

Humans and Climate In Conflict

A personal reflection on global climate change

To be an informed, responsible citizen of this planet in 2018, it is essential that you acknowledge the effects of climate change around the world. This is your home, after all, and your future. When confronted with the magnitude of the problem, however, it is easy to feel overwhelmed, small, and profoundly powerless. It is also possible to feel energized, compelled by your compassion for life to take action towards a better future. The way we feel about a problem ultimately guides our actions.

This independent project asks you to identify a current conflict happening somewhere in the world involving humans and a changing climate. Your job is to do the following:

1. **Research what is happening in your chosen conflict.** What kind of conflict is it (drought, loss of homes, disease, famine, etc.)? How is climate change driving/exacerbating this conflict? How are the humans who live there affected by the conflict? Are there other conflicts/issues at play here? Are there other living beings affected?
2. **Identify your own emotions related to this conflict.** How does learning about this conflict make you feel? Be careful to avoid focusing on how the conflict physically effects you — you don't live in Bangladesh; you do not have sea water in your bedroom.
3. **Discover the possible solutions and coping strategies available or being developed to address your conflict.** Are there adaptations that humans can make in their daily lives? Is there technology that could mitigate the harm? Are there preventative measures to be taken?*

With this information under your belt, your task is to **create a piece of art** that expresses all three prongs of your research. You may employ any medium that speaks to you: paint, pencil, charcoal, sculpture, song, etc. Your piece will be accompanied by a **detailed artist's statement** (at least one page in length) that lays out the three pieces of your research.

The power of art is in its ability to express the ineffable. Try to take your thinking beyond the literal towards the emotions, hopes, and dreams that motivate you personally to make a difference in the world.

Dates

Topics due *end of day* **Wednesday, January 24th**

First draft of artist's statement due **Monday, February 5th**

Final artist's statement and art piece due **Friday, February 9th**

*It is possible to approach this project from the opposite direction: Identify a potential solution to a climate-induced problem somewhere in the world (harnessing wave energy, growing food in high tech greenhouses, reusing grey water, etc.). Research the solution and the problem it addresses in the manner laid out above. Examine your personal reaction, etc.

Here are some resources that you might use to pinpoint your conflict:

Union of Concerned Scientists' Climate Hot Map

<http://www.climatehotmap.org>

Effects of global warming listed by type world wide with specific case studies. Includes interactive map.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s Climate Change Impacts

https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/climate-impacts_.html

Lists impacts by sector as well as by region in the US. Note: this is an archived version of the EPA's website from January 19th, 2017. As such, some links may be compromised.

As a point of comparison, check out the analogous section from the EPA's current website:

<https://www.epa.gov/arc-x/regional-guides-adapting-climate-change>

World Wildlife Foundation (WWF)'s Effects of Climate Change

<https://www.worldwildlife.org/threats/effects-of-climate-change>

Impacts listed by species and place (scroll down the page to find the list). Focused on the work WWF is doing around the world.

NASA's Global Climate Change: Vital Signs of the Planet —> Effects

<https://climate.nasa.gov/effects/>

Includes visualizations and graphs of global climate data related to temperature, growing season, precipitation, droughts and heat waves, hurricanes, sea level rise and the Arctic.

Artists and Climate Change

<https://artistsandclimatechange.com>

This website has examples of climate change inspired art, including statements from the artists.