

Theme 3: HABITS

Everyone has a responsibility to deliver a better human society and a better planet to the next generations. Present time is a consequence of the choices that were made throughout the past/history. Likewise, the future can be perceived as an area of responsibility for those living in the current world.

Peace and prosperity are dependent upon people everywhere acquiring new knowledge and skills that help them change their consumption habits and become more creative, compassionate and active citizens. Education for sustainable living involves rethinking human needs and to make changes in their daily life.

It is important to understand how much influence a small choice of today might have on the big changes of tomorrow. Such realization should help learners see how they can work towards shaping the future without gigantic effort but through minute daily choices. Those are often influenced by our habits.

Analyzing habits can help students and teachers reflect on certain aspects of sustainability. Teachers can encourage students to consider their habits related to the use of resources and consequently affecting the future. This can help learners to:

- analyze and critically evaluate the prospects of the future;
- dream, i.e. identify their vision;
- explore resources available to build alternative vision for the future;
- plan the actions needed to make the changes;
- evaluate the impact of the changes of behavior.

Habits might be understood as a pattern of acting which doesn't require much thinking about it. One just does it. Although the single habitual behaviors might not seem so important at first sight, their long-term results might differ incredibly.

A Story about habits:

Two friends, Thomas and Simon, both 15 years old, each evening before sleep do different things.

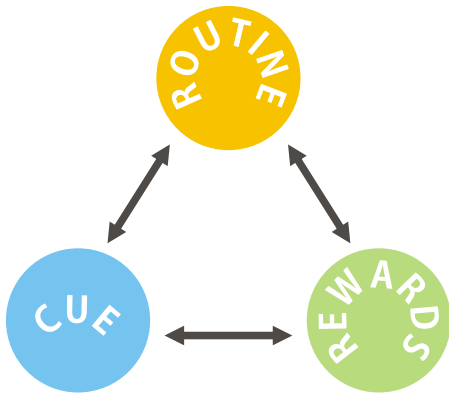
*Thomas reads 50 pages of book, Simon watches 1 episode of a TV series.
What will happen after a school year (272 days)?*

Thomas will have read about 40 books and Simon will have watched many TV series: The Walking dead, Grey's anatomy and others.

According to Ivan Pavlov classical conditioning theory, habits can be explained with 3 steps: cue, routine, rewards.

Picture: Habit loop





Cue – trigger that signal us to routine.
Routine – the habit itself, good or bad.
Rewards – the positive feedback of habit.

Changing the habit depends on our motivation. If one is motivated, the habit loop can be broken by changing the routine or by stop doing it. Our brain can't see the difference between bad and good habits, it works the same way for both. If you want to stop doing something you need to know: in the beginning the brain repeats the loop perpetually, but after some time it will start thinking less and less until it stops. But habits never really disappear, they only sleep and wait for cues and rewards. It is very good to have a strong reward for breaking a bad habit or for forming a new one.

“Life is habit. Or rather life is a succession of habits.” Samuel Beckett

3a Activity “Meet in the middle”

Students think about their personal habits and their influence in daily life. They consider alternative behavior and identify possible personal changes leading to a more responsible lifestyle.

 <p>Sustainable development skills</p>	<p>System thinking competency; Normative competency; Collaboration competency; Critical thinking competency; Integrated problem-solving competency.</p>
 <p>Curriculum</p>	<p>Geography; Literacy; History.</p>
 <p>Tips and recommendation</p>	<p>Useful if you want to set the participants on the path of thinking about themselves and the habits they use to. The participants create their own individual understanding of their habits and its impact in their life.</p>
 <p>Materials needed</p>	<p>Photographs: each group can receive the same image or different images from Annex 9 (Images #7, 8, 9, 10); Worksheet with sections (Annex 4); Pens and paper.</p>

INSTRUCTION: Organize the classroom for group work. Provide an image for each group (#7, 8, 9, and 10). Each group must have a photo, pencil and worksheet (Annex 4) for work.

Group work steps:

- 1) Each group member identifies which one of the four boxes on the worksheet they will use to record their ideas. (The middle box is left empty for the moment).
- 2) Each member of the group examines and reflects on the image and any other information provided by the teacher on the topic.
- 3) Each member records in their box their ideas and thoughts based on the image and the topic being investigated.
- 4) Next, group members take turns in sharing and explaining their ideas and thoughts to other members of their group. A discussion takes place.
- 5) The group then agrees and selects up to four of the ideas they have discussed and records them in the middle box on the worksheet.

After the group work is completed, ask each group to present ideas to the other groups.



