

D. I. Y. TEACH-IN MODEL

You don't have to be a college student or professor to hold a teach-in! You can sponsor one at your business, civic group, or in your living room. Whether you belong to a book club or a knitting circle, a bird watching group or a sports team, this is a time for all of us to step up and become educators. In as few as four or five hours, you can have a whole event planned and the hard part finished. Whether you are a seasoned organizer or this is your first community event, this simple outline will take you through it, step by step. Feel free to use this as a suggested guideline more than a plan that is written in stone. Use the pieces of the model that are helpful to you, adapt what you like, and be creative with the rest to best suit your group and resources.

Here is a quick summary of what to expect:

1. Figuring out commitments – one night or 100? (1 hour)
2. Nuts and Bolts (2 hours)
3. Outreach (1 hour)
4. Book List (1 hour)

STEP ONE: (1 hour) Get together with two or three friends who are also interested in climate change and energy issues. Together, discuss the type of event you are interested in: would you like to do a one-night teach-in, or are you ready to hold a teach-in, followed by a study group focused on sustained engagement for the First 100 Days? Either way, this model will help you get organized. Set a time, date, and location for your next meeting, and agree on an agenda so that it's lined up in advance.

STEP TWO: (2 hours) With your fellow organizers, decide the following things:

- **Where?** - someone's living room, a community center, a local coffeeshop with wi-fi access are all possibilities;
- **Who?** - how many people do you want to get involved? Would you like to limit it to your close friends and/group members, or are you going to publicize?
- **How?** - are you planning on inviting an "expert" moderator, e.g. local ecologist, climate scientist, city councilperson, conservationist? Or would you like to use the expertise and guidance structure your own group already has? Who will facilitate the discussions? Delegate discussion topics/goals.
- **When?** – the National Teach-In is planned for Thursday, February 5th. Set a time for your group to meet – an evening potluck is always nice.

- **What next?** – plan for your next meeting, which can be held over the phone or via email. Set up an email account for your organizing group, or decide on who will take responsibility for being the contact person for RSVPs.

Step Three: (1 hour) Start working on outreach. Send emails or [evites](#) to your friends and others who may want to be included. If you are publicizing, make a simple flyer and post it around: your grocery stores, co-ops, favorite venues, faith centers, meeting places, book stores, telephone poles, bulletin boards, and health centers are good places to start. Be sure to include your contact information, and ask people to RSVP – it helps to know how many people you’re dealing with! If you are having a small gathering, delegate responsibilities for the teach-in itself: who should bring which dishes/drinks/utensils? Who will make the photocopies of the discussion materials? Make sure someone has a computer, speakers, and a fast Internet connection. Remember that the webcast will be available for download, so you can save it onto a laptop in advance and then watch it at your leisure (without Internet).

That’s it! Other materials you may want to prepare to have on hand include:

- a small white board or flipboard, plus markers for writing and brainstorming
- small flyers with web resources to hand out at the teach-in – see our [resources](#) page for ideas
- pens and paper for guests to take notes

STEP FOUR: (1 hour) If you are planning on sustaining your engagement through the First 100 Days by holding a study group and following the 100 Days of Action calendar, be sure to set aside time each week or two to meet. Frequent meetings can help maintain focus and inspiration, and are a good practice for those of us who require structure in order to stay on task. For Step Four, decide on a reading list for your teach-in. In 100 days, you should be able to read four books as a group. We offer title suggestions below. Give the list to your participants well in advance so that copies can be secured for everyone either through your local library or book store.

You now have a full agenda set for February 5th and beyond. Your investment of 5 hours has the potential to touch the lives of your entire community, and you are adding your voices to the grassroots movement that is *necessary* to make the changes we need.

OVERVIEW OF TEACH-IN GOALS

1. Educate one another about the realities of climate science.
2. Consider how our own actions (personally and as a society) contribute to the problem.
3. Share a clear-eyed look at the potential futures to which our current path leads.
4. Re-vision our communities: what kind of future do we want for ourselves and our children? Examine our core values and resources.
5. Learn more about how to create change at home and in our neighborhoods, and influence national policy at the same time. Familiarize ourselves with the recommendations of the Presidential Climate Action Project (PCAP).
6. Open lines of communication with legislators, and then use them.

