

# ELT and climate change, where next?

Christopher Graham, co-founder ELT Footprint



**Future of English Language  
Teaching Conference** **ONLINE**



# Overview

Work done to date

Key messages and actions





# Why, and why now?



A black and white portrait of Margaret Mead, an elderly woman with short, curly hair, wearing round glasses and a patterned jacket. She is looking slightly to the left of the camera with a serious expression.

—  
“We won't have a society if we  
destroy the environment.”  
—

Margaret Mead



'A wonderful, rare and urgent book, filled with  
the hard-earned eloquence of experience and  
the reflective temperament of a poet'

Hisham Matar

# English Pastoral

## An Inheritance

James Rebanks



“What will our descendants say of us, years from now? How will we be judged? Will they stand in the dust of a scorched and hostile world, surrounded by the ruins of all that exists today, and think that we, who could have saved the earth, were thoughtless vandals, too selfish or too stupid to turn back? Will the future know us as the generation who pushed everything too far, on whose watch the world began to fall apart, who had so little courage and wisdom that we turned away from our responsibilities?”

James Rebanks, *English Pastoral*, 2020

# At government level



**UN CLIMATE  
CHANGE  
CONFERENCE  
UK 2021**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

# Our community's response - ELT Footprint

Born 2019 in Barcelona, now 3600 members <https://eltfootprint.org/>

ELT Footprint UK <https://eltfootprint.uk/>

# The British Council response

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection>

Climate Action in Language Education:

Professional development

Podcasts

Lesson Plans

Research



<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/training>



# Climate Action in Language Education



**A FREE online course series starting on 28 April 2021**

# Podcast Series The Climate Connection

The Climate Connection (#TheClimateConnection) is a new podcast series from the British Council which explores the relationship between the climate crisis and language education. Across the ten episodes, we'll hear from a wide range of leading practitioners working in the sector – teachers, trainers, researchers, publishers and authors. We'll travel from Colombia to China, Moldova to Mali, and Palestine to Poland in our quest to share what's happening at the cutting edge of climate action in language education. In partnership with the Oxford English Dictionary, we'll also learn more about the origins of climate-related language, in both English and other languages.

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/podcast>

# Lesson Plans

Twelve lesson plans around a range of climate and sustainability issues.

Different ages and levels.

Supporting booklet.

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/climate-action-language-education-lesson-plans>



A photograph of a wooden table with a cup of coffee, a pair of glasses, and a book. The cup is white with a black logo that says 'THE DRIP' and a coffee drop icon. The coffee has a white foam top with a latte art design. A pair of dark-rimmed glasses is resting on the table next to the cup. A book is partially visible on the right side of the table. The text 'An overview of the British Council Climate Action in Language Education research project' is overlaid in white on the image.

# An overview of the British Council Climate Action in Language Education research project

# The context of the analysis

1. The damage our community does to the environment and what we can do about it – trees, energy, flights

2. The opportunities we have for climate change education – 1.5 billion learners

**Desk research**

**Online surveys**

Teachers

Institutions

Publishers

Teenage students

**Interviews**





# What we need to do next - operational



# Making change happen

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“Culture change needs to happen through a movement, not a mandate. To create a movement in your organization, start by framing the issue in terms that stir emotion and incite action;”

Bryan Walker and Sarah A. Soule.  
Harvard Business Review June 20, 2017.



# The Covid 'dividend'

fewer flights   working from home   digital content, but ...

... backsliding?   There are elephants in the room.

<https://dimpact.org/about>



# Fragmentation

teachers   teacher associations   students   institutions

[www.eltfootprint.org](http://www.eltfootprint.org)   [www.eltfootprint.uk](http://www.eltfootprint.uk)

we need to get sharing through our networks

# The green continuum

## The 'green' institutional continuum

Environmental awareness needs to be part of school culture – the lens we use to focus on our priorities.

Not piecemeal, but integrated.

Integration is sustainable – the organisation grows and flexes, and the responses become organic and instinctive.

Embedding creates good habits in a sustainable way.

# Bottom up - listen to and support the agitators

Listen to and document ideas from your team and from students - a central hub such as Trello or Padlet.

Encourage micro-teams and encourage agitators.

Involve students in green decision-making.



# Suppliers (mainly publishers) – keep the pressure on

Publishers trees printing binding wrapping boxing selling distribution post-use

Things are really changing

Customer, employee, shareholder and reputational pressures

Tell them – they do listen to the markets.

Demand greener products – less plastic, better paper, greener content.

Digital?

Materials and content.

