



EMPLOYEE ACTIVITY | GRADE RANGE: 6–8

## Sustainability and Citizenship

### OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Define sustainability and citizenship.
- Make connections between environmental sustainability and good citizenship.
- Communicate calls to action concisely and effectively.

### OVERVIEW

Students will learn the various meanings and methods of sustainability before investigating connections between sustainability and citizenship. They will finish by creating a fictitious social media post encouraging their peers to be good citizens with specific suggestions related to environmental sustainability.

### TIMING

45–60 minutes.

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- Pencils, one per student
- **Sustainable Practices** student handout, one per student
- **Tweet Tweet** student handout, one per group
- Colored pencils or markers, one set per group

### VOLUNTEER PREP

1. Read through the activity instructions to familiarize yourself with the content. Note that approximate times are provided for each segment as a recommendation, but each situation will be unique.

Use the Lesson At-a-Glance below to determine how long you plan to spend on each section.

2. Prior to your session, coordinate with your host educator regarding available space and the ideal method to divide students into groups of 3–4 students. This may include moving desks into groups before the start of the session.
3. Prepare all materials before your session.
4. Have the **Essential Question** written largely or projected on the board before students arrive.

## LESSON AT-A-GLANCE

Section	Activity	Approximate Time in a 45-minute Session	Approximate Time in a 60-minute Session
Engage	Volunteer introductions and <b>Essential Question</b>	6–8 minutes	6–8 minutes
Learn	Sustainability	7–10 minutes	9–15 minutes
Apply	Sustainability and Citizenship	7–10 minutes	9–15 minutes
Challenge	<b>Tweet Tweet</b>	20–25 minutes	25–30 minutes
Closing	Call to action	2–3 minutes	3–5 minutes

## PROCEDURE

## Engage

1. Take **2–3 minutes** to introduce yourself to the class. Explain that you are here on behalf of Trane Technologies, and you are excited to help teach them about sustainability and good citizenship. Briefly explain your role at Trane Technologies and what you think it means to be a good citizen. This would be a helpful opportunity to connect sustainability, citizenship, and Trane Technologies' corporate citizenship strategy, Sustainable Futures.
2. For approximately **4–5 minutes**, engage students in the upcoming lesson by asking the following **Essential Question**. This question is intended to get students thinking about their upcoming learning experience, and can be used to encourage discussion and help students contextualize the topic focus while leaning into prior knowledge or experiences.
  - Is taking care of the environment part of being a good citizen?

## Learn

3. Explain to students that one thing that increases positive impact on the environment, as well as the topic of today's session, is *sustainability*. You may want to write this word on the board for reference.
4. Explain to students that sustainability means to maintain a certain rate or level. What it means regarding the environment is to avoid using *all* of a natural resource with the goal of keeping the environment balanced.
5. Emphasize that sustainability means that the current generation works to meet its own needs without affecting the ability of future generations to meet their needs. .

**Note:** It may be helpful to come back to this idea if students have difficulty seeing the connection between environmental sustainability and citizenship.

6. Inform students that sustainability can be categorized into three parts: environmental, social, and economic. Companies like Trane Technologies have implemented initiatives to address all three facets. Tell students that today you will be focusing on environmental sustainability, but if time allows, briefly explain an example of social and/or economic sustainability.
  - Social Sustainability deals with quality-of-life issues, i.e., affordable housing, mental health support, safety and security, etc.
  - Economic sustainability tried to support long-term growth and value without compromising other parts of the system. Examples include crop rotation, water efficient fixtures, renewable clean energy, etc.
7. Distribute a **Sustainable Practices** handout to each student. Review ways that individuals can practice environmental sustainability by having volunteers read from the handout or reading them aloud yourself.

**Note:** If students seem unfamiliar with a term, take a moment to explain it.

### Apply

8. Tell students that you want them to think about environmental sustainability through the lens of good citizenship. Ask 1–2 volunteers to tell the class what they think it means to be a good citizen. If students seem hesitant to volunteer, move on to the next step.
9. Explain to students that to be a good citizen, they are expected to conduct themselves “in accordance with the rights, duties, and privileges of being an inhabitant of [a certain place].” Many agree that the five qualities of a good citizen are honesty, compassion, respect, responsibility, and courage. You may choose to write those qualities on the board and share examples of these from current events or actions that students have seen in their communities.
10. Ask students to consider which of those qualities relate to making environmentally sustainable choices? Give 1–2 students an opportunity to explain their thoughts to the class. Predicted responses are respect and responsibility, but any justified responses can be acceptable.
11. Instruct students to write the qualities of a good citizen that they think apply to being environmentally sustainable on the bottom of their handout. Then, direct them to circle any of the sustainable practices they believe display good citizenship.

### Challenge

12. Divide students into groups of four students each. Based on the prior coordination with your host educator and space provided, have students grouped into desks of four or sitting in circles on the floor or in areas around the room.
  - **Note:** The number of groups will be determined by the size of the class. For example, if you have a class of 24 students, you will have six groups. Count students off into groups

based on class size. Go through the class and count 1–6 until all students have a number. Send students to the designated area for each group number. Adjust based on total number of students or if the educator has predetermined groups.

13. Pass out a **Tweet Tweet** handout to each group. Explain that each group will be developing three fictitious social media posts encouraging their friends and family to be good citizens by doing something that is environmentally sustainable. Their posts should make the connection between how the action leads to good citizenship and should suggest a task that individuals or families can reasonably accomplish. There should be a drawing, “meme,” slogan, etc. that accompanies each written “post.”
14. If time allows, give each group an opportunity to share their favorite “post.” Collect the handouts and give them to your host educator.

