

**Gender, Income, and Climate:
Addressing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals in Philadelphia**



Unit created by Miranda Kuhn (Arcadia University School of Education) for Global Philadelphia Association.

Title of Unit:

Gender, Income, and Climate: Addressing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals in Philadelphia

Grades: 9-12

Duration: 3 weeks

Overarching Essential Question:

- How do ordinary people create change in their communities?

Topical Essential Questions:

- How has Philadelphia fulfilled the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals?
- What needs to change in Philadelphia to fulfill the Sustainable Development Goals?
- What role do young people play in activism?

Big Ideas:

- Community interdependence
- Community cooperation and grassroots organizing
- Influence of institutions
- Connection of local needs to global needs
- Connection of past activism to contemporary movements

Enduring Understandings:

Students will understand that ...

- Change happens in a democracy by the efforts of communities
- Activism is a means to bring about change in society

- Women, LGBTQ+ people, and young people have been underrepresented in history, despite their essential roles in changing its course

Knowledge:

Students will know that ...

- The United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals cover a variety of issues that every country’s people are facing, including issues that impact the planet as a whole
- People have been organizing around many of these issues in the United States for a very long time, including activists from the Feminist Movements, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Environmentalist Movement
- Different modes of activism include political campaigning, non-violent resistance, protesting, boycotting, petitions, etc.
- The Civil Rights Movement consisted of decades of organizing by young people, women, and other community members, rather than several heroic leaders that single-handedly changed history

Skills:

Students will be skilled at ...

- Critical analysis of primary source documents
- Activist skills, including writing letters and petitions, persuasive writing, and public speaking
- Allyship, including empathizing, understanding, acknowledging other viewpoints, making space for other voices
- Collaboration skills, dividing work

Three-week overview to reflect pacing and timing of the unit:

Week 1	Introduction to Sustainable Development Goals	Goal 5 - Gender Equality	Goal 5 - Gender Equality	Goal 10 - Reduce Income Inequality	Goal 13 - Climate Action
Week 2	Brief overview of history of Philadelphia	Gender activism in Philadelphia today	Civil rights activism in Philadelphia today	Environmental activism in Philadelphia today	Wrap-Up + Introduction to Project
Week 3	Project				

Title of Lesson: Introduction to the Sustainable Development Goals

Content/Subject Area: UN's SDGs

Duration: 1 class period

Context and Teaching Suggestions:

- The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals cover a variety of areas in which countries need to improve for the good of their populations and for the protection of the planet
- There are 17 goals in total:
 - Goal 1 - No Poverty
 - Goal 2 - Zero Hunger
 - Goal 3 - Good Health and Well-Being
 - Goal 4 - Quality Education
 - Goal 5 - Gender Equality
 - Goal 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation
 - Goal 7 - Affordable Clean Energy
 - Goal 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth
 - Goal 9 - Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
 - Goal 10 - Reduce Inequalities
 - Goal 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities
 - Goal 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production
 - Goal 13 - Climate Action
 - Goal 14 - Life Below Water
 - Goal 15 - Life Above Land
 - Goal 16 - Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
 - Goal 17 - Partnership for the Goals
- Within the context of this unit, this lesson would serve as an introduction to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals
- Inequality – the status of not being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities
- Bravery - the choice and willingness to confront agony, pain, danger, uncertainty, or intimidation
- Protest - a public expression of objection, disapproval or dissent towards an idea or action, typically a political one
- Activism - the policy or action of using vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change

Resources:

- [THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development](#)
- [Sustainable Development Goals Campaign in Philadelphia](#)

Title of Lesson: The Equal Rights Movement in the United States

Content/Subject Area: Goal 5 - Gender Equality

Context:

- This lesson would give a history for early gender equality activism in the United States
- “First-wave feminism” - Equal Rights/Women’s Suffrage Movement - 1840’s-1920
- Declaration of Sentiments—a document inspired by/based on the Declaration of Independence and created to advocate for women’s rights as American citizens; authored primarily by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and signed by activists at the first woman’s rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York, 1848
- franchise—a right or privilege granted to an individual or a group
 - to *enfranchise* someone or some group is to give them the right to vote
 - to *disenfranchise* someone or some group is to take away or deprive them of the right to vote
- resolution—a formal decision or expression of opinion, often agreed on in a meeting by a vote
- 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution (1920) - prohibits the United States and the states from denying the right to vote to American citizens on the basis of sex, giving some women the right to vote

