SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CLASSROOM AND BEYOND – ENGAGE THE WHOLE SCHOOL!

Using the knowledge and ideas that you've gathered from the course, you will create an **action plan** in three chapters:

- **background**, where you provide some basic information about yourself and your school
- **preparation**, where you brainstorm about the role of sustainability in your class
- **action**, where you come up with a project and map out the steps needed to complete it

Don't forget to check the evaluation criteria by which your plan will be assessed.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

Introduce yourself. Simple as that!

My name:	María de la Yedra Martínez Expósito
My country:	Spain
My role:	English Secondary teacher
My school:	Santo Domingo Savio School is a "concertado" school (it receives subsidies by the government/administration). It's placed close to the largest park in the city.There are more tan 600 students divided in: PRE-SCHOOL (145 pupils) PRIMARY EDUCATION (300 pupils) COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION (228 pupils) and SUPPORT FOR INTEGRATION & INCLUSION attending to students with special needs. We have an inclusive school team that help teachers to adapt curricula for SEN students. The school has a sports hall, large playgrounds, a theatre and a church (it's a catholic school). But one of the most lovely places is our eco-garden full of vegetables and fruit trees!!! We are 48 teachers and totally involved in "green" projects: ALDEA: ECOHUERTO (a school eco-garden), ALDEA: RECAPACICLA (recycling), CRECIENDO EN SALUD (health and sport) … And This year we have started to be part and work in DON BOSCO GREEN ALLIANCE, the international Salesian platform that contributes to global environmental action and thinking. We also are fond of theatre and music and every year a play (in English), a musical or a concert are prepared and performed.

CHAPTER 2: PREPARATION

Think about a class that you currently teach, or a single lesson if you prefer. How can you add more sustainability elements to it?

You don't need to fill in all the blanks! Only fill in what is relevant to your subject, needs and goals. The point of this exercise is just to help you brainstorm and set priorities. **You can simply write 'N/A' if some cells are not relevant to your objectives.**

My class/lesson:	***9th Grade Students*** ***ALDEA: ECOHUERTO (Village: School Eco-Garden)***
Knowledge already in my class:	- Basic knowledge to grow a school eco-garden (seeds, planting calendar…) - Combining flowers, aromatic plants… - Seasonal plants - Local varieties - Tools used in gardening/farming
Knowledge I would like to add:	- Natural and organic fertilizers - Prevention vs. cure by using natural products .... - Use recycling material (bins, boxes, drawers, laundry baskets, supermarket trolleys…) for seed sowing, pots, protecting plants from wind or hail… - Make gardening tools with recycled material or reuse old ones - How to plan a dry garden (huerta de secano)
Local issues already in my class:	- Students have already visited factories nearby which manufactures and supplies wood or biomass pellet (It's included in the curriculum) - Urban gardens working as pollution "watchdogs" - We have a school eco-garden and we try to improve the number of green spaces on playgrounds.
Local issues I would like to add:	- Local market products - Involve the local community and neighbours - Traditional festivals in our town related to farming - Traditions of some farming products and ways to cook them
Competences already in my class: The garden is conceived as a centre of interest that generates research activities for students related to curricular and cross-curricular areas. We have already worked on the following competences:	**1. Competence in linguistic communication:** This refers to the ability to use the vocabulary of the garden/orchard. Written language is used in different actions such as, for example, to describe in the *"field"* notebook all the experiences and events that took place in the orchard. **2. Basic competences in maths, science and technology** to solve everyday life questions and problems which can appear. **3. Competence in knowledge of and interaction with the physical world:** The skill that is worked on most in our eco-school garden in order to include knowledge of the environment and the most representative features of the natural and urban landscape, as well as the implementation of measures that favour the defence of the environment and quality of life. **4. Learning to learn** to organise their tasks and time, and to work individually or collaboratively to achieve a goal. Every day there will be many opportunities for our students to gather and organise information in a practical way (sowing, flowering, watering, crop rotation…) **5. Social and civic competences** to relate to other people and participate actively in the task. Most of the tasks and activities carried out in the school garden are group activities, involving the whole class. **6. Sense of initiative** which involves the skills to turn ideas into action and manage risk-taking or project planning. All this project develops the ability to

