



# YOUNG REPORTERS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Young Reporters  
*for the environment*



**500,000 +  
students**

**44 countries  
and counting**

**19,000 photos,  
articles and videos  
submitted each  
year**



**Housing  
Executive**

**FEE**

# COMPETITION CATEGORIES



## **ARTICLE**

Can be a traditional news article, blog post, extended social media (i.e. Facebook) post.

- Must be factual and present solutions to a local issues (with clear links to global problems or events)
- No more than 1,000 words.
- Title of max. 140 characters.
- Must include 1-3 photos with captions of max. 20 words.



## **ONE TAKE PHOTO**

A candid (i.e. not posed or manipulated) photograph that truthfully and accurately captures the reality of a situation, event, or issue at one point in time.

- Title of max. 140 characters.
- Description of no more than 100 words and a caption of max. 20 words OR only a description of max. 120 words in total.



## **STAGED CAMPAIGN PHOTO**

A photograph that raises awareness with a clear environmental campaign message and inspires action.

- Title of max. 140 characters.
- Description (optional) of max. 100 words.



## **PHOTO STORY 3-5 PHOTOS**

Tell a story through a series of photographs to help the viewer better understand an environmental issue.

- Maximum of 3 to 5 photographs
- Title of no more than 140 characters.
- Description of max. 100 words. Each photograph must have a caption (max 20 words).

# COMPETITION CATEGORIES



## LONG-FORM REPORTAGE VIDEO

Like mini documentaries or news reports. They are based on news, events, history, facts etc., and use elements of direct observation, research, interviews, and documentation.

- Title of no more than 140 characters.
- No longer than 3 minutes.
- Must be filmed in landscape.



## SHORT-FORM CAMPAIGN VIDEO

Raise awareness of an issue and inspire positive action through short videos like TikToks, Instagram Reels, and Youtube Shorts.

- Title of no more than 140 characters.
- No longer than 1 minute.
- Must be filmed in portrait.



## PODCAST

Podcasts are like mini audio documentaries and can sometimes include video. They are based on news, events, history, facts etc., and use elements of direct observation, research, interviews, and documentation.

- Max. 5 minutes (a segment of the full podcast can be submitted).
- Title of no more than 140 characters.



# METHODOLOGY

The YRE Programme provides a simple set of steps for young reporters to follow as they produce their articles, photos, or documentary videos.



## INVESTIGATE

Investigate a local issue, using primary & secondary sources, key stakeholders, original research, and links to relevant context and global issues.



## RESEARCH SOLUTIONS

Identify possible solutions from experts' and stakeholders' perspectives, exploring pros and cons.



## REPORT

Identify target audience and create a journalistic piece: article, photo or short video.



## DISSEMINATE

Disseminate to educate. Use your social media, school platforms, national operator organisation, or local/national media.

KEEP  
NORTHERN  
IRELAND  
BEAUTIFUL



ECO-SCHOOLS



UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON  
**ECOSYSTEM  
RESTORATION**  
2021-2030



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## Activity: Investigate with interviews

One way you can investigate an issue is by interviewing different stakeholders to help you to better understand the issue.

**Ask yourself: What information do I need? How can I get a variety of perspectives on the causes, effects, and solutions to the issue?**

**Ask experts questions to collect facts about your topic, the history and context of the issue, and potential solutions.**

**Ask questions of other stakeholders (those who are interested in or affected by the issue) to learn about their experiences, their opinions, and how they have been impacted.**

# STEP 1 - INVESTIGATE

**Task: a reporter is to interview 3 people to gather their opinions on certain environmental topics. Choose one of the following topics or create your own:**

## Potential Topics:

- Sustainable Travel
- Waste/Litter
- Marine Pollution
- Plastic Pollution
- Biodiversity Loss
- Outdoor Learning in Schools
- Energy (& Renewable Energy)
- Just Transition

## Roles within the group:

- 1 x Reporter - asks questions
- 1 x Camera person – records using the device
- 3 x Interviewee - gives personal opinions or those of the group they represent

## Instructions:

- Form a group of 5 people to work on your investigation.
- Decide your group roles.
- The reporter can ask up to 2 questions of each interviewee.
- Spend 5 minutes choosing the questions you want to ask to gain more understanding of the topic and the interviewees' experiences and opinions. You can change, add or amend questions as you like.
- Give the interviewees 5-10 mins to think of their answers to the question.
- Camera person to set up recording: try to capture both the reporter and the interviewee.
- Reporter to ask agreed questions. Interviewees to answer. Ask follow-up questions to clarify answers when necessary.

