



# HABIT BREAKER ACTIVITY GUIDE AGES 11-14



# OVERVIEW

This activity guide introduces the topic of habit breaking and the activity allows you to explore the importance of changing our behaviour to combat climate change with your students.

Within this guide is a quick activity which show how habits are formed.

## KEY INFORMATION

- Indoor or outdoor activities
- Group activities
- Time - 5 minutes
- Practical

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**  
Follow standard classroom rules!

- **Lesson Objective:** to appreciate the need to change behaviour to combat climate change
- **Curriculum links:** Geography/Science

# LEARNING TIPS

This habit breaker guide is a good starter activity for the 'Act Local, Think Global' Project Seagrass activities, as well as when discussing 'Climate change', 'Resource rampage', 'Microplastics' and 'Litter' activities!

# INTRODUCTION

To combat **climate change** we **ALL** need to make changes! By reducing our demand of **fossil fuels** and making green switches, we'll start to slow the amount of **greenhouse gasses** being released. We can make simple changes like **walking** or **cycling** instead of driving, eating **less meat**, turning **electrical** items off when they're not in use and thinking about the things we buy.

Some of the changes necessary may seem hard to do, but we just need to make them into **habits** that we can do without even having to think. This activity highlights how it can be uncomfortable to break habits, it takes a lot of thought and some mistakes, but if we keep thinking about our new habit then we'll quickly be eco-friendly without having to make any effort!



## ACTIVITY:

- 1) Ask everyone to put down anything they're holding and to fold their arms.
- 2) Now get the group to cross their arms and to remember whether they put their right or left wrist on top.
- 3) All drop your arms to your sides.
- 4) Cross your arms and again remember which wrist is on top.
- 5) Drop your arms back to your sides.
- 6) Now ask everyone who had the same wrist on top both times to put their hand up and give them a quick count. Normally this will be most of the group. Do the same for those that changed which wrist they had on top.
- 7) Explain that crossing their arms the same way is a good thing - they have learnt an easy way to tuck their arms out of the way, so why waste energy changing it each time?
- 8) Now find out how many people had their left wrist on top both times and the same for the right wrist. Normally it'll be about half and half. This shows that neither way is necessarily better.
- 9) Explain how without realising it they've developed one way of folding their arms and it has become a habit that they repeatedly do without question. Habits are good for us! They stop us having to spend time and energy on things that we already have an easy solution for, such as putting the same wrist on top each time they tuck their arms out of the way.



### FUN FACT!

Habits take a minimum of three weeks to become engrained in your brain!



10) Sometimes conditions change and habits stop being useful - let's try to change this habit! Ask everyone to cross their arms with the *other* wrist on top.

11) A big well done to everyone for managing to change their habit!

12) Point out how breaking their arm folding habit required some thought, perhaps a couple of mistakes and felt a bit uncomfortable to begin with.

13) Humans have spent hundreds of years developing habits that use more energy, increased food production and take more from the earth. These habits have helped humans to grow and develop. However, the condition of the earth has now changed, and we can't continue with these habits. We have to change them in ways that reduce the damage we're doing, such as our contribution to climate change. To make those changes into habits we have to remember that, just like crossing our arms differently, we can do it! But we will have to keep thinking about the new habits and that sometimes we will slip up, but in the end, we will break the damaging habits and find new eco-friendly ones!

