Join a journey on which students are the directors, impacting the environment and activating a more just and healthy world.

Featuring media-rich, standards-integrated curriculum (for use across subjects), access to Redford Center original/supported films, special events and creative challenges for students, and a final film challenge and celebration.
What is Redford Center Stories?

Redford Center Stories is an environmental storytelling initiative for students (with focus on ages 10-14), designed to empower youth as changemakers exploring and activating the power of storytelling to impact environmental justice, protection and repair. This free program provides engaging, media-rich, high-quality, ready-to-use, project-based curriculum and resources to engage students with storytelling, film, science, equity, and environmental justice. Redford Center Stories is flexible and cross-disciplinary, and includes adaptable lessons (with PDFs, Google slides, media, resources, activities, and extensions); opportunities to learn with filmmakers and activists; mini-challenges to help students develop their visions and voices; and support in helping students create and contribute a 90-second film to a youth film showcase and celebration in April 2021. In partnership with incredible organizations doing important work to empower youth and climate solutions, this project is about young people's agency and capacity for vibrant impact and meaningful contribution.

What is The Redford Center?

Co-founded in 2005 by Robert Redford and his son James Redford, The Redford Center uses impact-driven film and media to galvanize the movement toward environmental justice, protection and repair. We produce, fund and support a diverse portfolio of projects that aim to balance out the pervasive alarmist environmental narrative with stories of progress, hope and inspiration. By leveraging the power of storytelling, we seek to engage and activate significantly more people—and a far more diverse and representative population of people—to join the environmental movement. Our cross-cutting portfolio of films are designed to have real-world impact and propel the systems change we so urgently need. Increasingly, our growing network of 400+ environmentally-engaged artists also represent Black, Indigenous, People of Color and LBGTTQ+ communities who are among the historically underrepresented groups that suffer disproportionately from environmental impacts, and are often among those leading progress on the ground, advancing the innovations and enacting the solutions needed to safeguard humanity and our planet. Achieving environmental justice, protection and repair requires the will of the people behind it: The Redford Center is committed to using the power of story and hope to accelerate a just transition to a healthier, more regenerative future.
“It’s time to hand the reins to our youth, and encourage them to become the designers of their future. We must honor their efforts, and support them as leaders.”

ROBERT REDFORD
Co-founder
The Redford Center
"The urgency of climate change and many of the related environmental challenges we face mandates that we saturate our culture with stories that inspire action...As the next few decades will be critical in terms of minimizing the impact of climate change, it’s particularly important that we support and promote the voices of our youth."

– JAMES REDFORD
Co-Founder
The Redford Center
Lesson One – Wisdom and Wonder: a foundation for justice

Introduces students to Redford Center Stories as a journey of learning and discovery to connect with the natural world, ourselves and each other, and bring health to our planet and communities. Students experience ways words and images direct/inspire attention, and begin to consider their own visions + voices for a more just, hopeful, healthy world.

Lesson Two – EarthRise: awakening hope for the future

The oldest human tradition is to gather together to share stories to better understand ourselves and the world. Over 50 years after Apollo 8 and the iconic Earthrise photo, what new perspectives are needed now? How can we redefine who is an “environmentalist”; and in ways that honor, uplift and amplify underrepresented communities, visions and voices?

Lesson Three – The Sea Around Us (Life and Reciprocity, part 1)

This lesson explores our relationship to water. Students are invited to think deeply about how water impacts conditions for life and health—for the planet and people. How does the history, science and story of water connect us all? How is ocean health connected to community health, and who is thinking about environmental justice, protection and repair with respect to the ocean?

Lesson Four – A Water Story (Life and Reciprocity, part 2)

The preciousness of water cannot be overstated. While water covers the Earth, only a tiny percentage of the Earth’s water is available for human use and consumption. The United Nations identifies water as a human right and necessity for health, as well as for the preservation and cultivation of human dignity. Who is most impacted by declining access to clean water?

Lesson Five – Shared Land & Tuning to the Trees (Life and Reciprocity, part 3)

As hidden, communal qualities of trees/forests are being newly discovered, so is the importance of communion with nature for human health. For whom is it easy to access nature, and for whom it is difficult or unwelcoming? Amidst the pandemic, it’s common to hear “nature is still open”, but is it? How can the outdoors be a shared space of nourishment, thriving, mutuality?
Lesson Six – Light and the 1st Law of Thermodynamics: Seeing

What can our relationship to “non-renewable”/“renewable” energy show us about how we are, and could be, living; and who is most impacted by decisions about energy use? With different ways of investigating these questions, students consider fossil fuels, impacts of energy use, what innovations exist (or could exist), and who is living in “frontline communities”?

