

TRAID EDUCATION

A newsletter for educators



Educating for Sustainability

NEW EDUCATION TOOLKIT LAUNCHES

DR ERIN REDMAN ON REAL WORLD SUSTAINABILITY

A TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE WITH SALLY DUSSEK

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“If you were to draw up a list of the most influential professions, teacher would most likely rank among the highest. This isn't because teachers accrue rewards like money, power or status, but because teaching, shapes something much bigger - the course of human history.”

Rutger Bregman, historian and author.



What TRAIID Education Offers

TRAIID promotes education for sustainability by offering free resources, assemblies and workshops, as well as giving tailored talks for universities and civil society groups. We address the issues of what to do with the clothes we no longer wear or need, the challenges relating to fast fashion and we introduce learners to more sustainable ways to source their clothes.

Our activities cover four knowledge areas (declarative, how-to, impact and social knowledge) and, depending on the school's preference, the workshops can place more emphasis on the production, consumption or waste aspects.

In addition, as part of our education work, TRAIID offers a limited number of visits to our charity shops or warehouse. We also place clothes banks in schools and educational institutions to encourage more clothes reuse within education communities. To work with us get in touch at education@traid.org.uk.

Welcome to the Team

TRAIID is delighted to welcome new Education Officer Morag Currie to our team. A trained teacher with more than 10 years' experience in the classroom, Morag is passionate about design and visual communication. When we all return to school, Morag will be able to visit your school to deliver an assembly or interactive workshop. Get in touch at education@traid.org.uk.

20TH
ANNIVERSARY
EDITION

TRAID **EDUCATION**

Behind
the Seams

TRAID
Education
Toolkit

Online Toolkit Launches

Since the recent launch of TRAIID's education toolkit 'Behind the Seams', hundreds of educators from more than 12 countries have downloaded this free resource from our website to promote education for sustainability in the classroom and beyond. With so much home schooling going on right now, this is proving to be a useful resource for supporting children and young people. The toolkit is structured around the themes of production, consumption and waste. It contains lesson plans, worksheets, slideshow presentations, videos and factsheets to support educators to deliver lessons about the issues covered in innovative and engaging ways. The lesson plans are designed to be stand-alone or mixed and matched with other lessons from the same or a different theme. This allows educators to use the toolkit in a variety of ways, depending on their own preferences and the types of groups that they are working with. Once you start work-

ing with the toolkit, let us know how you are using it, and any particularly useful lesson plans and activities. Get in touch at education@traid.org.uk. Download the toolkit [here](#).

New Education Video

TRAID has created a short, fun education video which presents the main problems caused by the production, consumption and waste of clothes, and the simple actions we can all take to make a difference. Use it to trigger discussion in the classroom or to motivate learners and educators to promote simple actions in their educational communities. It is also a great tool to introduce the key issues at a clothes swapping or reuse event, or to support schools and education institutions launching a clothes reuse scheme. Watch the video [here](#).

Interview

Dr. Erin Redman

**Integrating sustainability
into our classrooms,
curriculum and community.**



Dr. Erin Redman is a sustainability education expert, Professor and Director of the Educational Sustainability doctoral programme at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. Here, she explains to Ellen Tout how educators can model and advocate for sustainability.

TRAID: How would you define education for sustainability?

Dr. Erin Redman: Education for sustainability is by nature, interdisciplinary, solutions-oriented, based in the real world, and focused on empowering learners to lead for positive change. It's not just the lessons we use, the pedagogical techniques we employ, but also the behaviours we model.

TRAID: In the UK, climate change is part of secondary school Science and GCSE Geography. In your work, you emphasise the importance of going beyond the simple passing on of information. Instead, you talk about four types of knowledge: declarative, how-to, impact and social knowledge. Why is this combination important?

