

# NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

## ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR AGES 7-14



Photo: Sam Baggette/Oxfam

## About this resource

At the beginning of the year, whether it's the calendar or school year, people often reflect and set resolutions for the year ahead. The global pandemic has prompted many of us to reconsider our connections with those around us and what we value the most in life. It has also made many people think about how we can work together to create a fairer and more sustainable future for all.

The following activities can be used to help learners aged 7-14 years to reflect on their own role in their school, community and as a global citizen; supporting them to set goals for the coming year. There is also an accompanying slideshow to support their learning and thinking.

### Contents

About this resource	2
Activity 1 – An ideal future	3
Activity 2 – What can I do to make a difference?	4
Activity 3 -Creating New Year's Resolutions	5
Activity 4 – Class resolutions	6
Activity 5 – Reflecting on resolutions	6
Useful links and resources	7

## Learning outcomes

### Learners will:

1. reflect on what their ideal future would be like
2. consider potential barriers to their ideal future
3. think critically about what action is needed to make their future a reality
4. reflect on the progress made with their resolutions

## Curriculum links

- > **England:** English/PSHE/Citizenship
- > **Northern Ireland:** Language and Literacy/Learning for Life and Work/Personal Development & Mutual Understanding
- > **Scotland:** Health and Well-being/Literacy and English/Social Studies
- > **Wales:** Health and Well-being/Humanities/Languages, Literacy and Communication

## Activity 1 - An ideal future

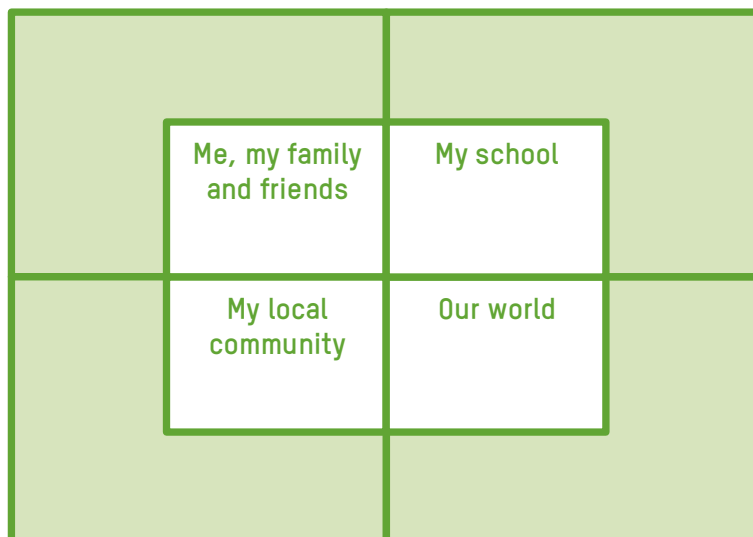
1. Ask learners to imagine what they would like themselves, their school, their local community or the world to be like in the future. For example, they might wish people to be kinder with one another or to take more action to protect the environment or they might wish for a fairer world.
2. Give each learner an A4 piece of paper and ask them to divide it into four. Tell learners that they can use each quadrant to draw their ideal future using pictures and words, or that they can create a collage using a mixture of drawings, writing and cut outs from magazines or newspapers. Explain that the four quadrants should represent 'Me', 'My school', 'My local community' and 'My world'. An example diagram is provided below and in slide 2 of the slideshow.



3. In groups of four, ask learners to share the representations of their ideal futures.
4. Finally, invite learners to share some ideas about their ideal futures as a class or whole group. Possible discussion questions include:
  - > What barriers might there be to creating my ideal future? Learners might like to record these on sticky notes around the edge of their piece of paper.
  - > Which of my ideas do I think are most likely to happen? Which ones do I think are least likely? Why do I think this?
  - > Do I think others share my vision of the future?
  - > What needs to change for my ideal future to become a reality?
  - > Who do I think can/should take action?
  - > What might individuals do to help create this ideal future? It may be helpful to make the point that there will always be some things in life we can't control. However, there are also things we can control, such as how we respond to events and others.
  - > Do I think individuals can influence what our future is like or do we need bigger groups of people to work together to make a change?

## Activity 2 - What can I do to make a difference?

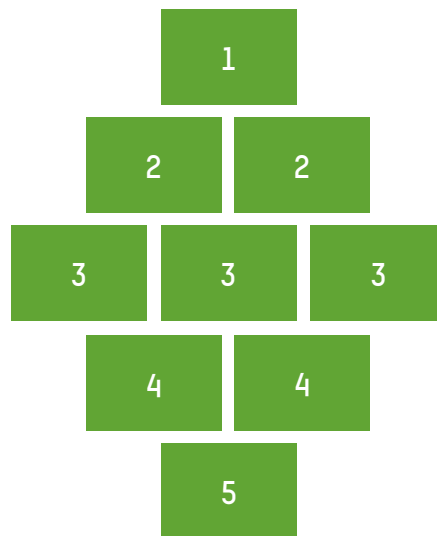
1. Give each learner a larger piece of paper and ask them to divide it into quadrants, as they did in the previous activity ([An ideal future](#)). Learners should then place their 'ideal future' representation in the middle of the larger piece of paper. An example diagram is provided below and on slide 3.