	choose and make decisions, as well as the acceptance of responsibilities and the evaluation of the results, with a view to detecting possible errors and proposing subsequent improvements.
Competences I would like to add:	1. **Advanced mathematical competence** in order to take measurements, calculate areas and perimeters based on reality (geometry); make mathematical calculations referring to water consumption, expenditure on materials (tools, fertilisers, seeds, etc.) or measure weights and volumes. 2. **Digital competence** to obtain, analyse, produce and exchange information and data. Our students will have to make constant use of word processors and the Internet. 3.**Cultural awareness and expressions** to appreciate the beauty and importance of nature and, on the other hand, the resources provided by the garden allow us to promote the expression and creativity of our students. Thus, for example, workshops can be carried out with disposable or recycled materials; workshops for making colognes, teas… 4.**Education for consumption and for a healthy life**: Hands-on learning provides students the knowledge for applying their lessons to real-life situations.

CHAPTER 3: READY, SET… ACTION PLAN!

Think about a class that you currently teach, or a single lesson if you prefer. How can you add more sustainability elements to it?

Now that you've identified some gaps and needs in your curriculum, try to think of a **whole-school sustainability project** that you can carry out to further them.

The project can be anything from a **pedagogical innovation** (*e.g., using issue analysis in your lessons, building a school garden*) to an **organisational change** (*e.g., setting up an eco-committee, collaborating with colleagues on a series of lessons*) to a **community effort** (*e.g., painting a 'Cut X%' mural, contacting a local NGO for workshops*). There are many paths to the same destination!

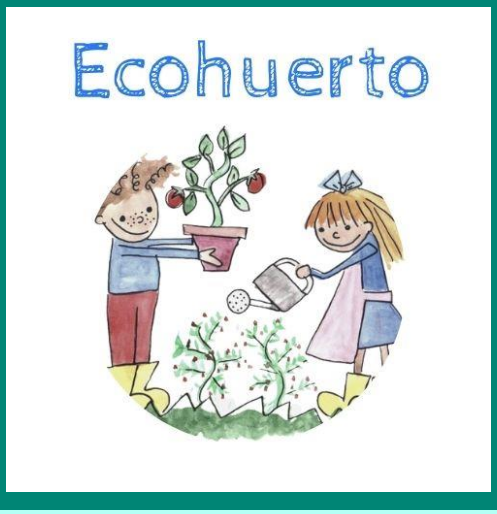
If you're not sure what project you want to carry out, you can write down a few possibilities on a sheet and give them a score between 1 and 5 based on 'importance' and 'availability of resources'. The project with the highest combined score should be a good candidate. Then...

1. Write the **title and/or summary** of your project in the first row
2. Outline the **steps you need to follow** to carry out the project
3. Note down **who will be involved** in each step and **how long you think it will take**

You can add or remove rows if you wish.

ALDEA: ECOHUERTO

https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/portals/web/aldea/proyectos/ecohuerto/el-proyecto



What?

Despite the fact that our school is surrounded by green areas we consider that a school garden is a source of motivation for the children to plan, collaborate, make decisions and take individual and collective responsibilities.

It can serve as “vehicle” to maintain, develop and promote fundamental values of respect, responsibility, diversity, ecology, sustainability and healthy eating. As well as the connection between the different areas of the curriculum.

This idea is the starting point of the project, and with enthusiasm and excitement we want to involve our students (from pre-school to secondary) on our school garden, an adventure that we began a few years ago and every school year is becoming more and more interesting and enriching.

A school garden is a first-rate educational resource for reinforcing curricular content and for transmitting to pupils the importance of productive techniques with food, in relation to natural cycles and respect for the environment. Sowing and planting vegetables and fruit trees has value in itself and helps to understand the multitude of rhythms that dominate nature, the dependence that human beings have on it and the increasingly pronounced asynchrony that exists between the two.

If we also use ecological and local species, we are achieving multiple objectives, bringing the products closer to the pupils, encouraging their consumption through experience and raising awareness of the advantages of consuming products that are ever closer to home in the fight against climate change.

