

THE ⚡ STORM

By Nicola Schofield

About M6

Founded in 1977, M6 Theatre Company specialises in creating dynamic, high quality and relevant productions with, for and by children and young people.

M6's work is driven by a passionate belief in the power of theatre to enrich, challenge and even transform young lives. From the company's base in Rochdale, M6 reaches audiences of over 15,000 per year with live theatre productions and over 21,000 with filmed, digital resources.

Funded by Rochdale Borough Council, **The Storm** by Nicola Schofield confronts issues surrounding the Climate Emergency for Key Stage 3 and 4 audiences aged 11+.

This powerful story, told through an intimate, emotionally charged performance, is one in a series of filmed, single voice plays, each with accompanying resources, which have been produced by M6 Theatre Company to support young people's social and emotional well-being.

<https://m6theatre.co.uk/schools/curriculum-for-life/>

**“Everything needs to change.
And it has to start today.”**

Greta Thunberg



How to use The Storm resource

The resource could be used by a single teacher but also presents an opportunity for a team of teachers to work together. Step 1 could sit well with English, Drama or PSHE teachers, and Step 2 could sit well with Science or Geography teachers.

Aims

The film and accompanying resources are designed to:

- Provide a creative stimulus to provoke meaningful discussion.
- Mobilise hearts and minds on the issues of climate change and sustainability.
- Broaden and deepen engagement with the problems we are facing with man-made climate change and the range of potential approaches to tackling it.
- Provide opportunities for students to make links across a range of curriculum areas, including Science, English, Drama, Geography and PSHE.
- Inspire social action and attitudinal change.
- Build confidence, resilience, and optimism.



Step 1: Ignite the Imagination

Watch **The Storm** film and facilitate a class discussion using **The Storm Guided Discussion Pack**.

- 📖 **Single lesson**
- 🕒 **Approx. 1 hour**



Step 2: Deepen the Knowledge

Work with **The Storm Education Action Pack** to help your students explore the causes and possible solutions to the Climate Emergency.

- 📖 **4 lessons**
- 🕒 **Approx. 4 hours**



Ignite the Imagination

The Storm is designed to be shared with young people aged 11+ with the support of a teacher or facilitator, ideally in single class size groups to allow for the post screening discussion.

We recommend you watch the film and read through the booklet before sharing the film with your students or young people.

Before they watch **The Storm**, explain to your students that they are going to watch a short, single voice play, told from the point of view of a character called Frankie. Explain that after the screening, there will be a chance to talk to each other about what they have seen, heard, and felt.

We have provided questions, quotes from the play, and teacher's notes to assist teachers and facilitators to confidently lead a guided peer group discussion following a screening of **The Storm**.

Please feel free to adapt or modify to best suit the needs of your own group or circumstances.



The story

The Storm is a 20-minute single voice play.

In **The Storm**, we meet a character called Frankie who lives with her Mum, Dad, and little sister Kiki.

The play is set in 2050 in an imagined future world which is shaped by the effects of climate change. The weather is violent and unpredictable, and areas are separated into zones to manage supplies and resources.

When we meet her, Frankie has been out planting trees and working on a rewilded farm, but she has made a stop to fix her broken bag before approaching the zone gates.

When a storm hits earlier than forecast, Frankie must face her fears, manage her anxiety, and take steps to get back to her family and to safety.

Following a screening

Question ?

Quote Q

Teachers note !

After watching the film, allow the audience a few moments to reflect. If possible, ask them to spend a few moments talking to the person(s) next to them about what they have seen, heard and how it made them feel.

The course the discussion takes will of course depend on the group's responses and it would be beneficial to follow their lead.

However, the following is a suggested route to cover all the elements and themes that lie within the play.

! N.B. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers.

? What were the most memorable moments?

Feedback.

If the group have any questions about the play, write them up on a board.

In small groups, see how many of these questions the group can answer for themselves

Feedback.

? What clues are there in *The Storm* that tell us it is set in the future?

Give the group a moment to think and take some responses.

Here are some quotes from the play as a reminder...