Image #7 Source: Leonid Smulskiy



Image #8 Source: Leonid Smulskiy



Image #9 Source: Leonid Smulskiy



Image #10 Source: Leonid Smulskiy

Questions:

- *What did you learn about the topic/ theme?*
- *Was there anything that surprised you?*
- *How did the responses of the different groups compare?*
- *Is there anything that you would like to find out more about?*
- *What personal lifestyle changes will you consider related to the topic/ theme?*

3b Activity “Time and technology”

Students participate in a short experiment which reveals their subjective perception of time. They identify key aspects of different time management practices and consider the influence of technologies.



Sustainable development skills

System thinking competency;
Anticipatory competency;
Critical thinking competency;
Self-awareness competency.



Curriculum

Arts;
Math;
Psychology;
Philosophy.



Tips and recommendation

Useful for discussion about addition of techniques, technologies and for changing roles in class.



Materials needed

Sticky notes;
Pens and paper or computer for:
·an article to be read out;
·a recording of a song;
·a video, DVD or computer clip.

INSTRUCTION: Inform the students that they are taking part in an experiment and ask them to have pen and paper ready. The teacher reads the article, plays the song and shows the video clip one after the other. Each must be exactly the same length e.g. 2 minutes.

Ask everyone to write down how long they think each presentation took and to list them from shortest to longest and record the results on the board or on a chart for the class to see. Then inform the class of the actual time that each presentation took.

Material for teacher (2 min. text):

The Patient Cat
by Laura E. Richards

When the spotted cat first found the nest, there was nothing in it, for it was only just finished. So she said, "I will wait!" for she was a patient cat, and the summer was before her. She waited a week, and then she climbed up again to the top of the tree, and peeped into the nest. There lay two lovely blue eggs, smooth and shining.

The spotted cat said, "Eggs may be good, but young birds are better. I will wait." So she waited; and while she was waiting, she caught mice and rats, and washed herself and slept, and did all that a spotted cat should do to pass the time away.

When another week had passed, she climbed the tree again and peeped into the nest. This time there were five eggs. But the spotted cat said again, "Eggs may be good, but young birds are better. I will wait a little longer!"

So she waited a little longer and then went up again to look. Ah! There were five tiny birds, with big eyes and long necks, and yellow beaks wide open. Then the spotted cat sat down on the branch, and licked her nose and purred, for she was very happy. "It is worthwhile to be patient!" she said.

But when she looked again at the young birds, to see which one she should take first, she saw that they were very thin, —oh, very, very thin they were! The spotted cat had never seen anything so thin in her life.

"Now," she said to herself, "if I were to wait only a few days longer, they would grow fat. Thin birds may be good, but fat birds are much better. I will wait!"

So she waited; and she watched the father-bird bringing worms all day long to the nest, and said, "Aha! They must be fattening fast! They will soon be as fat as I wish them to be. Aha! What a good thing it is to be patient."

At last, one day she thought, "Surely, now they must be fat enough! I will not wait another day. Aha! How good they will be!"

So she climbed up the tree, licking her chops all the way and thinking of the fat young birds. And when she reached the top and looked into the nest, it was empty!!

Then he spotted cat sat down on the branch and spoke thus, "Well, of all the horrid, mean, ungrateful creatures I ever saw, those birds are the horriddest, and the meanest, and the most ungrateful! Mi-a-u-ow!!!!"

2 min video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=auSo1MyWf8g&feature=youtu.be>

2 min audio:





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7-4WTzV-U4>

Questions:

- *What influences our perception of time?*
- *Could you give up the use of your mobile/laptop/TV for one day/one week?*
- *Is there anything that you would want to change in your purchase/use of technology?*
- *What are the possible advantages and disadvantages of doing this?*

3C Activity “Picture timeline”

Students investigate the development of suggested pieces of equipment (mobile phone, computer) and evaluate their effect on consumption patterns.

 Sustainable development skills	Anticipatory competency; Self-awareness competency; Integrated problem-solving competency.
 Curriculum	Math; Psychology; Arts; History.
 Tips and recommendation	Activity can be used to introduce class with history of different technics.
 Materials needed	Different piece of equipment that is used in everyday life: e.g mobile phone, television, computer and the like ones; Pens and paper.

INSTRUCTION: This activity is suitable as an investigation project. It is divided in 3 parts.

Part 1

The teacher divides the learners into 3 groups, each group to focus on a different piece of equipment that is used in everyday life: e.g. mobile phone, television, computer and assigns the following tasks:

- find 4-8 pictures from the past to the present to make a picture timeline;
- find available statistics for their purchase/usage in their home country;
- find available statistics for purchase usage in another/developing country.