Suggested Authentic Performance Tasks:

- For homework (or perhaps in class if your classroom has access to computers), I would suggest giving students the link to the DOCSTeach activity below, which will have students use primary sources to assess understanding of the sequential order of the movement and has an open-ended question relating to the techniques that activists use. This relates to the overall theme of our unit of emphasizing activism and empowering our students to take these skills and apply them for issues that they care about.
- Students could be told to make videos for GoFundMe that give reasons why people should donate to a cause, this could be inspired by the techniques that activists used during the Women’s Suffrage Movement for a cause that students get to choose or could be an opportunity for students to roleplay as fighters for women’s right to vote

Resources:

- [Seneca Falls Convention - PBS Video](#)
- [The Racial Divide in the Suffrage Movement - PBS Resources](#)
- [Collection of Primary Sources from the Library of Congress - Media Gallery](#)
- [19th Amendment Transcript and other resource materials - PBS](#)
- [Extending Suffrage to Women - DOCSTeach Activity for Students by the National Archives](#)

Title of Lesson: The Women’s Liberation Movement in The United States

Content/Subject Area: Goal 5 - Gender Equality

Context:

- This lesson would look at the history of the Women’s Liberation Movement
- “Second-wave feminism” - Women’s Liberation Movement - 1960’s-1980’s
- Equal Rights Amendment - proposed amendment to the United States Constitution designed to guarantee equal legal rights for all American citizens regardless of gender

Suggested Authentic Performance Task:

- For homework (or perhaps in class if your classroom has access to computers), I would suggest giving students the link to the DOCSTeach activity below, which will show students a pamphlet from the Philadelphia chapter of the National Organization for Women and ask them questions that will prompt them to use several analytical techniques including sourcing, close reading, corroborating, contextualizing, and using background knowledge
- Use video and film clips to create a collage of images and scenes that reveal how women were portrayed in film and television, either before the 1970’s or comparing before and after the Women’s Liberation Movement
- Create a pamphlet, petition, or poster advocating for the Equal Rights Amendment

Resources:

- [DOCSTeach Primary Source Activity created by me, using a pamphlet from the National Organization for Women](#) - log-in as a teacher to view full instructions
- [National Organization for Women. Philadelphia Chapter Records, 1968-1977](#) - The Historical Society of Pennsylvania
- [Equal Rights Amendment passed by Congress - HISTORY](#)
- Women, Race and Class by Angela Davis
- The Trouble Between Us: The Uneasy History of Black and White Women in the Feminist Movement by Winifred Breines

Title of Lesson: The Civil Rights Movement and Systematic Racism

Content/Subject Area: Goal 10 - Reduce Income Inequality

Context:

- This lesson would look at the history of the Civil Rights Movement
- If the teacher would like to focus on the history that has led to contemporary income inequality and segregation as a way to support Goal 10, then there are several great sources below (especially *The Color of Law*) to support the framing of this discussion
- If the teacher would like to focus on Civil Rights activism and strategies of resistance,

then there are other sources that can support that discussion below as well

- Plessy v. Furgeson - 1896 U.S. Supreme Court decision that upheld the constitutionality of racial segregation under the “separate but equal” doctrine
- Board v. Board of Education of Topeka - 1954 Supreme Court case in which the justices ruled unanimously that racial segregation of children in public **schools** was unconstitutional
- The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) - civil rights group formed in 1909, America’s largest and oldest civil rights organization
- The Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee (SNCC) - civil rights group formed in 1960, emerged from the student-led lunch counter sit-ins in North Carolina and Tennessee, committed to bottom-up grassroots organizing
- The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) - founded in 1942 by students in Chicago, had a huge influence on the role of nonviolent direct action in the Civil Rights Movement
- The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) - formed in 1957 to coordinate and organize local protests in the South through black churches, Martin Luther King Jr. Was its first president
- Desegregation - the process of ending racial segregation
- Integration - the practice of uniting people from different races in an attempt to give people equal rights
- Civil Rights Act (1964) - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin
- Voting Rights Act (1965) - aimed to overcome legal barriers at the state and local levels that prevented African Americans from exercising their right to vote as guaranteed under the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