(She looks at the book.) 'Kiki's never seen some of these animals before. I'll have to explain they're a bit like the dinosaur, they used to live here but they're extinct now.'

'Back in the 2010s... school strikes.'

'Mum still loves Greta now... she's never given up, never stopped fighting.'

(She finds a toy dinosaur in her bag.) 'We found you when we were fixing the wall... from something called a Happy Meal?'

'Tannoy: All residents must go to their allocated safe place. The storm is approaching. To cross zones go to the gates now!'

The play is set in an **imagined** future, in 2050.

Frankie's Mum and Dad went on school strikes.

Frankie has obviously never heard of a McDonalds.


Some animals that are currently on the brink of extinction like orangutans and polar bears, are extinct in Frankie's world.

There is a public address system that tells people to return to their 'safe place'. This indicates that the storms present a real threat to life.

The zones referenced throughout the play are a way of managing supplies and keeping the population monitored and safe during the violent weather. However, it will be interesting to hear what the group read into the zones and what else they think they may be for.

Some things may feel old fashioned, like Frankie's phone and the eggs being so valuable. It will be interesting to hear what the group think this tells us about Frankie's world, where commodities and food are less available.

Unpicking the play

Question Quote Teachers note 

After discussing Frankie's future world, the following questions will assist the group to recap the events of the play.


Where has Frankie just been?

Where is she when we meet her?

What is she doing?

Where is she going?


Ask the group to spend a few moments talking to the person(s) they are sitting with before feeding back. Take responses to each question in turn to build up a full picture.

 Where has Frankie just been?

Frankie has been working with a group called UPSTREAM. Alongside other young people, she spends her free time planting trees.

'We planted about 100 oak trees. Some birches too. Should all help the lower fields when the rain comes.'


How are trees good for the environment?


 Please see our useful facts about trees!

Then, she took a detour before returning home when the chance to work on Sandra's rewilded farm came up.

'It's taken them years to rewild the farm. It's incredible. They've let nature take it over again.'

Do the group know what rewilding means?


 Please see our useful facts about rewilding!

 Where is she when we meet her?

'I've just said I won't be long! You're the one keeping me talking! Flipping heck Dad. Look I'm only in Zone 11. I'm right next door.'

What might the 'zones' tell us about Frankie's world?

The zones referenced throughout the play are a way of managing supplies and keeping the population monitored and safe during the violent weather, but it would be interesting to hear what the audience read into the zones. What do they think they may be for?

 What is she doing?

Frankie has found shelter to fix her bag. She wants to protect the eggs she received in payment for working on Sandra's farm. These eggs are precious to Frankie.


What might this tell us about food/provisions in Frankie's world?

What else did Sandra give Frankie?

'This is an orangutan, they lived in places like Borneo it says. They lived in the trees, but the forests kept getting cut down.'

In the book, what animals did Frankie read about that are extinct in her world?

How many other animals can the group think of that are currently under severe threat of extinction?

 Please see our useful facts about conservation!

 Where is she going?

Frankie is going home. She needs to get to the gate to cross over to Zone 11 to return to her family.

Who is in Frankie's family and what do we know about each of them?

'He met mum at the climate protests, Mum said she thought Dad was annoying! She was right!'

'Mum's a Flood Risk Engineer. She's always planning ahead, thinking ahead, trying to help people be prepared.'

'Kiki will think I'm the best sister ever. Sometimes she asks questions, when mum's away. How do you explain it to a 5-year-old?'

The storm arrives...

Question ?

Quote Q

Teachers note !

? What changes everything for Frankie?

The public address system announces that a storm is coming.

'Tannoy: All residents must prepare for the early arrival of the storm. Updates to follow. All residents must prepare to make their way to their allocated safe space.'

How does this announcement make Frankie feel?

Frankie begins to panic. She feels incapable of moving on, and her fear seems to get the better of her.

? What memory, from when she was very young, does Frankie recall?

She recalls a memory from when she was very young of having to evacuate her home, when the dam in her town burst due to flooding.

! Please see our useful facts about flooding!

How has this experience affected her?

