the policies must insist on protecting communities from new destruction through extracting minerals.

2. Support the most important actions

Communities (often in the Global South, often indigenous) are blocking fossil-fuel projects and defending land and forests all over the world. These are some of the most important climate actions now.

Western companies and governments are paying for many of these projects. This gives campaigners in Europe, Australia, and North America clear ways to offer support. Groups working together internationally often have success, for example, with stopping the Sabah coal plant in Malaysia, the Keystone XL pipeline in the US, and mega-dams in Brazil.

3. Find other ways of doing things

The UN says a million animal, fish, plant, and insect species are at risk from deforestation, overfishing, and intensive agriculture and climate change. An economic system which wants more and more impossible growth drives these activities. We need to take urgent action and we need a change away from neoliberal capitalism that drives destruction. This is our chance to offer better ideas for the world and to include local democracy, common control of resources, and economic systems where people work together.

4. Take action against fossil-fuel companies

The very powerful oil, coal, and gas industries are using their money and influence to block climate laws, slow down renewables, and extract more and more risky forms of fossil fuel. All the many exciting campaigns against fossil-fuel companies need new support.

5. Look after the people who helped us get here

The school strikers have a big impact with very few resources, but they are calling for more adults to help. A new international group, Parents for Future, is working to answer that call. Rowan Ryrie from the UK branch says: 'We are finding ways for adults to use their economic power, and their power as voters, protesters, and professionals to protect future generations.' The UK website parentsforfuture.org has advice on how adults (not only parents) can get involved. This includes talking to schools to ask them not to punish striking students and taking action to support the school students.

Now plan and write your article in pairs – these questions might help:

1. What is the **main message** of your article?
2. What is the **function** of your article eg. to inform, to persuade, to describe? What type of language do you need to express this function?
3. Are you going to include **facts, opinions or both**?
4. Do you think the 5 points are **good suggestions or not**? Why?
5. Do you agree with the **politics**? If not, what can you write?
6. Do you want to **encourage** students to take part in the climate strikes **or not**? Why?

Follow up / homework:

Read, discuss and summarise more simplified articles about climate change:

[https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=What can I do to stop climate change%3F](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=What%20can%20I%20do%20to%20stop%20climate%20change%3F)

[https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=Stopping carbon](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=Stopping%20carbon)

[https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=An Earth we can live on](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=An%20Earth%20we%20can%20live%20on)

[https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=Protecting the %E2%80%98lungs of West Africa%E2%80%99](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=Protecting%20the%20%E2%80%98lungs%20of%20West%20Africa%E2%80%99)

[https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=How will the Global South pay for climate change damage%3F](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=How%20will%20the%20Global%20South%20pay%20for%20climate%20change%20damage%3F)