

Middle/High School Assembly

Notes for educators:

This assembly can be used with a single class or a larger group, as an introduction to Freedom to breathe. Students can choose to share their views and ideas in a way that inspires them, in any creative way that they would like. The teacher can choose the most appropriate follow up for their class/group – for example, this could involve writing poems, songs or letters, creating drawings or posters, making short videos etc.

The Freedom to breathe teaching resources have been developed by educational professionals and will achieve three key learning outcomes. **Students will:**

1. Understand the state of air quality in their city, and how it compares to other cities.
2. Understand the health impacts of air quality on their physical health, mental health and their ability to learn.
3. Understand how they can claim their right to clean air by understanding what the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is. It is focused on their rights to the best possible health, clean water and a clean environment (article 24), but does not include the explicit 'right to clean air.'


Curriculum links: this primarily links to the Next Generation Science Standards, but of course also touches on History-Social Science Standards

Freedom to breathe aims to gather the support of 20,000 children from four target cities (starting with Beijing, Delhi, London, Los Angeles) - in support of a call to the UN to acknowledge Children's Right to Clean Air. Students will have the opportunity to join a virtual event in November to hear the response from the UN.



The logo features a blue circular icon on the left containing a white silhouette of a person's head and shoulders. To the right of the icon, the text "Freedom to breathe" is written in a white, sans-serif font. Each letter of the text has a multi-colored, rainbow-like gradient effect.

Freedom to breathe



What are
the things
we need to
live a happy
and healthy
life?

 Freedom to breathe

Teacher to write down ideas on whiteboard if possible.

Food

**Clean
Water**

Sleep

What are
the things
we need to
live a happy
and healthy
life?

Warmth

Shelter

Fun!

Exercise

 Freedom to breathe

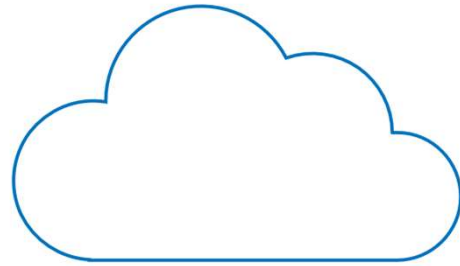
PAUSE POINT

How about clean air?



You may have got lots of ideas, but how about clean air? We need to breathe to stay alive! We're constantly breathing, even in our sleep. Clean air is critical to life and essential for our health and development. Unfortunately the air we breathe can be polluted, both indoors and outdoors.

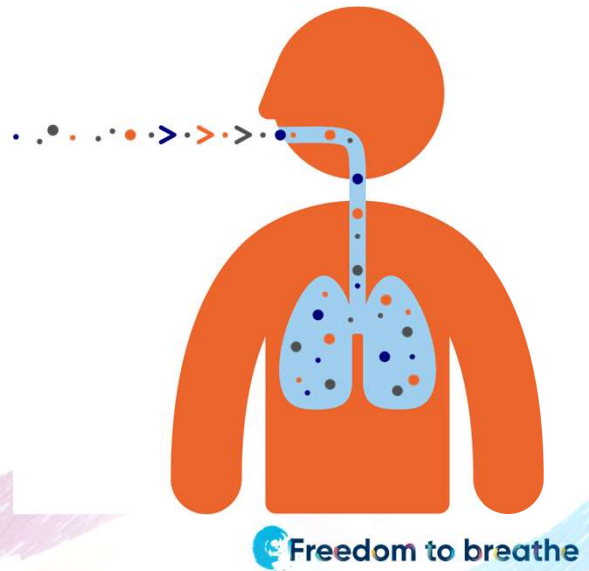
What is air
pollution?



But what is air pollution? What things might make it polluted?


Air pollution is in the air that we breathe in.

The particles and gases enter our bodies and can damage our health.




Read slide

“If you place your hands on your chest and take a deep breath, you can feel your lungs expand as you breathe in air. Sometimes, we may be breathing in dirty air”



Any amount of air pollution can be damaging to our health and physical and mental development, but the more that you are exposed to, the bigger the risk and the larger the impact it can have.

 Freedom to breathe

Read slide

Air pollution is often very small and most of the time, you can't see it at all. It's smaller than a single piece/strand of your hair!

Which of these things contribute to air pollution?



PAUSE POINT

There are lots of things that contribute to air pollution. Can you think of any?
I'm going to show you some of these on the next slide for you to guess which do and don't contribute...