'We had to leave so many things behind, our home, everything we knew. It was me, Mum and Dad, what we could manage into a bag. Then go, go, go!'

Frankie is very anxious. She could even be suffering from PTSD.

? If the group could give Frankie some advice about how to deal with her anxiety, what would it be?

Gather coping strategies from the group, things that work for them when they feel anxious or stressed.

This provides teachers with an opportunity to remind students of any Pastoral Support offered in school.

! Please see our useful tips on managing feelings of anxiety!

? How does the call from Mum help Frankie?

'It's ok to be scared. I get scared Frankie. Everybody does. It's one step at a time, right?'

Sometimes, we all need help to find the courage to move on. The fact that Mum has returned home after working away is a great incentive for Frankie. She helps Frankie to manage her anxiety by breaking down the big problem into smaller, manageable actions.

? What, if anything, gives us hope in The Storm?

This is a chance to revisit the positive themes in the play. Frankie has been planting trees. She has been inspired by nature's ability to rebuild itself on Sandra's farm. Simple things like family and birthdays will always matter. Mum reminds her 'never think what you do isn't important.'

! It is also a good time to remind your students that this is a play, set in an imagined future. There is still time for us to make a difference.



What can we do?

? What things can we all do now, in our everyday lives, to help in the fight against Climate Change?

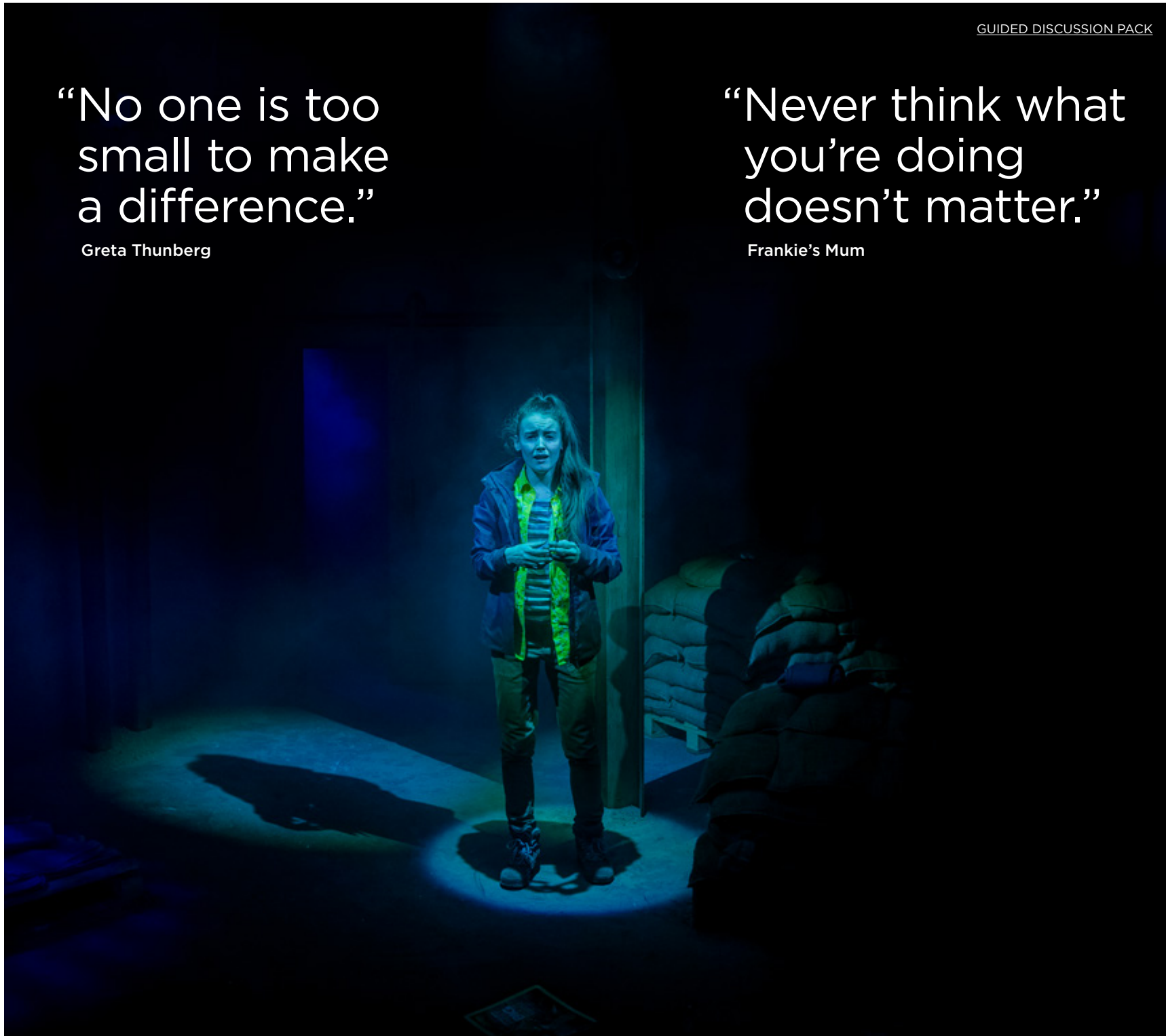
To round the session off, create a list of suggestions from the class.

