

Sustainability Teachers' Academy Lesson Plan

Sustainability in the News

Topics Covered

Sustainability
Three Pillars

Grades

6-8

Duration

15 Minutes

Sustainability Competencies

Values Thinking
Future Thinking
Systems Thinking
Collaborative Thinking

Online Resources

[Science Daily](#)

[CNN News](#)

[BBC News](#)

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify topics related to sustainability in current events
- Articulate the Three Pillars of sustainability

Materials

- Laptops or tablets, Wi-Fi internet access
- Whiteboards, dry erase markers, or posters and magic markers
- Printed articles, magazines, newspapers (optional)

Teacher Preparation

Students should already be familiar with basic ideas in sustainability (Brundtland definition, Three Pillars, etc.). Select and news websites, or online resources for student use, or use printed documents, magazines, and newspapers articles (if applicable).

Some possible topics include:

- Water resources and use
- Food production, distribution, or waste
- Energy resources
- Waste stream and recycling

Background Information

Students should already know that sustainability rests on three interrelated domains: the Environment, Society, and Economy (also known as the *Three Pillars of Sustainability*).

Current events we see in the news are often reported with a narrow perspective that fails to consider one or more of these important factors of sustainability. However, many of the most newsworthy events have important implications for the *Three Pillars*.

Recommended Procedures

Allow students to work in pairs or small groups to select and read about one current event from an online news aggregator (alternatively, the instructor can provide specially selected articles to students). After student pairs/groups have had time to read their article together, they should quietly discuss potential ways in which the news item or event impacts sustainability and the *Three Pillars*. Ask students to create a short list of the impacts they identify. Have student pairs/groups share a short description of their news item, and its impacts on sustainability with the class.