Books?
Cooking?
Factories?
Trees?
Cars?
Bicycles?
Burning wood?
Cleaning products?



Yes/no options

These flash up and students can raise their hand for yes, or put both hands flat on their desk for no

Sources and types of air pollution are covered in more detail in the follow up lesson

Can you guess where air pollution comes from?

Try to finish the sentences:

- **Indoor** air pollution is caused by things like....
- **Outdoor** air pollution is caused by things like....

Indoor air pollution is caused by things like...

Cooking - gases and particles are released when food is cooked.



Chemicals in cleaning products or craft materials, that are released into the air. These harmful gases are called volatile organic compounds (VOC).



Personal care products like shower gels and body sprays.



Dust, mould and bacteria.



 Freedom to breathe

Indoor air is often more polluted than outdoor air. Indoor air pollution can be on average 2-5 times more polluted than outdoor air, due to the wide range of indoor pollutants and limited air flow.

For more information on **indoor air pollution in the US** see the US Environmental Protection Agency site: <https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/introduction-indoor-air-quality>

For air pollution California, see the California Air Resources site: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/topics/indoor-air-quality-exposure>

For more information on **where air pollution comes from in the US** – please visit: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/sources-air-pollution>

Outdoor air pollution is caused by things like...

Vehicles such as cars, vans, trains, ships and planes release gases and tiny particles (in soot) into the air



Factories that make things such as food, clothes and toys and **power stations** that generate energy by burning fossil fuels



Farming often has a lot of animal waste and uses fertilisers and pesticides (chemicals) to help food grow, all of which can cause pollution



Burning fuel such as wood and coal to heat homes



 Freedom to breathe

Clean air is important as we need to breathe in order to survive! Even in our sleep we are breathing. Sadly sometimes we may breathe in polluted air.

Read slide

Air pollution and the particles that we breathe in are often very small and most of the time, you can't see them at all. They are quite often smaller than a single piece/strand of your hair!

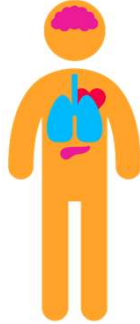
For more information on indoor air pollution see the USC Study of Children's Health one of the largest and most detailed studies of the long-term effects of air pollution on the respiratory health of children

<https://healthstudy.usc.edu/>

How does air pollution affect us?



Air pollution can damage your **lungs** and impact your breathing.



Exposure to air pollution can affect your **brain** and therefore your ability to learn and your mental health.



Breathing in air pollution can impact your **heart** and cause future heart problems.



PAUSE POINT

How does it affect us? What ideas do you have?

Additional information:

Polluted air is the number one environmental risk to humans. It affects all bodily functions / organs and therefore it affects physical and mental development and health. Children's bodies are more susceptible to this as they are still growing. Breathing in clean air is vital to help children live long healthy lives and realise their full potential.

We can all help to make sure the air around us is cleaner.

What could you do?

Hint: think about things you've done over the last week (e.g. at home/school, your journeys, your activities):

- Could you have done anything differently?
- Are you already doing something to help?



PAUSE POINT

We can all play a role to make sure we have cleaner air!

Think back to what you have done in the past week. What could you have done differently to make the air around you cleaner? Is there something you are already doing that you could share with the class to help other children too?

Open windows when cooking or cleaning to let fresh air in, and close windows when there are lots of cars outside?

Maybe you could have walked, or cycled, or even used a scooter instead of taking a car?

Maybe take public transport instead of a car?

Maybe stop idling?

Used less smelly crafting or art project materials (e.g. pens, paints, glue etc)?

At home...



- Open windows to let the fresh air in – especially when
 - cooking
 - or cleaning



- Use fragrance-free milder cleaning and personal care products.

When travelling to places...



- Walk, cycle, scoot or take public transport whenever you can instead of using your car.



- Don't idle – ask your parents/adults to turn off their engines when the car isn't moving.



Here are a few examples – remember that the air we breathe is all around us – indoors and outdoors

What can you do to make sure we have cleaner air?

What can we do to make sure we have cleaner air?

What can everybody do to make sure we have cleaner air?



Remember, everyone can play a role in making sure we have cleaner air around us.

Have a think about what you can do, what we can do and what everybody can do.

Maybe you could have walked, or cycled, or even used a scooter instead of taking a car? (these things can flash up?)

Maybe take public transport instead of a car?

Maybe stop idling?

Open windows when cooking to let fresh air in, and close windows when there are lots of cars outside?