Dr. Erin Redman: When you think about climate change, even if a learner understands the science behind CO2 emissions and the enhanced greenhouse gas effect, does that mean that they drive less, eat less meat or consume less? In terms of how-to knowledge, the learner can learn how to reduce their climate footprint through changes in diet, consumption and transportation decisions. When we think about impact knowledge, we can discuss the massive impact the agricultural industry has on the planet and how we can impact industries through our purchases, which shape the landscape, environment and people on it. Finally, social norms are really the key driver of behaviours. Social norms are a type of knowing, akin to place-based knowledge, local knowledge and cultural knowledge. Social knowledge is a lens for viewing the world, based on signals and cues around us. While all four of these knowledge domains are important in different ways, in my research I found that social knowledge is the only one that is critical across a large array of behaviours – from composting to eating less meat, and more.

“Educators are sustainability role models and change agents every day.”

TRAID: What do you think about the school climate strikes?

Dr. Erin Redman: The school climate strikes are incredibly important in sending the message to the youth that they have the power to act and have their voices heard. If we want to empower learners to be agents of change, then we need to listen to their call for action. We want engaged citizenry and we see that in the youth climate strikes.

TRAID: Do you think there are enough opportunities for educators to learn how to deliver education for sustainability? How should we be educating the educators? Is the current system effective?

Dr. Erin Redman: The answer to this question is very country dependent. However, in the four countries in which I have worked – Germany, Mexico, Ireland and the United States – educators often rate their knowledge and skills to educate for sustainability as low. If they do not feel confident teaching about a topic, they are unlikely to do so. For many educators I see, there are few requirements to engage in professional development and the quality of that development varies. Even where there are requirements, there are few, if any, offerings on sustainability. One barrier to integrating sustainability across all disciplines is that many educators think that only Science departments should engage in it. In my dream world, all

educators in all subjects would feel confident integrating sustainability into their classroom, curriculum and community. We are a long way from that and need many more opportunities for educators.

TRAID: What would you say to an educator who wants to introduce more education for sustainability into their school? How can they start?

Dr. Erin Redman: I would suggest looking at one curricular activity and thinking about how to weave sustainability into that one lesson. For example, look at your narratives about people of certain careers and change up the gender descriptors. Gender equity is a critical part of sustainability. If you don't have time to revisit a lesson plan, model sustainability and make a statement about it at the beginning or end of class. For example, if you are using a reusable water bottle, instead of single-use, make a comment about it. Modelling sustainable behaviours is an excellent first step.

TRAID: What are the barriers to more education for sustainability in schools?

Dr. Erin Redman: The misconception that sustainability only belongs in Science classrooms prevents many educators from engaging in the topic. Secondly, the overcrowded agenda and overworked educators. Educators are doing so much, caring for the heads, hearts and hands of young learners. Sometimes it feels like we are just piling on more and more things, without truly recognising all that goes into what they do every day. With the issue of overworking, I think educators are undervalued for their leadership, creativity, innovation and fostering of holistic learning.

TRAID: Which countries are doing well in educating for sustainability?

Dr. Erin Redman: It is interesting because Norway is doing well in educating for sustainability.

“It’s a misconception that sustainability only takes place in the science classroom.”

It is investing its 'oil money' into education and sustainable infrastructure, so it is a wealthy and small country that is rather forward-thinking. In Italy, they are trying to integrate climate change education systematically into its school system. In Germany, there is a strong focus on competencies, which lends itself to sustainability education because it is a shift away from memorisation and regurgitation.

TRAID: Do learners want more education for sustainability? How can we better serve them?

Dr. Erin Redman: Yes, educators see that learners engage in topics that are relevant to their lives. Sustainability (or unsustainability) is all around us. It's in our grocery stores, our sidewalks and bike lanes, our transit infrastructure, our housing developments.

TRAID: What one small tweak could an educator make to impact their classes?

Dr. Erin Redman: Educators are role models and change agents every day. You can educate for sustainability through cycling to school, using a reusable water bottle, wearing second-hand clothes (and proudly commenting on that fact), using reusable bags and adopting gender-neutral language.

For more from Dr. Redman, see erinredman.com and [@DrErinRedman](https://twitter.com/DrErinRedman).