“No one is too small to make a difference.”

Greta Thunberg

“Never think what you’re doing doesn’t matter.”

Frankie’s Mum



Next steps

- 1 Please share your feedback with us through our short evaluation form here: <https://m6theatrecompany.wufoo.com/forms/the-storm-evaluation-form/>
- 2 Continue to **some useful facts** about trees, rewilding, conservation, flooding, anxiety, Greta and some ideas for what we can all do!
- 3 Move on to **Step 2: Deepen the Knowledge.**

Work with **The Storm Education Action Pack** to help your students explore the causes and possible solutions to the Climate Emergency.



Some useful facts: Trees

Trees

Reducing harmful pollutants in the air.

Trees can help to reduce harmful pollutants, which are deposited into the atmosphere by industry and transport.

Carbon. Trees are our natural allies against climate change. They absorb carbon emissions. CO₂ is released into the air primarily by burning fossil fuels. One of the key ways in which carbon can be 'locked up' is by trees and forests, which store up to 25% of the world's carbon. Trees need carbon to grow.

Reducing the risk of flooding.

Trees reduce surface water runoff, which can overload drainage systems, and lead to flash flooding.

Cooling our cities and towns.

Trees lose moisture from their leaves and, coupled with the shade they cast, and the heat reflected upwards from their leaves, significantly reduce summer temperature in towns.

They provide a home for wildlife.

Trees don't just provide homes for birds and squirrels; they are important habitats for all wildlife. As well as providing a roof, they throw food in too. For instance, oak trees can support over 280 species of insects, which other animals then eat. Leaf litter feeds bacteria, fungi, insects, plants, and animals.

How do trees help our health and wellbeing?

Improving air quality. Trees, woodland and other green infrastructure improve air quality by intercepting harmful particulates, which are a contributing factor to respiratory conditions such as asthma.

Reducing stress. Urban residents suffering from stress experience less anxiety when they have a view of trees. Physical signs of stress such as muscle tension and pulse rate are also measurably reduced when moving into green surroundings.

Aiding recovery. Hospital patients with a view of greenery have been shown to recover more rapidly, and require less pain killing medication than those who only have a view of buildings.

Alleviating depression.

Taking part in nature-based activities helps people who are suffering from mental ill-health and can contribute to a reduction in levels of anxiety and depression.

Shading us from the sun.

Thinning of the protective ozone layer coupled with more extreme weather patterns is being linked to the increase in skin melanomas, the most rapidly increasing form of cancer in the UK. Dappled shade of trees provides a useful barrier to harmful ultra-violet radiation.

Encouraging physical activity.

