

Climate Kind Pedagogy (CKP)

Cultivating kindness and justice-informed
approaches within climate education curriculum

Dr. Kshamta Hunter

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- Background: what, why, how
- Climate Kind Pedagogy (CKP): Overview
- CKP Case Study: Climate Justice & Leadership Camp
- Summary takeaway

Agenda



Land Acknowledgement

I'd like to acknowledge the traditional owners and caretakers of this land that is situated on the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Musqueam, Coast Salish, Tsleil Waututh, and Squamish peoples. I would also like to acknowledge that you are joining us today from many places, near and far, and acknowledge the traditional owners and caretakers of those lands.

Traditional

recognizes lands traditionally used and/or occupied by the Indigenous or First Nations people

Ancestral

recognizes land that is handed down from generation to generation

Unceded

refers to land that was not turned over to the Crown by a treaty or other agreement

What do these terms mean to you?

The climate and nature emergency demands a new approach to teaching

Educators face the challenge of engaging students in climate discussions while navigating emotional complexities and future uncertainties.

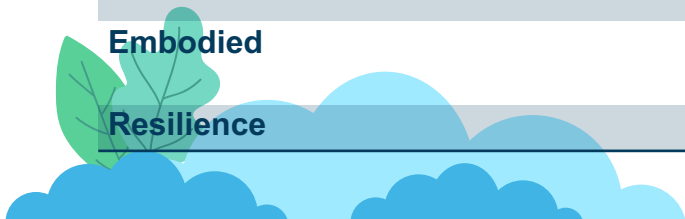
The Climate Kind Pedagogy (CKP) framework offers a transdisciplinary approach to climate education

Goes beyond Western ideologies and embraces alternative worldviews for effective and inclusive climate and science education with a message of hope and goals of socio-political and community action.



Summary of Climate and Kindness Informed Education Frameworks

Framework	Main Points
Climate	science education, inquiry learning, experiments
Climate Change	participatory action, interdisciplinary
Education for Sustainable Development	systems thinking, transformative, experiential learning
Education for sustainability	community learning, competencies
Environmental	outdoor, hands-on learning
Eco-pedagogy	socio-environmental justice
Kindness	trusting, believing and valuing students, respecting personhood of students, student autonomy
Care	developing relationships, cooperation, social justice
Trauma-informed	fostering safety and trust, awareness of systemic injustices
Embodied	understanding the role of the body and mind in constructing knowledge
Resilience	teaching and modelling flexibility



Constructivism
Humanizing Pedagogy

Foundational Values

Kindness
Reciprocity
Resilience
Justice
Interconnections
Relationships

Climate Kind Pedagogy

Transformative
Learning Theory
Challenge & Support

Reflexive Pedagogy
Dismantle Hierarchies
Student autonomy and
responsibility

Why Kindness?

Kindness is not just a virtue; it is a manifestation of profound intelligence. While intellect and knowledge are certainly important, they find their highest expression in acts of kindness - Almas Jalil

kindness is “an inter- or transdisciplinary tactic of intellectual community building” and that it is not to be confused with leniency (Magnet et al., 2014)

Why Kindness?

- “there is a positive and beneficial effect on the learning environment and the outcomes for learners when educators adopt a teaching philosophy based on a pedagogy of kindness”
- “there are strong links between being an exemplary educator and adopting a teaching philosophy that uses kindness, empathy, and care in its pedagogy”

kindness *“can and should play a valuable role in pedagogy because it can positively influence learner environments, learning outcomes, teaching success, and promote discourse on social justice”* (Gorny-Wegrzyn & Perry, 2021)

Climate Kind Pedagogy

Based in compassion

- compassion requires people to have the skills to notice, to feel and then to respond to the suffering of others. It is about recognizing these skills, developing and supporting them
- students are people first and students second
- grounded in believing, trusting, valuing, and empowering students
- committed to social justice and is concerned with matters of race, gender, culture, age, and religion, and emphasizes the inclusion and empowerment of voices from diverse cultures and background