7. Provide opportunities for direct action in the First 100 Days.

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Preparation

Thursday, January 15 th , 2009	
All day	Send out a reminder to all of your guests. If you are holding a study group, urge your participants to acquire a copy of the first text or two that you'll be reading.
Thursday, February 3 rd , 2009	
All day	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Download the webcast and discussion materials and go through everything to make sure it all works and/or makes sense.2. Send out an email to all participants on your RSVP list and ask them to visit the following websites:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal Carbon Footprint: http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/personal_footprint/• Climate Change Calculator http://www.nature.org/initiatives/climatechange/calculator/ <p>These are personal carbon footprint calculators. The first will tell you how many planet Earths it would require to sustain human life if everyone lived as you do; the second gives you sense of how you compare in terms of sustainability practices and overall carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions to others in the United States. Ask your guests to note their answers and bring the results to the teach-in.</p>
Wednesday, February 4 th , 2009	
All day	What was it you were supposed to bring? Chips? Fruit? Make sure you have everything you need.

The Event

February 5 th , 2009	
6:30 – 6:45 PM	Guests arrive. Chatting, drinks, introductions. Go around the room and have everyone give their name and a little bit of background – who they are, why they're here, etc. Hand out materials. Share personal carbon footprint results.

6:45 – 7:15 PM	Go over the basics of climate science. Make sure everyone has a chance to ask questions about things they are unsure of. Focus on solid numbers, research, causes, and effects. Limit speculation and rumor – what do we <i>know</i> is happening? See our resources page for helpful links.
7:15 – 8:00 PM	Watch the webcast, “The First 100 Days.” (running time: 35 min.) Follow up with discussion based on materials downloaded from the National Teach-In website.
8:00 – 8:15 PM	Break for potluck! Share food and open conversation. *Note on potluck – challenge participants to bring foods with a low carbon footprint: an origin within a 150 mile radius, if possible.
8:15 – 8:30 PM	Brainstorm a list of things you value in your community – these can be material, natural, social, anything. Make a list of things you don’t have, but want. Try listing under two headings: VALUES and RESOURCES. What kind of world do we <i>really want</i> ?
8:30 – 8:40 PM	Revisit personal carbon footprint results. What kinds of changes can you commit to personally? Collectively? Write them down. Discuss how to support these changes in one another.
8:40 – 8:50 PM	Go over the recommendations of the PCAP. Discuss. Do you agree with all of them? Why/why not? How might these policy changes affect your area or region?
8:50 – 9:00 PM	Share contact information for local, regional, and federal legislators. Look at suggestions for direct action and sustained engagement on the 100 Days of Action calendar. Make plans to act.

Extra resources for extended Teach-In events:

- *Wake Up, Freak Out – Then Get a Grip* – a 10 min. online video on the “tipping point” in climate change: <http://wakeupfreakout.org/film/tipping.html>
- *An Inconvenient Truth* – Al Gore’s Academy Award-winning documentary on global warming. <http://www.climatecrisis.net/>
- The 20-page summary of the Presidential Climate Action Project (PCAP) recommendations for US energy policies, available in lo- or hi-res: <http://www.climateactionproject.com/plan/>

SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT

You're ready to learn more about the realities of climate change. You have a group of individuals who are committed and supportive, and who want to share the project of educating each other and creating positive change.

These are your next steps:

1. Decide on how frequently you can meet. Every two weeks is good.
2. Set educational goals – what do you want to learn more about? What are you unsure of? What interests you?
3. Set action goals – how would you like to follow up on what you learn?
4. Select texts. Several titles are listed below, but there are many others out there – do some research and find ones that will best fit your educational and action goals.
5. Fix a timeline. Even if you race ahead or fall behind, it's good to have a shared timeline for reading and discussion. Four books in one hundred days? More? Fewer? Consider including magazine, newspaper, and journal articles in your syllabus; encourage others to bring clippings or writings of interest to add to the “optional readings” list.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Climate Science and Global Warming Effects

- *Earth Under Fire: How Global Warming is Changing the World*, (2008). Braasch, G.
- *Atmospheric Justice: A Political Theory of Climate Change*, (2008). Vanderheiden, S.
- *Heat: How to Stop the Planet from Burning*, (2006). Monbiot, G.

Solutions and Alternatives

- *Plan C: Community Survival Strategies for Peak Oil and Climate Change*, (2008). Murphy, P.
- *Ignition: What You Can Do to Fight Global Warming and Spark a Movement*, (2007). Isham, J., Isham, J. Jr. & Waage, S.
- *Apollo's Fire: Igniting America's Clean Energy Economy*, (2007). Inslee, J. & Hendricks, B.
- *The Post-Petroleum Survival Guide and Cookbook*, (2006). Bates, A.

This D.I.Y. Teach-in action plan on global warming solutions is developed by Lara Messersmith-Glavin