Suggested Authentic Performance Task:

- For homework (or perhaps in class if your classroom has access to computers), I would suggest giving students the link to the DOCSTeach activity below, which will use primary sources to help students understand the strategies that civil rights activists used
- Journal entry from Ruby Bridges’s perspective of her first day at William Frantz Elementary School
- In groups, create petitions to bring to the teacher of things that should be changed in the classroom. Take the petitions home, to lunch, to other classes, and get as many signatures as you can. The petition with the most signatures could possibly be enacted in the classroom
- Using the source of MLK Jr.’s speeches below, the class could have a discussion about what makes a good speech and come up with a checklist of essential elements, then the teacher could have small groups come up with speeches about topics of their choice to be presented to the rest of the class

Resources on Racial Income Inequality:

- *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* by Richard Rothstein
- [Facts: Racial Economic Inequality](#)

- [The Misperception of Racial Economic Inequality](#)

Resources on the Civil Rights Movement:

- DOCSTeach - [What Strategies Were Used to Achieve Equality and Civil Rights?](#)
- PBS videos - [5 of Martin Luther King Jr.'s most memorable speeches](#)
- *Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges
- [Counter Histories | Southern Foodways Alliance](#) - films about civil disobedience in the South

Title of Lesson: The Environmental Movement and Climate Change

Content/Subject Area: Goal 13 - Climate Action

Context:

- History of the American Environmental Movement
- Conservation movement - 1890's-1920's movement to protect nature from human usage, included wildlife management, sustainable forestry, and soil conservation, led to the creation of the first national park, Yellowstone National Park, in 1872
- Progressive era conservation movement - Theodore Roosevelt wanted to protect wildlife from market hunting, became a prominent conservationist, set aside more Federal land for national parks and nature preserves than all his predecessors combined
- Modern environmental movement - began in the 1960's, more public awareness of air and water pollution, solid waste disposal, radiation due to nuclear testing, and pesticide poisoning (brought to public attention by Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*), led to Earth Day demonstrations and the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1970
- Sustainable forestry - management of forests with the goal protecting forests
- Soil conservation - prevention of loss of the top layer of soil from erosion or prevention of reduced fertility caused by over-usage or chemical soil contamination
- Market hunting - hunting by profession
- National park - scenic or historically important area of countryside protected by the federal government for the enjoyment of the general public or the preservation of the wildlife
- Air pollution - introduction of harmful substances into the air
- Water pollution - contamination of water bodies
- Pesticide poisoning - when chemicals designed to control pests affect non-target organisms such as people, wildlife, plants, or bees
- Earth Day - the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970, had 20 million Americans participate (10% of the population), to demonstrate against the impact of 150 years of industrial development on the environment
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - federal government agency tasked with protecting the environment, created in 1970

Suggested Authentic Performance Tasks:

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Resources:

- [Climate Change – United Nations Sustainable Development](#)
- *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson - [RACHEL CARSON](#)
- PBS video - [Rachel Carson's Silent Spring](#)
- PBS video - [The Environmental Movement and the First Earth Day](#)
- Earth Day's website - [Gaylord Nelson - The History of Earth Day](#)
- [Clean Air Act Text | Overview of the Clean Air Act and Air Pollution](#)
- [The Plain English Guide to the Clean Air Act](#)
- [FEDERAL WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ACT](#)

Title of Lesson: The City of Brotherly Love

Content: Brief overview of the history of Philadelphia

Context:

- This lesson will give a brief history about Philadelphia, I recommend showing one of the films in the first source as a multimedia tool to support this lesson
- Lenape People - indigenous people of Northeastern Woodlands, including in present-day Philadelphia, pushed out of their land by expanding European colonies
- Indian Removal Act (1830) - key law which authorized removal of Native peoples, the Indian Removal policy led to the U.S. government sending most remaining Lenape people in Philadelphia and the eastern United States to the Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma) in the 1860's, where most Lenape reside today
- William Penn - given a charter for what would become the Pennsylvania charter by King Charles II of England, planned the city that he named Philadelphia (meaning the "City of Brotherly Love"), hoped for a city of religious tolerance as he had experienced religious persecution

Resources:

- [Philadelphia: The Great Experiment | HMP](#)
- City of Brotherly Love by Chris Satullo for The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia <http://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/city-of-brotherly-love/>
- A City of Firsts by Michael Zuckerman for The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia <http://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/city-of-firsts/>
- [Philadelphia America's First World Heritage City](#)
- [William Penn, architect of a nation](#) by John B. B. Trussell

Title of Lesson: Gender Activism in Philadelphia Today

Content: Goal 5 - Gender Equality

Context:

- This lesson is about gender activism in Philadelphia in the past ten years, including transgender activism, the Women’s March, and the Take Back the Night march
- Cisgender - a person who identifies with the gender they were assigned at birth
- Gender binary - a system in which gender is constructed in two strict categories of male or female
- Gender dysphoria - clinically significant distress when a person’s gender assigned at birth is not the same as the one with which they identify
- Transgender - umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the gender they were assigned at birth
- Transitioning - could include social (changing name and pronouns), medical (hormone therapy and/or gender affirming surgeries), and legal (changing legal name and/or gender on legal documents) transitioning that a transgender person may go through to live more fully as their gender
- Pro-choice - advocating legalized abortion
- Pro-life - opposing abortion

Resources:

- [How to support transgender people in Philadelphia: Four trans activists on what being an ally means](#)
- [History](#) - Take Back the Night
- [Women in Philly, and around the country, are marching](#)
- [Philadelphia DA Larry Krasner on Radical Path to Remake Criminal Justice System](#)
- [4thWave](#) - Intersectional Feminist Publication
- *Hood Feminism: Notes from the Women That a Movement Forgot* by Mikki Kendall
- [Women from around the region gather for International Women’s Day rally](#)
- [Black feminist women created most modern movements, author Feminista Jones tells Penn](#)

Title of Lesson: Civil Rights Activism and Inequality in Philadelphia Today

Content: Goal 10 - Reduce Income Inequality

Context:

- This lesson is about civil rights activism in Philadelphia in the past ten years, including Black Lives Matter
- Gentrification - the character of a poor urban area is changed by wealthier people moving in, improving housing, and attracting new businesses, typically displacing current inhabitants in the process
- Education inequality - unequal distribution of academic resources, including school

funding, qualified and experienced teachers, books, and technologies to socially excluded communities

- Black Lives Matter - decentralized political and social movement protesting incidents of police brutality and all racially motivated violence against black people

Resources:

- [Philly Has the Country's Third Worst Income Gap, Study Finds](#)
- [Penn experts pose solutions to Philadelphia's pandemic-fueled gentrification](#)
- [Tina Tartaglione, POWER push for Pa. minimum wage increase](#)
- [Homeless mothers squat federal housing sites as encampment deadline looms](#)
- [The Activists Who Took On Philadelphia's Housing Crisis](#)
- [Students protest education inequity in march from Lower Merion to Philly's Overbrook High School](#)
- [Protesters in Philly want Biden to get aggressive on poverty](#)
- [Black Lives Matter Philly organizers say even with Chauvin guilty verdict, their work isn't done](#)
- [Black Lives Matter in Philly honors Walter Wallace Jr. six months after his tragic death](#)
- [Reimagining What Monuments Can Be in Philadelphia](#)
- [Northeast Philly sees first Black Lives Matter protest](#)
- [In Photos: Philadelphia protesters march for Daunte Wright and police abolition](#)
- [Local activists pressure city to address UN report alleging undue force by Phila. police](#)
- [A guide to how policing laws in Philly and Pa. changed — or didn't — after George Floyd's murder](#)
- [NBCNews: 'White Lives Matter' rallies flop as hardly anyone shows up](#)