Based in the notion of a culture shift

- implementing a pedagogy of kindness requires teachers to change their teaching approach from control to relationship-building
- dismantling hierarchies and normalizing challenge (with support)
- challenges learners to see beyond their existing world views to appreciate and value self and others
- educators are facilitators and co-constructors
 - through relatively small changes that are guided primarily by the attitude towards learners
 - change in the traditional relationship between the learner and teachers also requires change in the institutions of higher education and such a pedagogy needs institutional support (Rice & Bakke, 2022)

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Foundational Values



the quality of
being generous, helpful,
and caring about other people, or
an act showing this quality
(Cambridge dictionary)

KINDNESS

to believe that someone is
good and honest

TRUST

behaviour or treatment that is
fair and morally correct

JUSTICE

able to be happy, successful,
etc. again after something
difficult or bad has happened

RESILIENCE

Understanding the diverse and
unique needs of each learner
and striving to meet them.

EQUITY

**How can we enact the
uphold these values in our
practice?**

to connect with or be related to
each other

INTERCONNECTIONS

an emotional or other
connection between people

RELATIONSHIPS



Respecting and inviting diverse perspectives and lived experiences in the co-creation of learning experiences.

I.e. being patient and respecting students' identities and getting to know students through in-class check-ins, values clarification and grounding activities

KINDNESS



Demonstrating an appreciation of autonomy, agency, and humanity through the co-creation of learning experiences.

I.e. using content menus, asking for students' feedback and Demonstrating genuine compassion for them as fellow human being

TRUST



Questioning structures of power, privilege and inequalities experienced by human and more-than-human entities.

I.e. Value individuals and their lived experiences and incorporate lessons that critically examine the relationship between power, privilege and identity

JUSTICE



Equipping learners with the tools to face challenges and uncertainties with a hopeful attitude.

I.e. demonstrating adaptability in lesson planning and using a wide variety of activities to ensure that students are equipped with multiple strategies for navigating situations

RESILIENCE



Understanding the diverse and unique needs of each learner and striving to meet them.

I.e. Ensuring teachings are culturally responsive to the students and that they feel safe and welcomed for who they are

EQUITY



Relating theory and practice by making connections in the local community and the real world.

I.e. applying curriculum to the local community through content, assignments and activities that connect students to the community

INTERCONNECTIONS



Building positive connections within and beyond the classroom with the community and the natural world.

I.e. Demonstrating genuine care and empathy for the lives of students by asking questions and listening to their stories

RELATIONSHIPS



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Educator Attitudes



Creating a
classroom where
diversity and
differences are
welcomed,
respected and
celebrated;

Believing people and
believing in people

Welcoming and Open

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Reducing the
influence of power
hierarchies by
honouring
learners' lived
experiences and
wisdom.

Dismantles Hierarchies

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Providing a safe
place for learners
to take risks,
explore complex
ideas, and
collaborate with
peers.

Trauma-Informed

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Syllabus & Planning



CO-CREATION

Involving learners in decision making processes within the classroom.

I.e. implementing students' suggestions in lessons

THEORY TO PRACTICE

Applying classroom learning to the real world through application-based activities.

I.e. Using current events as content

FLEXIBILITY

Adapt learning and teaching based on interest, feedback and self-reflections.

I.e. actively adapting lessons to meet the class needs

COLLABORATION

Working with others to transfer learning into the broader community.

I.e. including dialogue and discussion

INQUIRY-DRIVEN

Providing space for engaging with complex questions about real life.