Who?

Teachers:

Biology
Technology
Me (English)
Chemistry

Students (from pre-school to secondary)
I’ll work with my 9th grade students (14–15 years old), especially collaborating and helping younger pupils.

Parents

We count on the collaboration of **the school principal**, **the parents' association** and **Junta de Andalucía** (Andalusian government and administration) which is in charge of most part of the material.

How long?

One school year +

OBJECTIVES:

1. Direct observation by students of the rhythms of nature, knowledge and direct contact with the environment.
2. Contact with natural and ecological products and their cycles. Learn more about the crops grown in our town/region.
3. Encourage the consumption of products according to their seasonality, which will facilitate the acquisition of good eating habits through the preparation of recipes with the products obtained in the garden.

Ecoescuelas

4. Integrate and teach collaboration and teamwork. 5. Encourage children to be physically active to stay healthy. 6. Respect nature. 7. Involve parents in the work of the garden, through joint and coordinated activities. 8. Make appropriate use of tools. 9. Encourage environmentally friendly actions such as recycling, reduction and reuse of available resources. 10. Learn how to market the crops and products that make a self-sustaining community.		
Basic time & cost calculations Material and some tools are supplied by Andalusian Government and Administration with the programme **ECOESCUELAS (Eco-Schools)** https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/portals/web/aldea/contenidos/-/contenidos/detalle/ecohuerto-icono Tools (parents and teachers supplied them. Most of them are reused or repaired) Water & Energy (50 – 65 euros)		
STEPS: *Just the first school term (October to December) appears on this worksheet. For more information you can use the link at the beginning. It's our "roadmap" for this school year.* **FIRST STEPS IN SEPTEMBER:** **-** Cleaning the remains of previous harvests and ploughing the land. We prepare the land for cultivation - Distribution of quadrants among the participating groups **OCTOBER:** - Fertilising and enriching the soil with compost. - Selection of plants for cultivation. - Sowing of seeds in seedbeds and seedlings in the soil. - Drawing up a watering schedule and monitoring the harvest. - ACTIVITY: Distribute the garden - Putting up signs identifying the crops. **NOVEMBER:** **-** Planting of crops, irrigation, pest and disease control and care. - ACTIVITY 2: The Mascot of Our Garden and a slogan. - Planting of seedlings in the ground. **DECEMBER:** Control and care of crops. Schools nearby visit our school garden (which will be decorated for Christmas by our little pupils) Photos and videos will be uploaded on the school Facebook and webpage	Teachers & students (4th grade to 10th grade) Teachers and students (5-year-old pupils to 10th grade) A day with families Teachers and students (4th grade to 10th grade) Younger pupils will take part in a "competition" to design our mascot and create a logo. Teachers and students (3-year-old pupils to 10th grade) Information and photos/videos will be sent to the project coordinators and share with other schools.	2 weeks 4 weeks 4 weeks 2 or 3 weeks

PROS & CONS:

At the beginning of the project it is easy for students to ask a lot of questions. It is usually me, as an English teacher, who is in charge of these classes.
These questions are very useful to set up small discussions and to see the readiness of the students for the work ahead.
Most of them are….
Does water for irrigation fall from the sky? Can we buy vegetable seeds in supermarkets? How much does a hoe cost or where can I get one for free? Do we need a tractor to grow a school garden? If there is no electricity, where do gardeners charge their mobile phones?
Don't forget that we need tools for the cultivation, supplies and infrastructures, water, seeds and plants…
If we know what we need and how we can get it easily, **LET'S START!!!**

PROS:
Quality time
Teamwork
Peer support
Project Based-Learning which connects students to the world beyond the classroom and prepares them to accept and meet challenges in the real world.
Respect for the environment

CONS:
Lack of time
Sometimes lack of commitment and collaboration among teachers, students and PARENTS
Extra work - *What's the point?* is listened to by teachers so many times
And on holidays, *who will look after it?* This problem can be easy solved at our school because there's always someone living here. It's a religious community.

This worksheet is adapted from UNESCO's Education for sustainable development toolkit. We hope you will find good use for this action plan in your school.

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