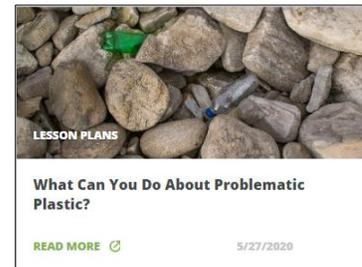


## Sustainability September: New Jersey's Changing Climate Resources for Educators and Families

Here at Duke Farms, our mission is to be a leader in environmental stewardship and inspire visitors to become informed stewards of the land. It is a place of education, enjoyment and research that enhances the environmental health of the region. Through a wide array of educational programming, our focus is to build a more environmentally-informed and engaged society. New Jersey has become the first state in the country to establish mandatory K-12 public school learning standards addressing climate change, and we are eager to provide resources that empower both formal and informal educators to be a part of this forward momentum. Whether you are an elementary teacher, middle school humanities teacher, secondary science teacher, nonformal educator, parent or caregiver looking for activities to do with learners, you can strengthen the upcoming generation's understanding of and ability to diminish the effects of climate change. The following article includes lesson plans ideas, informational text, links, and book recommendations (both from just a few external sources and those created by Duke Farms) designed to assist you on your educational journey!



Our [Distance Learning Portal](#) is an indispensable hub of resources and information on multi-disciplinary topics ranging from ways to create a native bee-friendly yard to lesson plans about the anatomy of native birds to ideas on how to connect mathematics or language arts to nature-based topics. These lessons and activities are constructed with both formal and informal educators in urban, suburban and rural settings in mind! Moreover, with the announcement of the official adoption of climate change

learning standards for NJ schools, [this article was written to highlight various lesson plans](#) which align to various grade levels and standards. This comprehensive list is just a small sample of some of the resources created by Duke Farms and it acts as a guide to some related external resources.

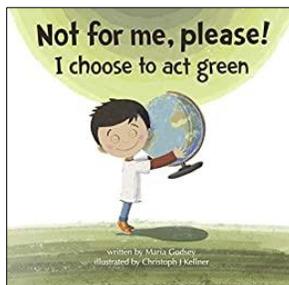


For anyone looking to approach climate change with younger kids, National Geographic provides a helpful [article on ways to phrase the conversation](#) in an accessible way. It breaks down the subject into helpful analogies and offers avenues for understanding between adult and child.

For those in more formal education settings, NASA has an [entire collection](#) of informative lesson plans and activities designed for K-12. To highlight just a few:

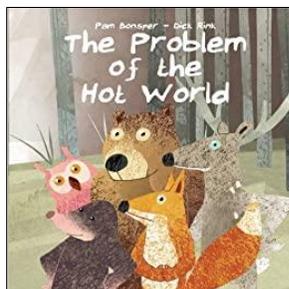
- [NASA's Climate Kids](#) is where children can lead their own “edu-tainment” exploration with videos and games.
- [Teaching Climate](#) is an entire page dedicated to training educators how to teach about climate and climate change, and includes whole packages geared towards helping educators become more informed.
- [Learn Science](#) is another resource collection from NASA which is chock full of lesson plans spanning all matter of environmental education.

Young readers will enjoy the lessons found in these book recommendations:



**Not for Me, Please! I Choose to Act Green** by Maria Godsey tells the story of a young boy with a big mission: “After seeing first-hand the damage caused to the environment and animals due to trash and waste, he’s changed his ways and now thinks and acts green. He believes he can have a big impact on the world around him and protecting the planet has become his new passion!”

To watch and hear the story read aloud, [follow this link!](#)



**The Problem of the Hot World** by Pam Bonsper and Dick Rink is a book designed to begin the conversation with children about what is happening to our changing world and how it impacts both the animals around us and humans directly. It engaged children and offers the opportunity to discuss possible solutions at home.



**Our House is on Fire: Greta Thunberg's Call to Save the Planet** by Jeanette Winter tells the story of Time's Person of the Year, 16-year-old climate activist Greta Thunberg, and her journey to what would eventually spark a worldwide movement calling for legislation and action from world leaders in order to mitigate climate change.

To watch and hear the story read aloud, [follow this link!](#)

**All the Duke Farms resources directly align with the newly adopted NJ Student Learning Standards. For more information about how you may implement them in the teaching of climate change in your PK-12 and beyond classrooms, contact Kate Reilly, Manager of Education, Duke Farms at [kreilly@dukefarms.org](mailto:kreilly@dukefarms.org).**

### **Adopted 2020 New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS)**

#### **Climate Change**

As stated by the NJDOE:

On June 3, 2020, the State Board of Education adopted the 2020 NJSLS in the following content areas:

- Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills;
- Comprehensive Health and Physical Education;
- Computer Science & Design Thinking;
- Science;
- Social Studies;
- Visual and Performing Arts;
- and World Languages.

These standards truly represent a foundation from which districts will build coherent curriculum and instruction that prepares each New Jersey student with the knowledge and skills to succeed in our rapidly changing world. They will put New Jersey again at the forefront of national education by including the following:

- Climate Change across all content areas, leveraging the passion students have shown for this critical issue and providing them opportunities to develop a deep understanding of the science behind the changes and to explore the solutions our world desperately needs.