I.e. asking questions about real-world issues



Table 1 Elaborating on the 8 ways of learning (adapted from Bilton et al., 2020; RAET, 2019; Yunkaporta, 2009)

	Story Sharing: This is about teaching and learning through narrative. Personal narratives (i.e., stories) are central. We connect through the stories we share.
	Learning Maps: This is about making learning pathways and processes visually explicit. We picture our pathways of knowledge.
	Non-verbal: This is about hands-on learning, critical reflection, and least-intrusive management strategies. Ancestral/spiritual knowledge also comes through this way of learning. We see, think, act, make, and share without words.
	Symbols and Images: This is about exploring content through imagery and using visual cues and signals. We keep and share knowledge through art and objects.
	Land Links: This is about place-based pedagogy, linking content to local land and environment. We work with lessons from land and nature.
	Non-linear: This is about indirect management strategies, lateral thinking, comparing and synthesising diverse cultural viewpoints and knowledge systems, innovating, adapting, working within cycles, and working with holistic knowledge. We put different ideas together and create new knowledge.
	Deconstruct/Reconstruct: This is about modelling and scaffolding, balancing teacher instruction with independent learning. We work from wholes to parts, watching and then doing.
	Community Links: This is about grounding learning content and values in community knowledge, working on community projects and using or displaying knowledge products publicly for local benefit. We bring new knowledge home to help our mob.

Table 2 The Two-Eyed Seeing for Science Education (TESSE) Framework

Two-Eyed Seeing Framework for Teaching and Learning Science

Representation-rich 5Es Inquiry

8 ways

Engage:

- Engage students' interest
- Elicit their prior knowledge about a concept

Explore:

- Teachers plan a range of activities where students create, compare, critique, and refine their ideas through multimodal representations

Explain:

- Teachers guide students towards conceptual understanding through an interplay between their representations and scientific ideas
- Teachers introduce scientific ideas

Elaborate:

- Teachers plan activities where students apply and extend their knowledge to a new problem or context

Evaluate: Ongoing formative evaluation through dialogue and representations; summative evaluation in relevant contexts for a purpose

Story sharing + land links:

- Students and other community members (e.g., Elders) share their experiences with the local environment, associated with a concept

Non-verbal + symbols & images:

- Students represent their ideas through a variety of symbols and images to explain, compare, and refine their ideas
- Students participate in hands-on activities and practical investigations

Learning maps + deconstruct/reconstruct:

- Teachers and students make learning pathways and processes visible
- Teachers and students link concepts with other concepts and to broader contexts

Non-linear + community links:

- Teachers and students consider diverse perspectives to understand and address problems
- Students apply knowledge to innovate and/or solve real-world problems

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Activities





Self-Reflection

Expose learners to honest self-reflection activities to explore their biases and promote cooperation.

I.e. Weekly Journal writing prompts



Experiential

Provide concrete experiences to foster more meaningful and deep connections.

I.e. experiments or role-play



Problem-based

Posing a problem and inviting learners to engage in a manner that suits their learning style.

I.e. examining a real climate issue

Nature & Land-based

Changing the setting in which learning takes place by allowing learners to explore their own connection to the environment and land.

I.e. weekly nature walks, outdoor reflection time

Debates & Discussions

Engaging in civil discourse about a topic with opposing views and learning to navigate the diversity of perspectives in the real world.

I.e weekly facilitation/debate about a specific topic

Community Engagement

Connecting learning with the local community and wider context by demonstrating how actions can create real change in the world.

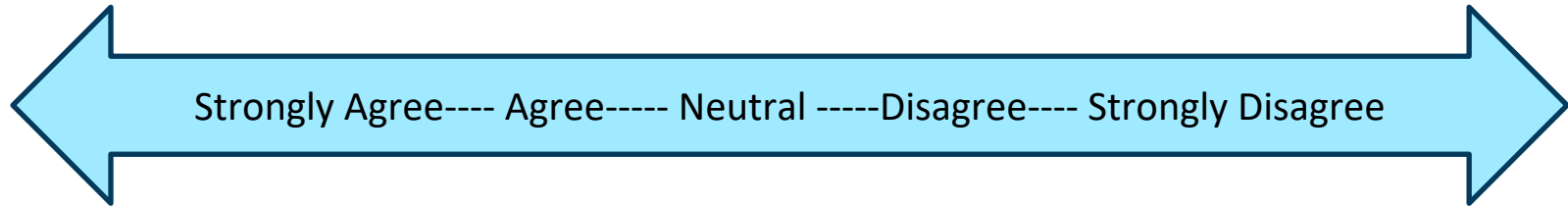
I.e. inquiring about opportunities with the local food bank



Human Spectrogram



Take a stand



Individual action to help the planet doesn't make a difference; only industries can make real changes.



