

OUR PLANET: OUR BUSINESS



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Name: Teacher Example

Class: WWF-20

REFLECTIONS WORKSHEET

Our Planet: Our Business raises one of the most important challenges of our time: How can business help to tackle the world's environmental crisis? Created for WWF by the Emmy Award-winning Silverback Films, *Our Planet: Our Business* shows the immense value of nature to our economy, the scale of the challenges that we are facing, and the critical role that business can play in creating solutions at scale.

Teacher's copy: This student worksheet can be used as an in-class activity or be set as an individual home research task. Students can choose to complete these activities whilst watching the film, pausing at various points to reflect on the issues and questions raised, or to watch the film and complete the questions at the end. The questions follow the film's narrative in chronological order.

Below are suggested answers/notes for each question:

1. Planet Earth has not always been habitable for life. Using the table below, make notes on how conditions on our planet have changed in order to support life:

Non-habitable Earth	Habitable Earth
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A chaotic and unstable climate• The atmosphere was a turbulent mix of noxious gases• Oceans and lands were poisoned by these toxic gases	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increasing biodiversity helped to create soils on the planet and stabilise the atmosphere.• The more diverse and complex life on Earth became, the more productive the living world grew.• Different habitats across the globe work together to keep it healthy.

2. What defining characteristic of the Holocene period enabled humanity and other life on Earth to thrive? How did this benefit us? Make notes below.

- The Holocene was a period of stability where the Earth's average mean temperature only fluctuated between +/- 1 degree Celsius.
- This period of stability is what gave us Earth's regular seasons and allowed agriculture to develop.

3. What does the term 'The Great Acceleration' refer to? Bullet point some key notes about this period below.

- The Great Acceleration has been a period of unprecedented change, productivity and growth.
- Technology has driven advances across the globe.
- Our world has become connected as never before and business has boomed.
- Diets have changed, farming techniques and fishing has intensified.

4. Our planet has now entered a new age called *The Anthropocene*. What does the term *The Anthropocene* mean? Bullet point some key notes about this period below.

- The Anthropocene means *The Age of Humans*.
- Humans are now the dominant force of change on the planet.
- 3/4 of the land surface and 2/3 of the ocean are now impacted by our activities.

5. Give examples of some of the ways mankind's activities have affected our planet's natural resources:

- Our poles are losing their ice, in the summer there is 40% less arctic sea ice cover than there was in 1980.
- Many of the world's great rivers and lakes are drying up. For example, Lake Chad has shrunk by 90%.
- Almost half of our planet's forests have been felled for their timber and to make space for ourselves and our livestock.
- Mangroves are being cleared to make way for beach resorts.
- Extensive over-fishing is leading to the collapse of key fish stocks.

6. "There'll be no jobs on a dead planet" – Bren Smith.

Considering the issues that have been raised in Our Planet: Our Business, what do you think Smith meant when he said this?

Student's interpretations will vary. They could refer to the following:

- Economy, business and culture can collapse overnight if natural resources run out.
- We need a large diversity of life, thriving and wild, on our planet to sustain our way of life as we know it.

7. List below some of the effects we are already seeing on our planet as a result of increased global temperature and biodiversity loss:

- Weather systems are becoming less predictable.
- Deadly storms, fires and floods are all becoming more frequent and more severe.
- Over 90% of people on the planet breathe dangerously polluted air.

8. Scientists have predicted the changes to our planet that a baby born today might experience over their lifetime, if humanity does not act quickly. Note down a prediction made for each of the years below.

- **2040s:** Soils of the frozen North thaw, releasing their locked methane. Any chance of controlling the climate is lost.
- **2050s:** The last of the coral reefs collapse as a result of ocean acidification and warming.
- **2080s:** Overuse of fertilisers and pesticides could have killed off soil micro-organisms and pollinating insects. There will be no more fertile soil. The weather becomes increasingly unpredictable, leading to a global food shortage.
- **2100s:** Our planet could be four degrees warmer. Countless species could be extinct and large parts of the Earth may be uninhabitable and global peace an impossibility.

9. What are the five universal goals that business should be striving towards not only in their own organisation but in their investments and supply chains?

1. Transition to zero carbon (reduce emissions & move to renewables)
2. Minimise the space we use (allow space for nature, particularly through better agriculture and selective forestry)
3. Return the oceans to good health (sustainable fishing and product traceability, marine protected areas).
4. Eliminate waste (including the need for a circular economy)
5. Reimagine success (system change for sustainable growth)

10. How are the mindsets of consumers and entrepreneurs changing? What differences are there between how previous generations view business and how new generations are likely to view business?

Society is moving towards a new view of businesses, away from the notion that the purpose of a business is to make money and towards the idea that business have a role to play in improving society and a responsibility to protect the environment.

11. Why will these changing mindsets drive businesses to change?

Businesses need to respond to the demands and values of their consumers. In order to attract the next generation of consumer, business will need to be able to react and prove their sustainability and commitment to the welfare of the planet.

12. On Wednesday 17th June at 2pm, you will be attending an expert panel Q&A, organised by WWF-UK, based on Our Planet Our Business. Use the space below to brainstorm and jot down any questions, comments or concerns that this film has raised for you, and come ready to put these to the experts on June 17th!

If students are struggling to think of specific questions, ask them to note down how the film made them feel.

WHAT NEXT?

EVEN SMALL CHANGES CAN ADD UP TO BIG ACTIONS

- Write a letter to a local politician or business and tell them about an environmental issue that is close to your heart. And don't be afraid to ask questions!
- Help scientists to record the variety of wildlife in your area by taking part in a citizen science programme. Create habitats for wildlife in your own backyard (e.g. a bug hotel, rotten logs for beetles, heaps of branches and leaves for hedgehogs) and grow plants to attract bees, butterflies and other pollinators.
- Use less plastic, reuse and recycle. Try to buy things that last for a long time and can be repaired or recycled. Things like bicycles and clothes can be mended.
- Speak out! Talk about the importance of protecting nature with your friends, families and teachers.
- Start a movement in your school or community to help the planet by planting trees or saving energy. Remember, schools are businesses too – what changes could you campaign for to make a difference?
- Think about the food you eat. The ways in which we grow and produce our food has a massive impact on the planet. Eating more plant food helps! Producing 1kg of beef requires 70 times as much land as producing 1kg of vegetables.