# Topics & Interview Questions

**Remember, these questions are only suggestions--feel free to create your own questions for your topic!**

## Sustainable Travel

- **How do you travel to school?**
- **Is it easy and/or safe to walk to your school?**
- **Does your school encourage active travel with competitions or incentives?**
- **How can your school encourage children and families to travel sustainably to school?**
- **What can our government/politicians do to make sustainable travel more accessible?**
- **How many flights does your family take a year?**
- **Would you be happy to holiday in Ireland in place of a foreign holiday?**

## Waste/Litter

- **Does your school recycle?**
- **How does your school deal with food waste?**
- **Do you know what happens to your school waste once it leaves your school?**
- **Why do you think there is litter around your school?**
- **What can you do to improve the litter in your local area?**
- **How do you think we can change littering behaviour?**
- **How can we encourage people to reduce waste?**
- **Why do you think people in your school do not separate their waste or throw litter on the ground?**
- **Do you think children should have to bring their waste home with them each day?**



# Topics & Interview Questions

Remember, these questions are only suggestions--feel free to create your own questions for your topic!

## Marine Pollution

- How does our waste end up in our oceans?
- How do you feel about plastics being in our food chain?
- How does it make you feel when you see litter and waste on our beaches?
- Do you look after your local beach?
- How do you feel swimming in water with waste in it?
- How is marine pollution affecting your local sea life?

## Plastic pollution

- What damage are plastics doing to our local environment?
- What local animals does plastic harm?
- How do you feel about plastic being in our food chain?
- Does your school recycle plastic? Could it be improved in any way?
- Have you noticed all the plastic lids are now attached to bottles e.g. milk bottle the lid remains attached. How does this make you feel? Do you think it will help and why?
- Would you like your school to make a promise to reduce single use plastic at your school?

# Topics & Interview Questions

Remember, these questions are only suggestions--feel free to create your own questions for your topic!

## Biodiversity loss

- Do you know what biodiversity is? Can you provide 3 examples of local biodiversity?
- Why is it so important to look after our local biodiversity?
- What could you do at home or in your school to protect local biodiversity?
- What does your school already do to protect biodiversity?
- Do you grow any of your own food at home or in school? What do you grow or what would you like to grow?
- What are some challenges to improving biodiversity at your school and at home?

## Outdoor Learning in NI

- Do you think outdoor learning is important or beneficial? Why or why not?
- Do you enjoy learning outdoors? What makes it enjoyable?
- Do you think your teachers enjoy taking you outside of the classroom for lessons?
- What are the barriers to outdoor learning?
- How does Northern Ireland's weather impact outdoor learning opportunities?
- What are some of the solutions for dealing with our weather to allow for more outdoor learning?



# Topics & Interview Questions

**Remember, these questions are only suggestions--feel free to create your own questions for your topic!**

## Energy Usage & Renewable Energy

- **What are the different types of renewable energy?**
- **Does your school or home have any form of renewable energy?**
- **Do you think your school should invest in renewable energy, if so why? How would it help?**
- **Can you think of ways your school wastes energy?**
- **How can you school or family at home reduce their energy consumption?**
- **What is the government's role? Should they actively support and fund the installation of renewable energy in homes and schools? How would they fund this?**

## Just Transition:

- **How does it make you feel when you see other countries suffering from climate change?**
- **Do you believe our spending habits here in NI impact poorer countries? In what ways?**
- **Before purchasing and buying, do you think of the impact on others?**
- **What are the challenges for NI families who want to choose low carbon (environmentally friendly) lifestyles?**
- **How can your school make it easier for all children and families to get involved in environmental action or activities?**
- **Can you think of ways to be environmentally friendly which are free and cheap to do?**
- **Do you think your school should provide opportunities for families/communities to grow food or have allotments?**





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## Prompts for Researching Solutions, Reporting, and Disseminating



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## STEP 2 - RESEARCH SOLUTIONS

**Task:** Once you have chosen and narrowed down your issue, define the problem. Then consider the different stakeholders who are invested in or impacted by this problem and the variety of solutions that are proposed.