Evaluating Solutions

Climate solutions are often framed as individual actions and behavioural changes. For example bike to work, take shorter showers, recycle. What are the advantages and limitations of this approach? To what extent do these calls to action resonate with your personal experience?

Flight of the Hummingbird

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=naj6zZakgEg>

A PARABLE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



FLIGHT OF THE HUMMINGBIRD

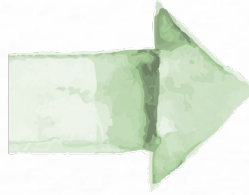


MICHAEL NICOLL YAHGULANAAS

*with Wangari Maathai and
His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

Activity: Mapping Climate Justice

- 1) Visit the Environmental Justice Map:
<https://ejatlas.org>
- 2) Identify a conflict
- 3) Who is involved? Who benefits or doesn't?
- 4) What is at stake?
- 5) How does it relate to Climate Justice?



Pedagogical Approaches that support Climate Education

Mentorship and
Observational
Modelling

Games: DayBreak

Forecasting, Back
casting and Scenario-
planning

Grounding practices

Scenario based group
role play

Visioning exercises
and discussions

Values Clarification
exercises

Action-oriented
project learning

Place-Based
Learning Community
service learning

Community service
learning

Storytelling

Land-based
approaches

Traditional Ecological
Knowledge (TEK)

Life Cycle Analysis
(LCA) and data
mining

Jigsaw Interlinked
Teams

Mind or Concept
Map

Power or Stakeholder
mapping

Project or Problem-
based learning

Interdisciplinary
Team-Teaching

Case Studies

Workshops

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Evaluation Strategies





Person-Centered



Design assignments and activities to incorporate elements of self-reflection and self/peer assessments



Reflexive



Provide students with a variety of options for how they demonstrate their learning, reflection and growth as a learner