Part 2

Each group prepares and gives a presentation which:

- identifies differences in design over the years;
- considers materials, and resources used to produce the equipment;
- Evaluates the effect of usage on: consumption, the environment, convenience, time usage.

Part 3

After all the presentations have been made the teacher facilitates a discussion on:





- how people used their time before the equipment item was available/invented;
- how people managed/survived without the item;
- disposal issues/challenges for the items.

Questions:

- *Is there anything that you would want to change in your purchase/use of technology?*
- *What are the possible advantages and disadvantages of doing this?*

3d Activity “Make a choice”

Students choose a piece of equipment and that they would consider giving up for a certain period of time. They observe what happens next.

 Sustainable development skills	Critical thinking competency; Self-awareness competency.
 Curriculum	Literacy; History.
 Tips and recommendation	Useful to start discussion about addiction of technics, technologies and time planning.
 Materials needed	–

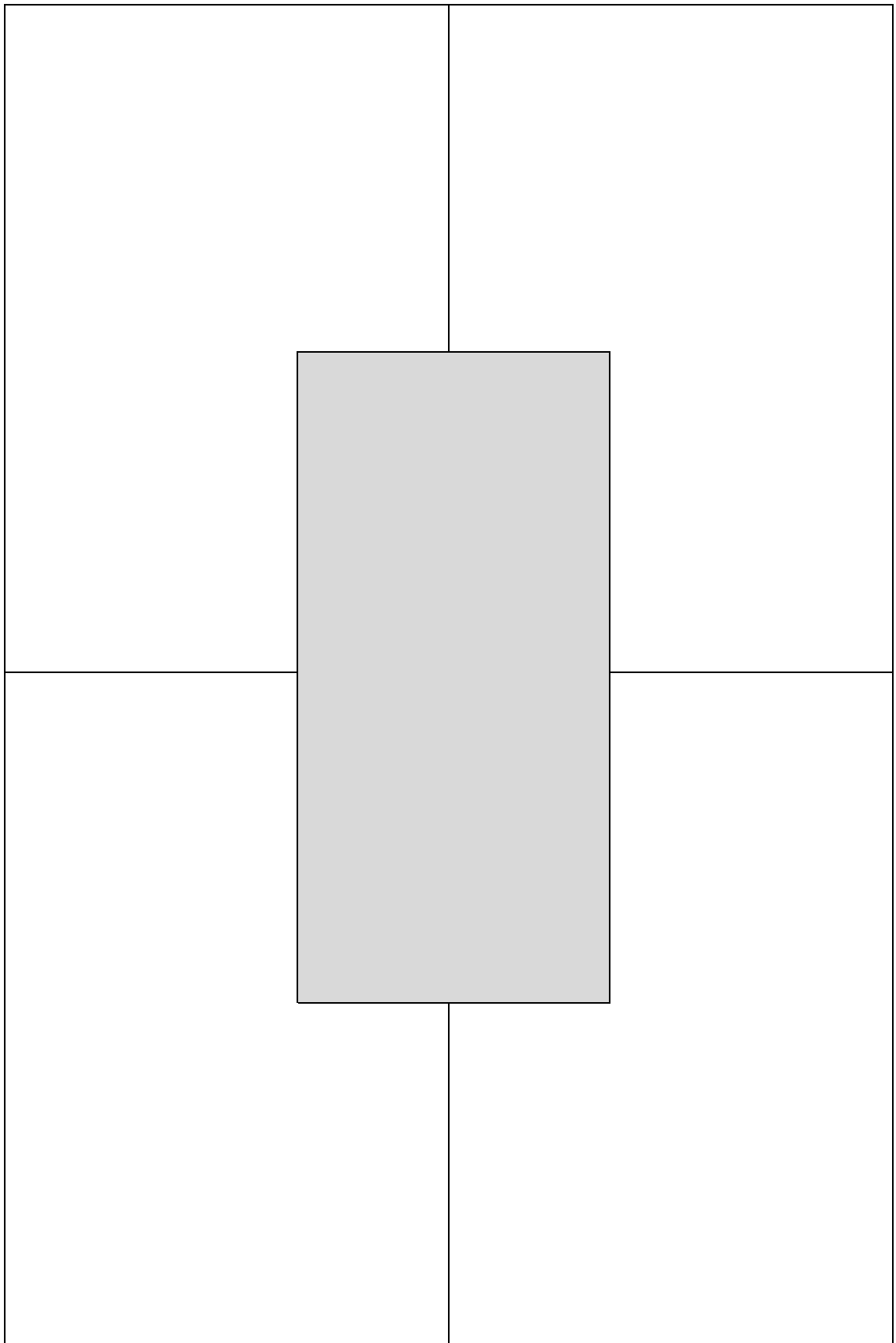
INSTRUCTION: Invite students to see how difficult is to change habits. Invite each student to identify an item of equipment that they would consider giving up for a period of time. They should sign up to this by standing in a named area of the classroom.