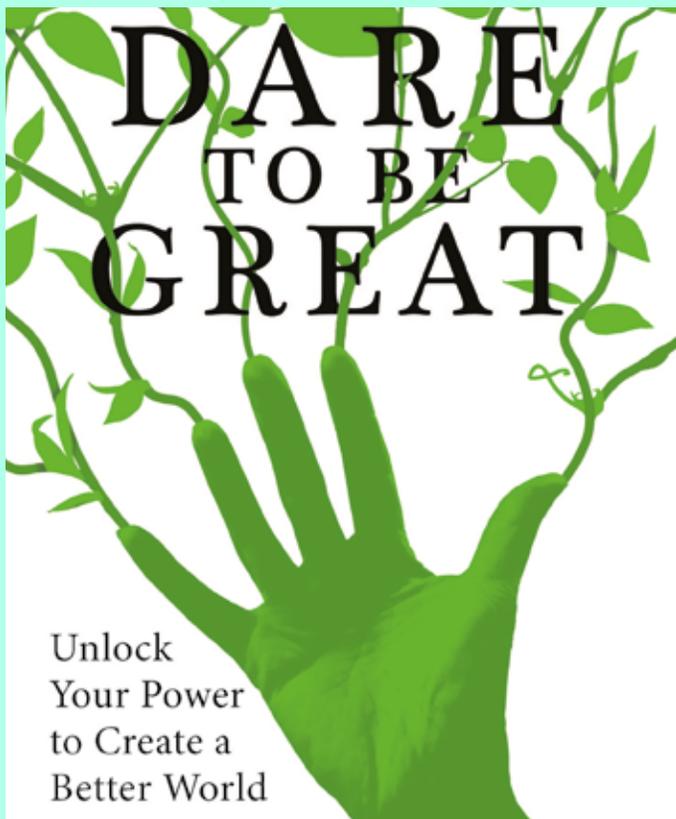
“Young people in the UK are wearing clothes for 2 years and 2 months - a shorter period of time than 3 years ago.”

From Consumer Research for ECAP, 2019

“75% of UK teachers feel that they have not received adequate training to educate students on climate change, its implications for the environment and societies around the world and how these can be addressed.”

Oxfam-UKSCN, 2019

Inspiring Reads



Activist and lawyer Polly Higgins dedicated her life to campaigning for recognition of ecocide - a law that would make businesses and government criminally liable for the damage they do to our ecosystems. One-year on from her death, her new book shares insights from her trailblazing journey, and guides readers to realise their power to create a better world.

In Higgins' words: "I know it may not yet look like it, but we are sowing the seeds of greatness for countless generations to come. That is the great work of our times. Yours and mine."

'Dare to be Great: Unlock Your Power to Create A Better World' by Polly Higgins (Flint) is out now.

LEEF Celebrates 31 years

Founded in 1989, the London Environmental Educator's Forum (LEEF) is a membership organisation for London's passionate green educators. This year is its 31st anniversary, marked by the National Conference on Urban Environmental Education. The event was held at the National History Museum in February and attended by 190 educators.

Keynote speakers included Justin Dillon, LEEF's first Chair of Trustees and now Professor of Science and Environmental Education at Exeter University, Raichael Lock of Manchester Environmental Education Network, and 16-year old Anjali Ramen-Middleton of the UK Student Climate Network. To find out more, including regular networking events, sign up for a LEEF membership [here](#).

On the Web

We recommend Bill Scott's blog on learning, sustainability and the link between them. Professor Emeritus of Education at the University of Bath, and former Head of its Education and Sustainability research programme, his blog addresses a wealth of topics, from climate anxiety to his views on zoos. Intellectually stimulating and unmissable reading. Read it [here](#).

Inspiring Upcycling

“We have small budgets but big creative hearts”

Keen for learners’ creative work to have real-world applications, Sally Dussek, Head of Textiles at Norbury Business and Enterprise College for Girls, got in touch with TR Aid about her upcycling project. Here, she tells Ellen Tout more about what the work involved and how to teach creatively on a budget.



TR AID: What inspired your own interest in sustainability?

Sally Dussek: My Textiles degree dissertation was all about sustainable fibres, so it’s always been an important issue for me. People really need to understand the environmental impact their clothing choices have on the environment.

TR AID: What did the upcycling project involve?