### Closing

15. Before you leave, thank the classroom teacher and students for allowing you to join them, and encourage them to apply what they have learned about this aspect of sustainability by discussing it with their families. Suggest they pick one sustainable practice they can begin implementing as a family.

### EXTENSION IDEAS FOR EDUCATORS

- If the classroom or school has an online or social media presence, students can turn their fictitious social media posts into real posts encouraging the school community to be environmentally sustainable (and good citizens!).
- Research each sustainable practice listed on the students' handout and determine what can be done at the school/classroom level. Implement initiatives throughout the school/classroom.
- Finish learning about the other two facets of sustainability—social and economic—and make connections to citizenship.

## NATIONAL CONTENT STANDARDS

### National Science Standards

- MS-ESS3-3: Apply scientific principles to design a method for monitoring and minimizing a human impact on the environment.

### Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

#### Speaking and Listening

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

#### Writing

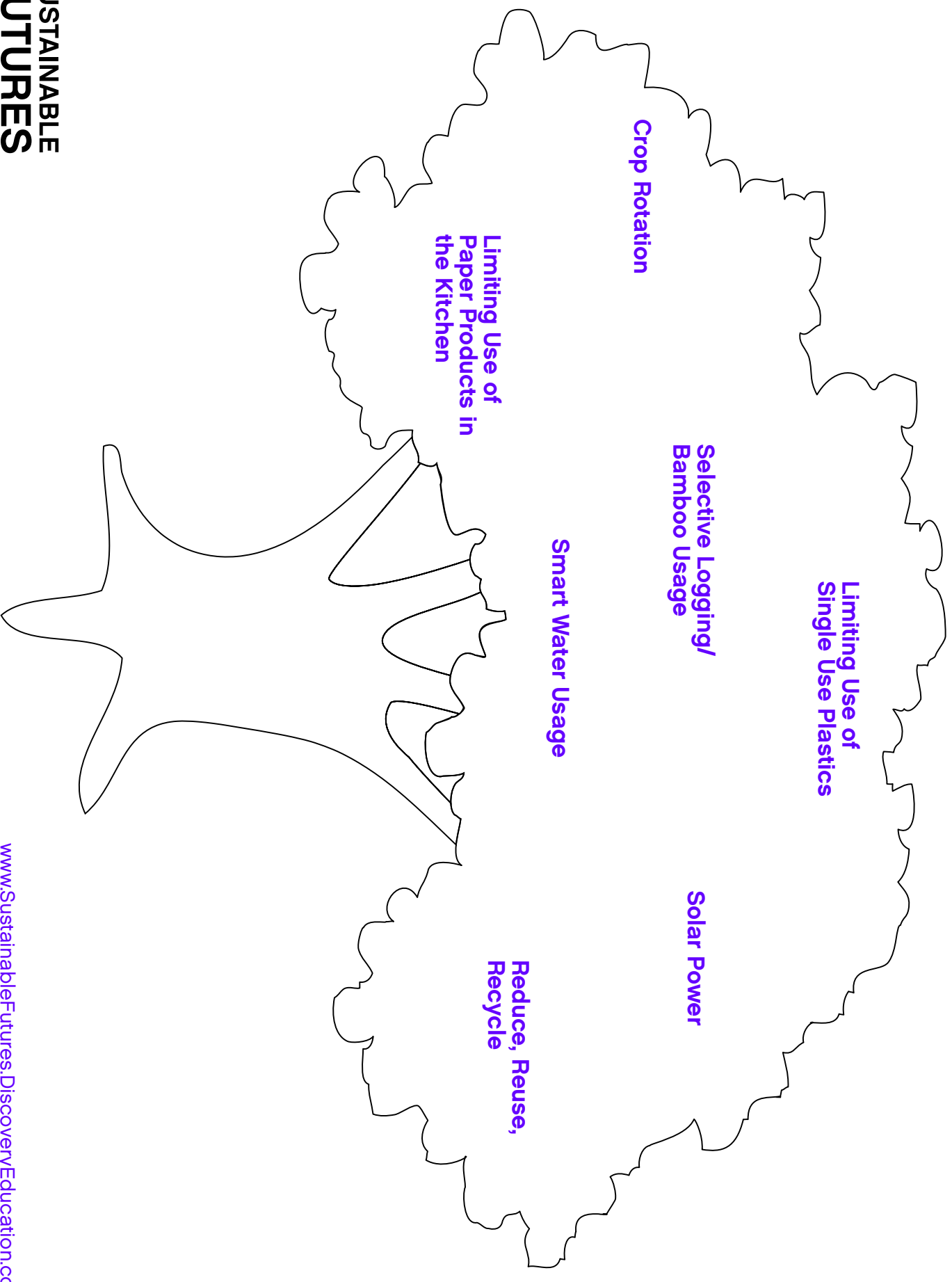
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigatio.



























### C3 Framework for Social Studies

- D2.Civ.1 Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of citizens.
- D2.Civ.6 Describe the roles of political, civil, and economic organizations in shaping people's lives.
- D2.Civ.7 Apply civic virtues and democratic principles in school and community settings.

## SOURCES

- <https://app.discoveryeducation.ca/learn/videos/d577707d-8e6b-43f7-9082-0e4218c8279b>



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