# Listen to the kids 1

Sample size 506 teenagers globally

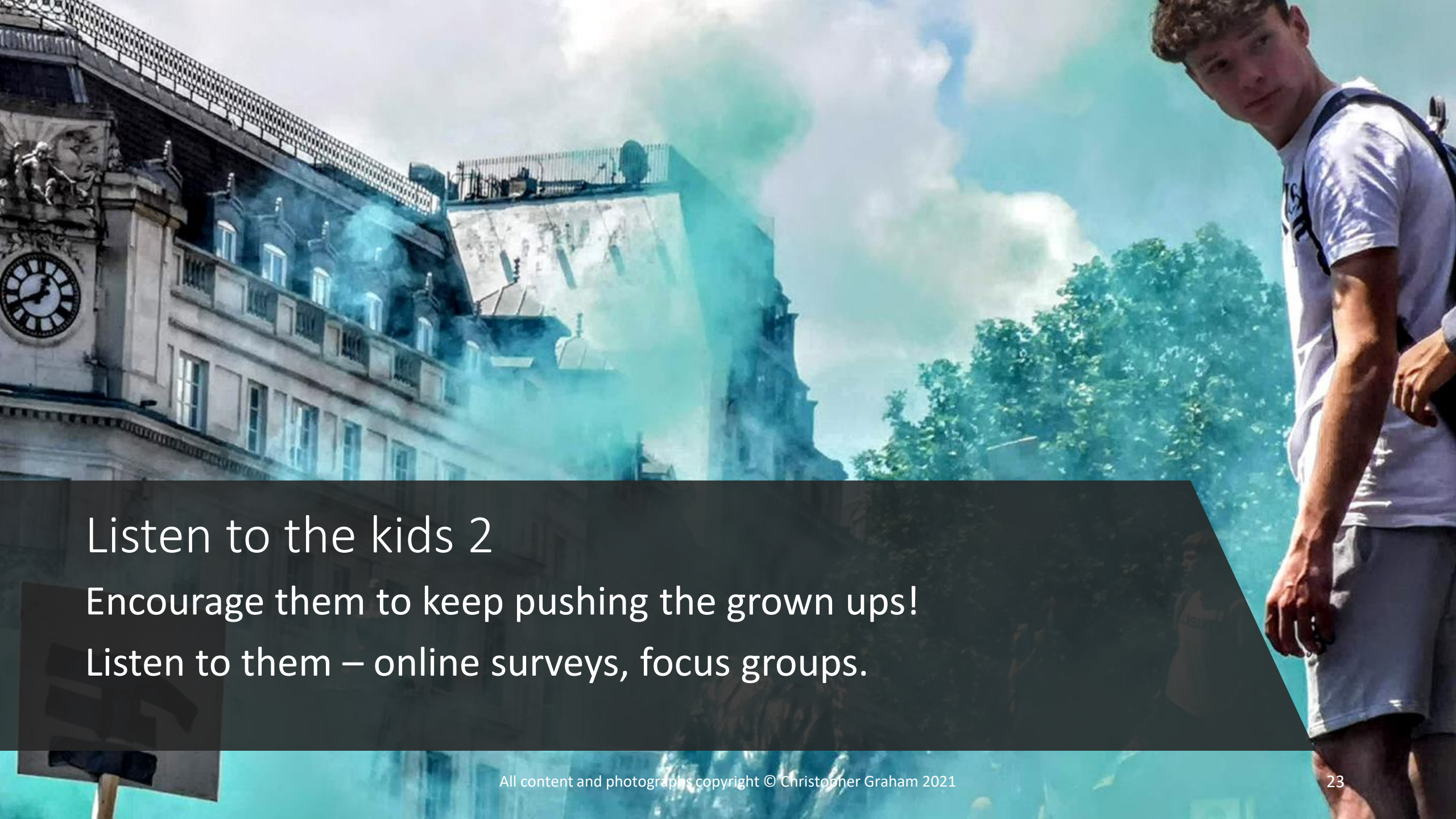
Has your school done any projects about climate change in English?

Yes 24.51% No 75.49%

Sample size 359 teenagers globally

Would you like your English lessons to have more climate change topics?

Yes 71.59% No 28.41%



Listen to the kids 2  
Encourage them to keep pushing the grown ups!  
Listen to them – online surveys, focus groups.



WHILE YOU'RE BUSY  
SELF-DESTRUCTING..  
YOU'RE DESTROYING ME

What we need to do next – in  
class



# Professional development

Sample size 1887 teachers in 109 countries globally

79.7% feel they need training on how to integrate climate change topics into lessons

Let's respond as a community to this need

# Practical activities

“With my 3rd grade students, I conducted a lesson about seed germination and explained how it is important to plant trees and flowers. Also I gave them some beans to plant at home and asked them to bring it when it grows up. It was interesting for them. And after two weeks many students brought their plant.”

Munis Saibjanova, government school teacher, Uzbekistan.

# Community outreach – plugging into community initiatives

“Samira Bekheira, a secondary school inspector overseeing 35 schools in Algeria, has been instrumental in driving climate change education and action in her region.”

“Samira’s initiatives are embedded in the school and the surrounding community and enjoy strong student support and participation. These initiatives are being funded by the school from existing budgets despite there being broad local and national cross-stakeholder support for the project, including the mayor, the ministry, the headteacher, parents and teachers, as well as students.”