Title of Lesson: The Environmental Movement in Philadelphia Today

Content: Goal 13 - Climate Action

Context:

- This lesson is about climate activism in Philadelphia in the past ten years, including environmental justice activism and the youth activists of the Sunset Movement
- Environmental racism - environmental injustice that occurs within a racialized context both in practice and policy
- Environmental justice - is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies
- Climate change - a change in global climate patterns from the mid to late 20th century onwards and attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels
- Sunrise Movement - a American youth-led political movement to stop climate change

Resources:

- [Pollution Is Killing Black Americans. This Community Fought Back.](#) - New York Times
- [Fight Against Environmental Racism Finally Gets Its Moment | Time](#)
- [Philadelphia's oil refinery is dead, but the fight for accountability continues](#)
- [Thousands strike for global climate change at youth-led rally at Philadelphia City Hall](#)
- [Many eyes were on Philly this week. Don't look away, environmental activists say](#)
- [Outside Biden's town hall, middle school activists demand climate action](#)
- [Sunrise Movement sit-in ends in arrests at Philly Dems HQ](#)
- [Philadelphia releases 'Climate Action Playbook' in commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050](#)
- Metropolitan Paradise: The Struggle for Nature in the City, Philadelphia's Wissahickon Valley 1620-2020 by David Contosta and Carol Franklin
- [Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia | Environmental Movement](#)
- [Cobbs Creek Community Environmental Education Center](#)
- [Philadelphia Parks & Recreation | Homepage](#)
- [Home - John Heinz at Tinicum](#)
- [The Schuylkill Center](#)

Philadelphia Photo Essay

This assessment will be the culminating project after two weeks of lessons covering the historical background of three of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals in the United States and the contemporary activism related to addressing these goals in Philadelphia.

Students will create a photo essay using images that they take around Philadelphia to show both how the city has fulfilled their assigned Sustainable Development Goal and what challenges remain. A photo essay is a series of photographs that is assembled in a particular order to tell a story. Teachers could share Dorothea Lange's "The Great Depression" as a famous example of a photo essay. Some students might choose to use only images in their presentations, while others could use captions or even full paragraphs to provide context for the scenes and issues they are capturing.

The teacher can assign groups for this project or students may choose based on their interests. Students could be placed in groups for the three goals discussed in class so that they have some background knowledge on the topic, placed in groups that discuss every goal besides the goals discussed in class so that they have to do more research as a group, or placed in groups for every goal, depending on the preference of the teacher. If students are grouped by just the three goals discussed in class, there could potentially be two groups for each goal.

Group size could be flexible depending on how the teacher wants to use the third week of the unit. If the students should do every step of the project together, then the size of the group does not matter. It could also be useful to assign roles within the project. Potential roles could include one student that curates secondary sources for the group's research, one student that creates a map of possible locations to photograph, one student that presents the photo essay using the group's pre-written script, and one student that answers any questions the teacher and class might have after they present.

Students will use secondary sources to learn more about their topic and to find more information about locations to photograph around the city. Each group should be encouraged to make a map with these possible locations based on their research. The teacher could provide examples of different formats of maps that students could make, such as a digital map using Google Maps or another similar website, marking locations on a printed map, a hand-drawn map, or a list of location addresses with directions between them. After the research has been conducted and the students have an idea about where they want to take photographs, the students will go around Philadelphia in their groups and take photographs on their phones or photo-taking devices. This could potentially be done as a field trip, but more likely, these groups will work outside of school with assistance from their parents.

Students will then need to review their photos and decide how they want to display them. They need to consider their topic and the story that they are trying to convey about that topic. When they have their photos, they then need to prepare their presentation. Students will create a script to present their photographs to the class, which should mention their secondary source research, where the photographs were taken in Philadelphia, and why the students chose the pictures that they did. The presentations could include the class and teacher asking questions to the group after they present. Finally, teachers are encouraged to provide students with self-evaluation forms so students can provide context for the work that they put into the project.