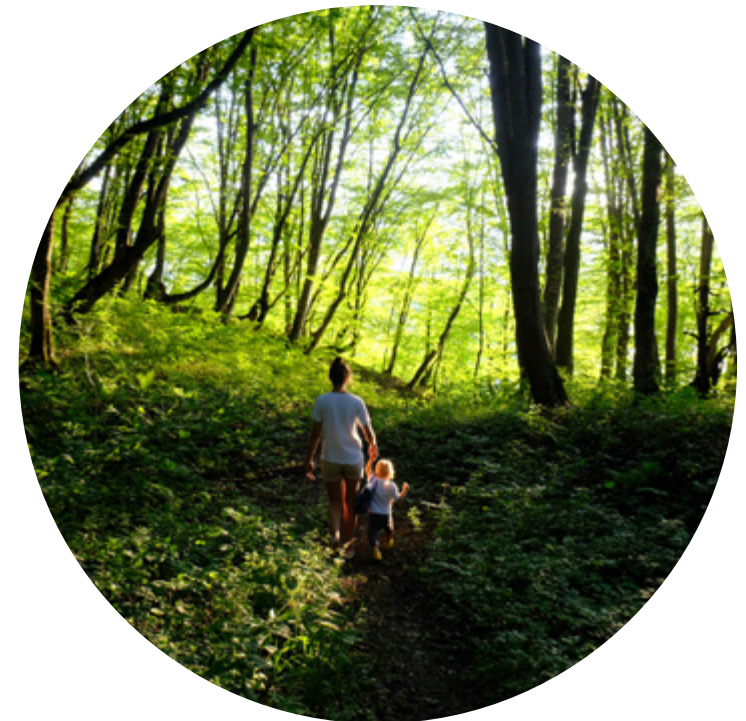
Green spaces provide space to exercise which improves memory and cognitive function. People who use parks and other green spaces are three

times more likely to reach the recommended level of physical activity than nonusers. Children living in areas with good access to green spaces have been shown to spend less time in front of television screens, computers, and smart phones and to have 11-19 percent lower prevalence

of obesity compared with children limited or no access to green spaces.

Bringing people together.

Trees and woods can help to bring people together and strengthen communities, reducing loneliness and isolation.



Some useful facts: Rewilding, conservation & flooding

Rewilding

Nature is our greatest ally in locking carbon away and protecting our climate. Rewilding can help nature recover on a massive scale and shape a better future for people.

Rewilding is about restoring natural processes. This means repairing damaged ecosystems and reintroducing lost species.

A natural process is the way nature works when left to her own devices. It is not possible to build a natural process, but it is possible to create conditions to help them reassert themselves.

Examples of rewilded environments:

Knepp.co.uk

And Frankie's own example of Yellowstone:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iloe8y8rwJQ>

Conservation

Deforestation and hunting are the biggest threats to orangutans. Borneo alone is set to lose 220,000 km² of forest by 2030 – that is 30% of its total land coverage and is larger than the size of the UK.

This is due to agriculture, infrastructure (roads) and forest fires.

The good news is that deforestation in Borneo is slowing down and in Indonesia and Malaysia, stronger requirements for forest protection are now being set.

For 10 top facts about orangutans, check out:

www.wwf.org.uk/learn/fascinating-facts/orangutans

Polar bears are the earth's largest land-based carnivore. They are listed as vulnerable because the Arctic sea ice they depend on is melting due to global warming. The Arctic is warming twice as fast as the global average.

Loss of sea ice also affects the polar bear's main prey – seals – which also need sea ice to raise their young.

They range across the Arctic Ocean in parts of Canada, Alaska, Russia, Greenland, and Norway. They can walk or swim long distances to feed or breed – sometimes roaming vast areas of up to 600,000km².

For top 11 facts about polar bears, check out:

www.wwf.org.uk/learn/fascinating-facts/polar-bears



Flooding

Serious floods around the world, which used to occur every 100 years are now occurring between every 10-20 years.

Warmer air temperatures, caused by climate change, lead to more evaporation, which eventually causes more rainfall.

It's not just happening in the UK. The USA suffers from hurricanes every year, but the number and intensity is rising.

Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans was the costliest and one of the deadliest hurricanes in the history of USA. Hurricanes develop because of air warming up over warm seas, causing air to rise rapidly and develop into major storms. The warmer the sea, the warmer the air, the worse the hurricane.