2. In pairs, ask learners to reflect on what they are already doing or could do as individuals to create their 'ideal future'. Explain that these can be small or bigger actions, such as treating others with kindness, exercising more, learning something new, trying to reduce their carbon footprint, being part of the school council or volunteering in their local community. The ideas in slides 4 to 7 could be used to prompt their thinking.
3. Ask learners to write down their ideas in the quadrants of the larger piece of paper, so that each action corresponds with the most relevant quadrant of their 'ideal future'.
4. Ask learners to discuss in pairs what other actions they could individually take to contribute to their ideal future. They should each write down these ideas in a different coloured pen or pencil in the related quadrants of their larger piece of paper.
5. Ask each pair to join with another to form a group of four. Learners should share their ideas of different actions that individuals might take, before discussing the following questions:
  - > How will this action make a difference? Who and what might be impacted?
  - > Is it achievable? What would I need to do to make sure this action takes place? Who might be able to help me?
  - > How might I influence others to take this action?
6. Finish by sharing learners' ideas as a whole class.

### Activity 3 - Creating New Year's resolutions

1. Organise learners into groups of three or four. Ask learners to choose their nine favourite actions from those discussed in [What can I do to make a difference?](#) activity. They should write each resolution on a sticky note or card.
2. Ask learners to rank their ideas in a 'diamond nine' formation based on criteria such as: which actions they feel will have the most impact, which are the most important, and how easy an action might be to do. An example diagram is provided below and in slide 8.
3. Full details on how to organise a 'diamond nine' ranking are provided in Oxfam's [Global Citizenship in the Classroom: A guide for teachers](#) (p.19):



4. Allow time for learners to join with another group to discuss their rankings and identify any similarities or differences.
5. Ask learners to individually select their top three resolutions to take forward for the next term or year. Ask them to write down reasons for why they have chosen each one. They could use the following key questions to help guide their thinking:
  - > What is the purpose of this resolution? What will it achieve?
  - > Why is the resolution important to me?
  - > Who and what will be impacted by this resolution?
  - > How easy will this resolution be to achieve?
  - > When will I achieve this resolution by? How will I know that I have achieved it?
6. Finally, invite learners to share some of their resolutions and the reasons for their choices with the whole class.

## Activity 4 - Class resolutions

1. Using their ideas from the [What can I do to make a difference?](#) activity, ask learners to work in pairs and pick five resolutions for the whole class to work towards.
2. Ask each pair to join with another pair. Between them pairs should have ten resolutions. Ask learners to share their resolutions and discuss why they have chosen them. In their group, learners should then agree on five resolutions for the whole class.
3. Each group of four should then find another group and repeat the activity. Display the resolutions on the board and invite learners to give reasons for why they think each one is important. Their aim is to persuade the rest of the group to agree with them. Give each learner five sticky dots and explain that they represent votes. Ask learners to place their sticky dots on the board next to their favourite resolution(s). They can use as many (or as few) dots as they want on each resolution.
4. The five resolutions with the most dots will be the class resolutions. Ask learners to create a classroom display so that the five resolutions are visible to all learners.

## Activity 5 - Reflecting on resolutions

1. This activity could be done periodically or at the end of the school year or term. It would work with both learners' individual resolutions and the whole class resolutions.
2. Using their resolutions, learners should take a few minutes to reflect individually on the following questions:
  - > What has gone well?
  - > What am I proud of?
  - > What has gone less well?
  - > What could I/we do differently in the future?
3. Organise learners into pairs and ask them to discuss their ideas.
4. Discuss as a whole class what has gone well with the resolutions. Encourage learners to provide examples and identify what they could do differently in the future.
5. Finally, support learners to create posters to show their achievements, as well as their future intentions.
  - > This year I have...
  - > In the future I will...

'You may never know what results come of your actions, but if you do nothing, there will be no results.'

Mohandas Gandhi

## Useful links and resources

- > Our [Global Citizenship in the Classroom](#) guide is full to the brim with practical tools and advice for teachers wanting to embed global citizenship in their classrooms. Learn how to effectively bring a global lens into your teaching with our handy planning framework, participation methods, and tools to assess learning.
- > See the [Get Global!](#) resource for a wealth of ideas on how to facilitate active global citizenship. Support learners to move from thinking critically about issues that are important to them, to planning and participating in action, to reflecting on their performance and assessing their work. Although aimed at ages 11-16, many of the activities can easily be adapted for younger learners.
- > The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of ambitious and urgent goals and targets aimed at changing our world for the better. Packed with practical advice, useful information, cross-curricular activity ideas and inspiring case studies; this [guide](#) aims to deepen teachers' understanding of education about and for the SDGs.
- > With inspiring case studies and creative ideas for taking action, our [Making Sense of the Climate Emergency](#) resource for ages 8-14 helps learners to: reflect on their values in life, discuss thoughts and feelings about the climate crisis, and feel empowered to act – both individually and together with others.
- > Oxfam is a global movement of millions of people working together to end poverty and create a kinder, fairer, safer and more sustainable future. [Find out more](#) about how Oxfam works to achieve change in the UK and around the world.