# Making change happen

“Students estimated themselves, then calculated their possible water footprint using the app on <https://www.yarininsuyu.com/>, and watched part of the "25 Litre" documentary. Students had wildly underestimated their water use, and were surprised that burgers and clothing used so much. Some signed the pledges to reduce water usage.”

Private school teacher, Turkey.



# Getting things done

“Dalok Parsongue Natanoumane is the president of TETO, the Togo English Teachers’ Organisation. In his interview he discussed a classroom-based project that has helped to deal with a very significant problem around the world, that of plastic bag use and general disposal of waste.”

“The effectiveness of the project was underpinned by teacher development and support in teaching these topics. Workshops were held for teachers from all the pedagogical regions, with teacher returning to their regions empowered to engage with students both in classes and in their English clubs.”

# Spreading the word

“Students get engaged in these topics. They become aware of the need to be environmentally friendly and tell their relatives about it.”

Araceli Salas, teacher educator, Mexico.

# Materials – the green lens

Simple tweaks – class or publisher-led

Changing defaults – publisher-led

# Our Planet – American University of Armenia

Three Units:

The Earth`s Surface

The Earth`s Natural Resources

The Earth`s Atmosphere

Our Planet is accompanied with:

Teacher`s Manual (TM)

Teacher`s Slides (TS)

**Global Warming**

The atmosphere of the Earth is becoming warmer and warmer. Too much carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases make the Earth warmer.

When there are a lot of these gases, they trap more heat from the sun and make the Earth warmer. We call it **global warming**. Global warming is very bad. Because of global warming, oceans become warmer and sea ice starts to melt.

Look at these pictures. Do you see any difference?







1979, at the end of summer      2015, at the end of summer

This is the Arctic sea ice. This ice melts more and more every year. When ice melts, the sea level goes up. Too much water creates floods. A lot of land goes under water.

**Action Plan to Reduce Ecological Footprint**

↓

**WE CAN REDUCE OUR ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT IF WE:**

			
1. _____	1. _____	1. _____	1. <u>Take public transportation.</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____



# A nice summary...

Adam Matthews, Juniors Operations Manager at the Wimbledon School of English in London, when talking about environmental content with primary students, said, “juniors want things to be genuine.”

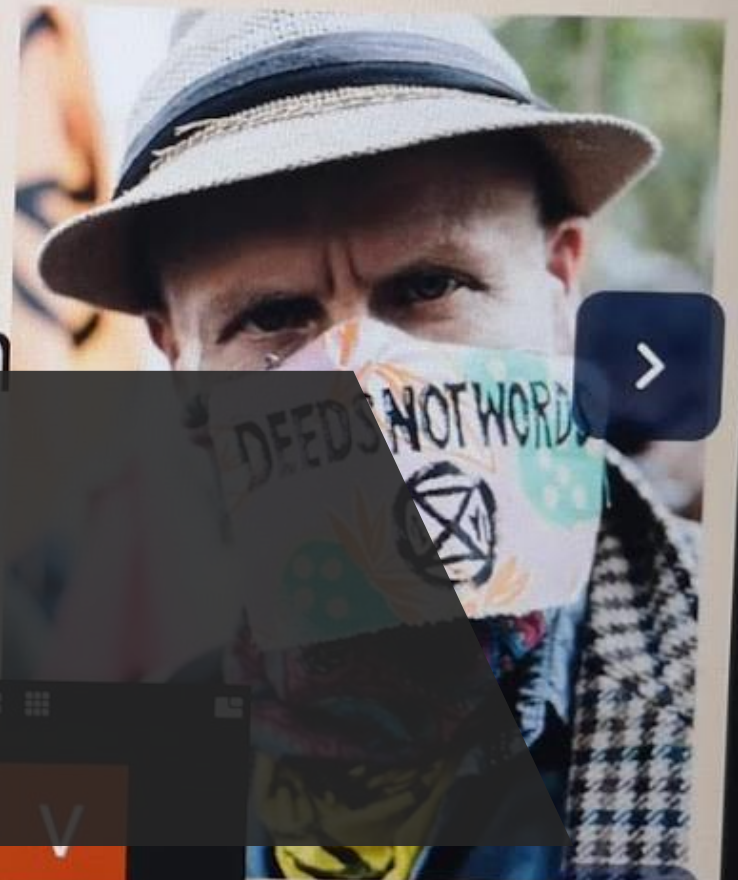
# Measures to solve this problem

Construction of dams and water protection areas

People have to collect trash from the water.

Let's talk

Reduce the use of plastic.



## This session has now ended

Please return to the conference programme to choose your next session.

### Webinar: Discover Trinity

Thursday 1 July, 2021

Find out more: [learn.trinitycollege.co.uk/discover](https://learn.trinitycollege.co.uk/discover)



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