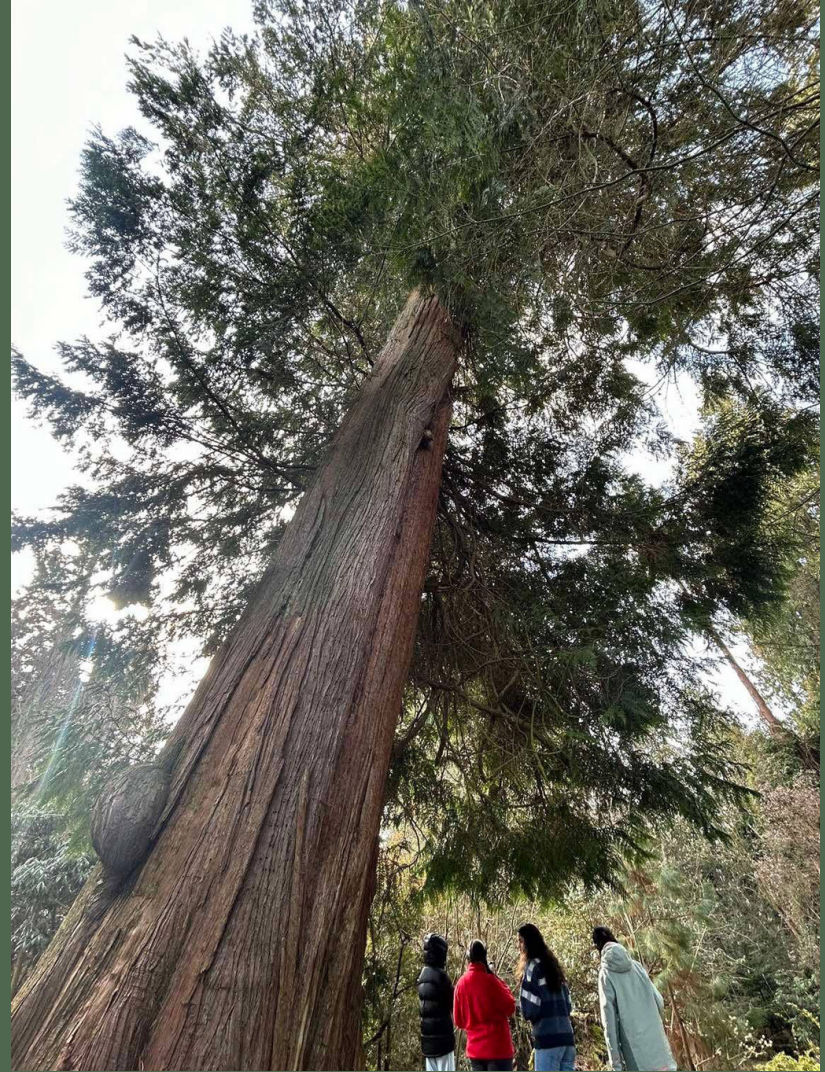
Choice & Flexibility



Focus on formative instead of summative assessment and encourage students to create honest learning goals for themselves

Case Study: Climate Justice & Leadership camp

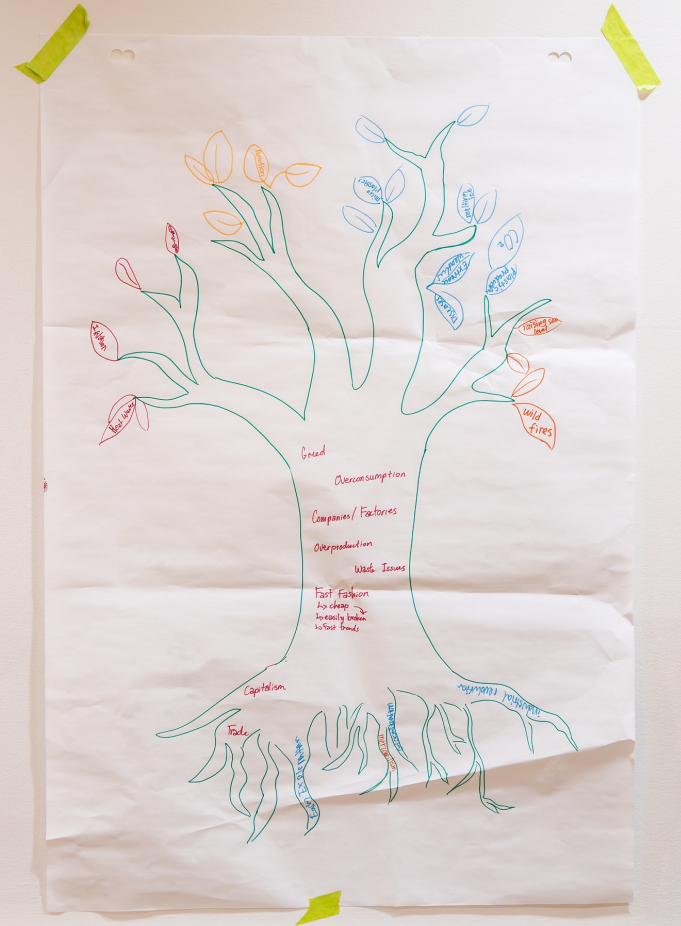
To engage youth in climate education through participatory and values-based approaches grounded in Climate Kind Pedagogy (CKP).