How can we raise awareness at a school / local / national level?

How can we get the right people listening to us?



California Clean Air Day asks everyone to come together to do at least one thing for clean air on one day based on the actions they committed to at cleanairday.org.



To get involved in California Clean Air Day, you could take the clean air pledge for kids!

www.cleanairday.org/pledge/kids/

CLEAN AIR PLEDGE FOR KIDS



Bike to school, the store or a park



Plant a tree



Tell my parents to turn off the car when idling



Walk to school, the store or a park



Tell my parents to turn off the car when idling



Give a report to my class on the environment



Grow a seed or plant a garden



Give a report to my class on the environment



Do an air quality experiment



Make a craft or art project about air quality to raise awareness

Page

 Freedom to breathe

Have students visit
www.cleanairday.org/pledge/kids/
To take the pledge

**Everybody can play a part to make sure
we have cleaner air!**

There's something else we can do too...



Individually, with our friends and families, at home, at school, when travelling, talking about it in school and with others etc.

There's another thing we can do, but before I tell you about that, I want to return to our earlier discussion about what do we need to live a happy and healthy life and talk to you about something called a right

What is a right?

Rights are important things which we **need** to live a happy and healthy life.

We talked about some of these earlier...

 Freedom to breathe

PAUSE POINT

'Rights are important things which we need to live a happy and healthy life'
We may want certain things in life, but we definitely need some things to live a happy and healthy life. Unfortunately children around the world may not have the same things we do.

What are the things we need to live a happy and healthy life?

- Clean Air**
- Food**
- Clean Water**
- Warmth**
- Shelter**
- Fun!**
- Sleep**
- Exercise**

PAUSE POINT

Freedom to breathe

The infographic features a central blue circle with the question 'What are the things we need to live a happy and healthy life?'. Surrounding this circle are eight items: Clean Air, Food, Clean Water, Warmth, Shelter, Fun!, Sleep, and Exercise. The items are arranged in two columns. At the bottom left is a blue box with 'PAUSE POINT' in white. At the bottom right is the 'Freedom to breathe' logo, which includes a small globe icon.

Reminder - this was our list and you might have thought of a few more too!

Needs and wants

What is the difference?

Need:

Something we must have to live a happy and healthy life

Want:

Something we like but we don't need



We said that there are things we want and need – but what is the difference?

Need or want?

What is the difference?

Xbox
Clean water
Netflix
Chocolate
Hospitals
Education

Clean Air?



PAUSE POINT

students vote whether each of these is a need or want e.g. hands up for a need and hands on table for a want (or similar voting mechanism)



The UN are a big and important organisation who

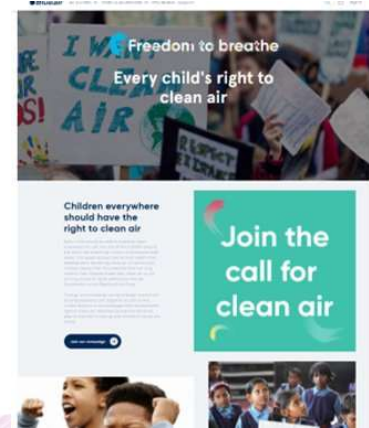
The UN says that children should have access to hospitals, clean water, healthy food, a good and clean environment and education.

But they do not clearly say that clean air is a right!



The UNCRC does not explicitly state Clean Air should be a right.

- Do you think it should?
- Raise your hand if you agree.
- Your teachers will make sure that the right people know you think clean air should be a clear right, by adding the number of children who voted 'yes' to <https://www.blueair.com/us/freedomtobreathe.html>



 Freedom to breathe

Raise a hand if you think it should - call to action and explain the campaign (see next slide for more notes)

What happens next?

- 20,000 children calling for the Right to Clean Air all over the world – starting in Beijing, Delhi, London & Los Angeles!
- Event in November bringing together the children's voices to the UN
- Your ideas are really important – we'd love to know what they are so we can help you share them with the UN! Examples of things you might like to do, could include:
 - Stories, poems, letters, songs
 - Artwork
 - Videos or photography (of actions and places, not people)

Please ask your teacher to share a selection of your work with us via email: freedomtobreathe@ccair.org



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Students will have the opportunity to join a virtual event in November to hear the response from the UN.

Please ensure any work shared does not contain images of people and students are only identified by their first name / age e.g. Luke, age 7, Los Angeles or primary school student, age 10, Los Angeles.

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