Learners implement the change for the agreed time (one day/week). After the period invite students to evaluate the effects of the challenge.

Questions:

- *How did you feel?*
- *What is the effect on your work?*
- *What is the effect on your free time?*
- *What is the effect on your social life/networking?*
- *Do you want to sustain any of the changes? Why? Why not?*

Annex 4 – for activity „Meet in the middle“
Worksheet



Annex 9 – for activities: „What makes us human?“, „Meet in the middle“, „What we buy?“



Image #1 Source: Lina Strauke



Image #2 Source: Leonid Smulskiy



Image #3 Source: Colourbox.com



Image #4 Source: Lewis Akenji



Image #5 Source: Wikimedia Commons

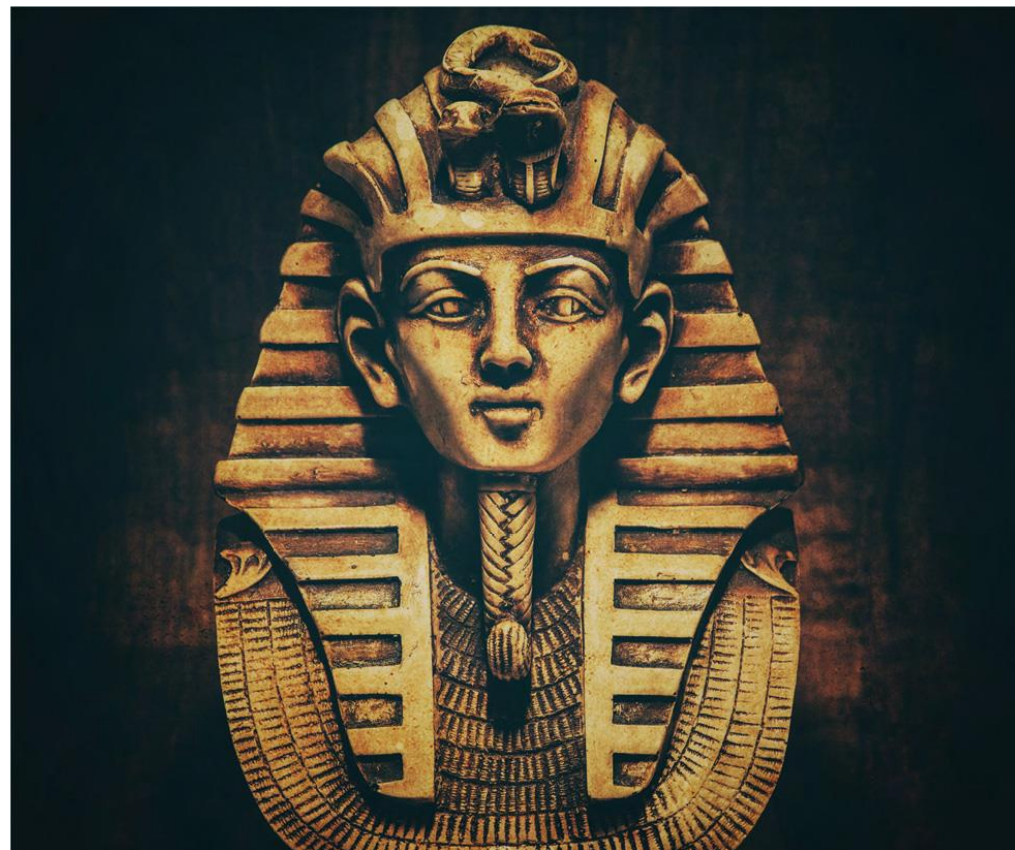


Image #6 Source: Colourbox.com



Image #7 Source: Leonid Smulskiy



Image #8 Source: Leonid Smulskiy



Image #9 Source: Leonid Smulskiy



Image #10 Source: Leonid Smulskiy



Image #11 Source: Colourbox.com



Image #12 Source: Lina Strauke



Image #13 Source: Leonid Smulskiy