Learning objectives:

The overarching goal of the Climate Justice Camp is to advance justice-informed climate education for secondary school students by advancing:

- Understanding of climate science and climate justice
- Comprehending the interconnections and inequities in climate-related socioecological systems
- Exploring emotions related to climate change, engage in healing, and develop emotional resilience
- Creating safe and brave spaces for conversation and promoting advocacy
- Inspiring collective action for mitigation and adaptation



A Week of Learning, Feeling, and Growing

Each day offered

- Expert-led workshops
- Experiential learning
- Outdoor learning
- Collaborative art
- Storytelling
- Reflective journaling



Topics included



- Climate Science
- Climate Justice & Solutions
- Activism & creating social change
- Climate Art
- Climate emotions
- Envisioning Climate Just Futures
- Musqueam cedar weaving and connections to climate change
- Biodiversity
- Collective action
- Media literacy and fact-checking

Creative Activities

- Creating climate zine
- Cedar Weaving Workshop
- Collaborative art
- Poster making
- Sustainable City Planning
- Body Thermometer activity
- Fact checking
- Digital media project
- Grow, Harvest, Prepare and Share





Journalling

Data Collected:

Over 5 weeks of camp: Spring and Summer 2024, 2025, 2026

Participants: 60 high school students (ages 13–18)

Facilitators: 17 UBC students

A poster titled "Climate Justice and Leadership Camp Schedule" with a background image of a forest. The poster lists activities for five days: Monday (Mar 17th), Tuesday (Mar 18th), Wednesday (Mar 19th), Thursday (Mar 20th), and Friday (Mar 21st). At the bottom, it states "SPRING BREAK, MAR 17TH-21ST 2025" and "UBC SUSTAINABILITY IN COLLABORATION WITH UBC CAMPS & UBC BOTANICAL GARDENS".

Monday Mar 17th	Tuesday Mar 18th	Wednesday Mar 19th	Thursday Mar 20th	Friday Mar 21st
Climate Science, Justice & Solutions	Human Causes & Exploring Emotions	Social Change, Activism & Indigenous Climate Action	Climate Art, Media & Communication	Envisioning Climate Just Futures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carbon Emissions Activity• Human Causes of Climate Change• Climate Science and Justice• Greenheart Treealk and UBC Garden Tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Climate Emotions and Art workshop• The Life of a Tree activity• Ephemeral Art• High School Students as Climate Changemakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cedar Weaving Workshop with an Indigenous Weaver• Culturally Significant Plants Activity• Climate Justice Workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sources and Fact-Checking• Climate Science Communication and Activism• Re-imagining Biodiversity• Youth Activism and the Vancouver Climate Emergency Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finding Your Role in Climate Change• Rootbound: Combining Law, Organizing, and Storytelling against Climate Despair• Pizza Lunch!• Zine Making• Food Garden activity with UBC Botanical Gardens

SPRING BREAK, MAR 17TH-21ST 2025
UBC SUSTAINABILITY IN COLLABORATION WITH UBC CAMPS & UBC BOTANICAL GARDENS

Methods of Data Collection



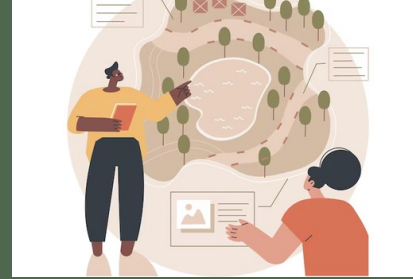
Focus Group Discussion

Day 1 (pre-camp)
Day 5 (post-camp)



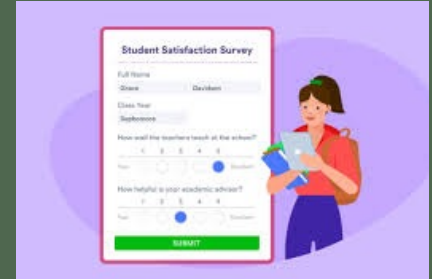
**Facilitator
Interviews**

In-depth
interviews



**Participant
Observation**

Daily logs



Participant Surveys

Pre and post-surveys
Anonymous

Findings: Focus Group Discussion Highlights (Youth Participants)

Pre-Camp Reflections:

- Mixed motivations: personal interest, parent suggestion, location
- Low awareness of climate justice
- Hesitancy about expressing climate emotions