Sally Dussek: In year seven, we run a ‘salvage fairies’ project, where students design their own character and give them imaginary environmental superpowers to help save the planet. Then, in year nine, we look in depth at the environmental concerns of textiles to examine learners’ ideas and understanding of what the real costs of cheap fashion are. We discuss the ethical and environmental impacts of their roles as young citizens and designers, using TED-Ed talks, the Rana Plaza disaster and also TR AID’s website and ethos to contextualise it. The challenge is then to make an upcycled bag or skirt from a pair of jeans.

TR AID: What resources do you use?

Sally Dussek: All of the textiles come from donated clothing or fabrics, which really helps. We also make block prints from waste materials and reuse plastic bags and packaging by bonding them with heat to create new materials. We are a diverse all-girls comprehensive, and we struggle with small budgets but have big creative hearts!



“The creative industries offer innovative solutions to fire students’ imaginations and help solve the environmental problems we’re facing.”

TRAID: How do learners react when you talk about sustainable fashion?

Sally Dussek: I always start by asking how many of them open their wardrobe, filled with clothes, and say, “I’ve got nothing to wear”, or go to their fridge, filled with food, and say, “There’s nothing to eat in this house!” It’s a quick but effective way to get them to consider how lucky they are and to begin to unravel the journeys, stories and lives of the people making our clothes. Relating things back to their own experiences makes it easier for them to begin to see the bigger picture. Students said the work made them question their shopping habits.

TRAID: What advice would you give to other educators?

Sally Dussek: I think the most important thing is to make it fun and not overly ‘preachy’. Encouraging students to have empathy for others is really important, and imagery can be a good way to do this. For example, images of wildlife ruined by plastic, sad as they are, certainly spark students’ emotions and opinions.

TRAID: What hurdles do you come across in teaching about sustainability?

Sally Dussek: It’s not easy getting students to question the ‘buy brand new’ mass marketing that is so prevalent in their lives; or getting them to appreciate that shopping in independent or second-hand shops is a great way to help the planet. There’s still a lot of negative stigma around charity shops for teenagers. That’s why using TR Aid as a charity to promote in schools is so helpful. It really helps to dispel the myths related to charity shops.

TRAID: Why are creative subjects helpful in talking about sustainability?

Sally Dussek: The creative industries offer such

innovative and interesting solutions that can fire students’ imaginations and get them to see that other alternatives are possible to help solve the environmental problems we’re facing.

TRAID: How has your school worked with TR Aid?

Sally Dussek: TR Aid has run workshops, which reinforce our projects. We always reference TR Aid Brixton as somewhere to get great second-hand clothing. It’s near to our school and helps students contextualise things in relation to their own lives.

TRAID: What’s next for your project?

Sally Dussek: We’d love to do some upcycling shows in TR Aid stores, but time constraints always make it difficult. On a more practical level, we hope to run clothing swaps and get a TR Aid recycling clothing bank onsite. We are also looking at ways in which old uniforms can be upcycled.

Get in touch to see how TR Aid can work with your school at education@traid.org.uk.

Feedback from the classroom

“It made me think twice before buying clothes and consider the workers.”

“I now feel grateful for all of my clothes.”

“It’s important to support charities like TR Aid so that factory workers can have their voices heard.”

“I realised that clothes can be turned into something new and there’s no need to waste things.”

“Some people have hundreds of good joyful experiences that cost nothing. In the school-yard itself, you find a corner where there is just one little flower. You bend down – you use your body language – and you say: ‘Look here.’ And some answer: ‘There is nothing there.’ And then you talk a little about what you see: ‘This flower here, it’s not the season for it. How can it be there this late in the year? And look at it. It certainly has need of a little more water; it’s bending, look at the way it bends. What do you see when it’s bending like this?’ I call teachers who behave like this ‘nature gurus...’ ”

Extracted from *Deep Ecology and Education: A Conversation with Arne Næss*.

TRAID

TRAID is a UK charity working to tackle the problems caused by producing, consuming and wasting clothes. We help the UK public to keep clothes in use, and deliver education about the impacts of our clothes and what we can do about it. TRAIID completes the circle by raising funds for global projects benefitting the people and places making our clothes.

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