

WRITING: VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

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| <p>Children use a poem like <i>My future, In the museum of past centuries</i> [in the anthology <i>Earthways, Earthwise</i>, compiled by Judith Nicholls] or <i>Today's tomorrow</i> [Pat Moon, in the anthology <i>Green Poems</i>, compiled by Jill Bennett] as a scaffold for their own creative work.</p> | <p>Children consider what “footprints” they would like to leave behind them [eg when they move on from Years 6 to 7]. This might be for their class, their school, or the wider world. Ideas might be generated through discussion or circle time, and written on cut-out footprints.</p> |
| <p>Children create a list of items they would put in a time capsule to let future generations know about life in the present. They could role-play people reactions to opening the capsule, and use this as the basis for a written piece [eg script, poem or story].</p> | <p>Children make pledges for the planet – things they will do for the future of the world and its people. At the 1992 Earth Summit for sustainable development thousands of these were written on paper leaves and displayed as a “tree of life.”</p> |
| <p>Children create a timeline of their lives, from their birth to the present. This is then extended into the future [say, for 20 years]. An extension of this activity is to split the timeline at the present – into a sustainable [desirable] and unsustainable [undesirable] future. How would you ensure that things worked on the sustainable pathway?</p> | <p>Children research a familiar place in the past, through old maps, photos etc. They discuss change in the future, basing their predictions on trends from the past, and from observations of the present. [This might, for example, involve overlaying a present-day map with tracing paper and noting possible changes on it]. They present a report based on their findings.</p> |
| <p>Children take imaginary photographs of a place they like [eg in the neighbourhood – using a cut-out frame can help in this]. They draw two other images: how the place might have looked 25 years ago; how it might look in 25 years time. They describe their images to each other, and note down key words – which form the basis for poems or prose writing. [<i>Window and Belonging</i> by Jeannie Baker would serve as an excellent support for this activity].</p> | <p>Guided fantasy. Children imagine they are 50 years in the future. What is it like? They role play being time travellers, on a trip to the early 21st century. In role, they look around the school grounds, noting what they see or find, and speculating on what it means. They produce a report detailing the positive and negative aspects of what they have seen, and outlining their conclusions. [Being space travellers also works well, while the <i>Doctor Xargle</i> books by Jeanne Willis can be an entertaining way in.]</p> |