Coastal flooding:

The ice caps at the North Pole (The Arctic) and The South Pole (The Antarctic) are melting which is causing the sea levels to rise. A conservative estimate is 40cm over the next 100 years. The effects of such a rise would be dramatic. Many cities could be flooded by the sea. Bangladesh already suffers from severe annual flooding and cities nearer to home such as London, Cardiff and Newcastle could also be at risk.

Climate change will make flooding in the UK worse. Over the past decade, severe flooding and record-breaking rainfall have inflicted misery to ordinary people.

BBC England – Storm Ciara hits the Calder valley:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-51507162>

Some useful facts: Anxiety

Anxiety

Learning how to control feelings of anxiety is an important life skill:

Young Minds (<https://youngminds.org.uk/>) have consulted with young people who have the following tips:

- Find positive activities to enjoy.
- Think about something to look forward to.
- Do physical exercise.
- Learn mindfulness and yoga.
- Imagine negative thoughts leaving your brain and floating off into the sky.
- Keep yourself occupied.
- Have time out.
- Reflect on how you are feeling.
- Talk to other people you trust.

It is worth reminding the group about any Pastoral Service you have in school. Remind them where they can find someone in school to talk to.



Some useful facts: Greta

Greta Thunberg is the teenager whose one-person protest sparked a worldwide climate revolution. Discover more about this young eco-hero with these top ten Greta Thunberg facts.

- 1) Greta Thunberg is an environmental activist. She was born in Stockholm, Sweden, in 2003. When she was eight, she started learning about climate change. The more she learned, the more baffled she became as to why so little was being done about it.
- 2) At the age of 11, Greta became so sad about climate change that she temporarily stopped speaking.
- 3) Greta has Asperger syndrome, a condition that affects how people socialise. But Greta views her condition as a positive, calling it her “superpower”. She says it helps her see the world in black and white, and that there are “no grey areas when it comes to climate change.”
- 4) In August 2018, Greta decided to take action. Instead of going to school, she made a large sign that read ‘SCHOOL STRIKE FOR CLIMATE’, and calmly sat down outside the Swedish parliament. Her aim? To make politicians take notice and act to stop global warming.
- 7) In March 2019, climate campaigners across the world, and inspired by Greta, came together to co-ordinate the first Global Strike for Climate. It was huge – over 1.6 million people from 125 countries took part.
- 8) Since her strike began, Greta’s life has become a whirlwind. She’s given rousing speeches to politicians, to the EU parliament, the UK parliament, to protesters and more. She’s even won the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 9) In August 2019, Greta travelled on a wind and solar-powered boat from Plymouth, UK, to New York, USA – the journey took 15 days. Greta will be at the United Nations Climate Action Summit in New York, where she’ll demand action from world leaders.

WATCH: Greta Thunberg’s full speech to world leaders at UN Climate Action Summit:

<https://youtu.be/KAJsdgTPJpU>

Read her speeches in her book ‘No One Is Too Small to Make a Difference’.



Some useful facts: What can we do?

Be like Frankie and 'make do and mend!'

Use energy efficient light bulbs. Turn off lights, don't leave appliances on standby, use low power on phone or laptop and only boil the water needed in the kettle.

Having a sort out? A declutter? Donate unwanted items to charity shops or refugee programmes.

- Use bars of soap instead of plastic packaged alternatives.
- Get a water bottle.
- Pick up litter.
- Be the recycling guru in your home.
- Get composting.
- Walk, take public transport or car share.
- Create petitions.
- Buy shampoo and conditioner bars too.
- Bamboo toothbrushes

The Woodland Trust are offering free tree packs for schools and communities. Why not organise your school to get to get planting!

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

Want to learn more about climate change?

woodlandtrust.org.uk

friendsoftheearth.uk

wwf.org.uk

greenpeace.org.uk

ypte.org.uk (Young People's Trust for the Environment)

Want to get involved?

Check out our page of local initiatives:

m6theatre.co.uk/projects/storm



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