### Ways to research solutions

- Draft a list of questions-what are the gaps in your knowledge?
- Interview experts & stakeholders
- Read news articles
- Use school databases to research
- Search trusted websites & academic search engines (i.e. Google Scholar)
- What other trusted sources do you search for information?

### Don't forget:

- All proposed solutions will have pros and cons
- Consider your biases. What might you be overlooking?
- Try to collect a variety of viewpoints & suggested solutions.

### Questions & Considerations when Researching Solutions:

- What is your personal viewpoint about the problem? What do you think is the strongest solution?
- Why should people care about this problem?
- Consider the different stakeholders who are invested in or impacted by the issues you are researching. This can include experts, business owners, politicians, community members, local organisations, activists, and more.
- Try to learn about a variety of proposed solutions from different perspectives. What are the benefits and challenges of each proposed solution?
- Have your opinions about how to address the problem changed or grown in some way since you started to research?

## STEP 3 - REPORT

**Task: Decide the best way to report on your chosen environmental issue. Do you want to write about it? Create a video? Take photographs? Make a podcast? Create a social media campaign?**

### Use mentor pieces as inspiration for your own work!

Check out last year's international YRE Competition winners.

Find great resources and examples on BBC Young Reporter (UK)

NPR Student Podcast Challenge (USA)

### Ask Yourself:

- What is your primary aim? Do you want to inform your audience or evoke a certain feeling about the topic?
- What are your strengths?
- Do you want to inform through words or images?
- What story can you tell about your topic?

### Some Potential Curriculum Links

**Key Stage 3: Developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills**

**Geography** - questioning, planning, collecting, recording, presenting, analysing, interpreting information and drawing conclusions relating to a range of primary and secondary sources

**Language and Literacy** - talking to include debate, role-play, interviews, presentations and group discussions; using a range of techniques, forms and media to convey information creatively and appropriately.

**Art and Design** - using the visual elements with understanding when engaging in art and design

**Key Stage 3: Developing pupils as Contributors to the Economy and Environment**

**Geography** - Explore how we can exercise environmental stewardship and help promote a better quality of life for present and future generations, both locally and globally

**Language and Literacy** - Plan and create an effective communication campaign

**Art and Design** - Explore how Art and Design can help preserve and promote the environment

**Lots of great opportunities to link with GCSE exam subjects (English, Media Studies, etc.) as well!**



## STEP 4 - DISSEMINATE

**Task: Once you have completed your report, share and publish your work.**

### Competition Categories:

- Article
- Long-form Reportage Video
- Short-form Campaign Video
- One-Take Photo
- Photo Story (3-5 photos)
- Staged Campaign Photo
- Podcast

Tag Eco-Schools NI to share your work!

Facebook: @EcoSchoolsNI  
Instagram: @ecoschools.ni

Email [eco-schools@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:eco-schools@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) for help with publishing your work!

### Ways to disseminate your work:

One way your competition entry will be assessed is by how you disseminate--or publicly share--your work.

You need to include evidence of dissemination in your competition entry. You don't have to publish in all the ways listed below, but the more you share, the more points your entry will earn!

A total of 5 points may be awarded for dissemination through the following channels:

- Personal Sphere (your personal social media) = 1 Point
- School Community (school website, school social media, newsletter, etc.) = 1 Point
- National Operator Organization (Send to [eco-schools@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:eco-schools@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org)) = 1 Point
- National Media (Newspaper, TV, radio) = 2 Points