Post-Camp Changes:

- Youth expressed increased confidence talking about climate topics
- Deeper emotional and ecological connection to land
- Confidence to take action or start a project
- Favorite moments: tree walks, weaving, sustainable city planning

Findings: Facilitator Interviews & Survey Insights

Facilitator reflections

- Value of interactive, land-based methods
- Importance of CKP values like trust, care, and justice
- Noted challenges with time, behavior management, and material access

Survey responses

- Appreciated nature-based and hands-on learning
- Request for more breaks, more time outdoors, fewer repetitive tasks
- Many showed emotional resonance with storytelling and climate emotions sessions

Tree Walk



Outdoor Biodiversity Activity



Key Outcomes of the Camp

Youth Outcomes:

- Better understanding of climate justice and systems of inequality
- Increased emotional vocabulary and language (eco-anxiety, hope, grief, action)
- Awareness of local biodiversity and cultural relationships to land
- Communication with family and friends about climate change

Facilitator Outcomes:

- Skill-building in pedagogy and youth engagement
- Experience in collaborative planning and interdisciplinary delivery



Reflection on CKP Values

CKP VALUES	EXAMPLE FROM CAMP
Kindness	Weaving gifts for loved ones, peer encouragement
Trust	Youth led discussions, built group solutions
Justice	Carbon equity activity, land-based storytelling
Resilience	Tree walk & Eagle Tree story, persistence in climate change games
Equity	Adapting to all learning styles, Indigenous teachings
Interconnection	Tree of life activity, soil and ecosystem exploration

Student Participant Quotes

"During the tree walk. Going uphill slowly, touching the bark—it made me feel fragile but also respected, like we were part of something big."

"for me the bad news was empowering, we can all do something to help; all the people that we met in the camp are so passionate about this, that made me see their perspective and care"

"After this camp, I feel like I can do something, even small things. For example, the carbon emission activity helped me understand how can I help the climate by not wasting electricity and natural resources"

"I will join more volunteer programs that I know about now, I know more about how volunteering can help"

Facilitator Quotes

“Respect was foundational in this camp. I made sure students knew they were respected. Justice was a key focus for me—showing that climate issues are often the result of human decisions and injustices, not just natural processes. We discussed inequalities in climate impact, including topics like climate injustice, capitalism, and developed vs. developing countries. Discussions on Indigenous rights and environmental protection were woven throughout. Guest speakers discussed public action and policy change. These sessions aimed to empower students and show them how to take action.”

“I think the activity—the "Life of a Tree"—was especially impactful. That activity asked them to empathize with a tree, to imagine how it may have felt throughout history. Anthropomorphizing the tree in this way helped bridge that emotional connection and build a sense of kinship with it. I found that to be one of the most powerful moments.”

Parents Quotes

"I just wanted to say thank you for this opportunity. She really enjoyed the camp, And she learned a lot. She liked all the teachers and the activities you did. Maybe we have a budding scientist!"

"It has been a while since I've seen X excited to go do something every single day. She loved the variety of the speakers and activities. Thank you!!"

"I was kind of surprised, the descriptions of [camp] was very educational, which we were happy about but I didn't expect Y to enjoy that part so much. She came home every day happy and excited to tell us what they did and learned. You guys definitely did it right in your approach"

In Summary: Practicing Climate Kind Pedagogy through 5Cs:

1. **Compassion:** practicing compassion by making intentional compassionate spaces
2. **Connection:** relationship building through 1:1's
3. **Clarification** of roles and realistic expectations
4. **Co-construction** rather than 'telling'
5. **Challenge:** normalizing challenge

Start small with:

1. Where Educators Can Start with Climate-Kind Pedagogy
2. Pedagogical Approaches that support Transformative Sustainability Learning

Available at <https://climateeducation.ca/ckp-toolkit/>

Thank you

Learn more at
climateeducation.ca

Gratitude: UBC TLEF and
Sustainability Hub