Lesson Seven – Gravitational Echoes/Waves (sound/light/action): Hearing

Recently, scientists confirmed one of Einstein’s theories with the measurable discovery of “gravitational echoes”: waves of all kinds ripple in time/space without end. When a decision is made in a community, which ripples/impacts are considered and prioritized? Who gets to speak for a community? What about ripples of sound/light/air pollution – who’s most impacted, at what cost?

Lesson Eight – Active Citizenship and Rising Community

Around the world, young people are raising their visions/voices for environmental justice, protection and repair. How are the rights of nature, and all beings, newly coming into public dialogue? What can citizens do of all ages do to participate more fully? This lesson dives deeper into advocacy, and the role of art, literature, music, expression, science in deep change.

Lesson Nine – Soil: Feeling

How can creativity and innovation newly arise as communities use what they find in their own “backyards,” and share their knowledge? What conditions have depleted Earth’s soil/people’s relationship to it; with what impact? What are innovations in urban farming, soil health and regenerative agriculture able to teach us about seeking + cultivating diversity and a richer story?

Lesson Ten – Generative and Just Systems, Building Forward

What can inspire us all to live in greater reciprocity? When we create a story, invent something new, design a city/building/food system/way of sharing resources, are we thinking about both immediate and long-term impacts on natural systems and all people? What future can, and will, we call into being? What will the legacy of this generation/time in history be?
To support students in learning across curriculum, and in developing confidence and capacities for self-awareness; critical and creative thinking; agility, application and problem-solving across contexts; and collaboration and teamwork, many learning environments are prioritizing integrative learning, including project- or challenge-based learning, theme-based learning and phenomenon-based learning. All three approaches to learning support educators in working together to deepen the student learning experience, and help more fully connect learning with purpose and avenues for application, action and impact. Within these approaches and methods of inquiry and engagement, investigation and capacity-building from diverse subjects are integrated and embedded in explorations of a particular theme or phenomenon, as well as in the creation of student-inspired and student-led projects.

The Redford Stories Project incorporates and extends all three of these approaches to learning–project-based learning, theme-based learning and phenomenon-based learning–with the following objectives and learning standards woven throughout the learning experience, and with the invitation for educators to customize lessons and the overall journey to best suit their needs and students. The aim is to create a learning journey that includes/supports all educators and students.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Help educators integrate environmental content/context into any unit of a class/course
2. Draw out connections between social-environmental-economic patterns (and points of view)
3. Inspire deeper self-reflection, self-awareness and confidence for learning across subjects
4. Let connections inform examples/metaphors/languages/stories for shared understanding
5. Support a relational understanding of human beings and nature; and mutual influence
6. Affirm nature as teacher and model for systems thinking, balance and creativity
7. Encourage joyful, purpose-filled learning and an expanded sense of belonging + potential

**COMMON CORE STANDARDS**

- Language Arts Anchor Standards
  - Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking
- History-Social Studies Framework
  - Major Themes and Essential Questions, Grades 5, 6, 7, 8
- Math Connections (emphasis on analysis and problem-solving)
  - Major Themes and Analysis, Grade 5, 6, 7, 8

**NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS**

Cross-Cutting Concepts, Grade 5, and 6-8

**SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING PRINCIPLES**

**UN Sustainable Development Goals**

**SOCIAL JUSTICE STANDARDS**

(Teaching Tolerance)
“The Redford Center Stories curriculum makes teaching with my students an absolute joy. The focus on environmental and social justice is practical, inspirational and fun. I feel like I can bring myself to the curriculum and make it my own. It’s opening up new conversations and deeper community in my classes, allowing me to get to know my students in really new ways. I feel like we are all learning together.”

– Teacher
San Francisco Unified School District

“I loved the weeks we did Redford Center Stories in class, and some of my highlights were probably when we got to see videos of other people around the world working together and seeing and hearing their stories and listening to people most affected by climate change.”

– 6th Grade Student
A journey of discovery starts with the impulse to wonder. This introductory lesson introduces students to a journey of exploration to connect with the natural world, ourselves and each other, and bring health and healing to our planet and communities. Students will begin to consider how their voices can impact environmental justice, protection and repair.

“We are linked and defined by an expanding and diversified cosmos. In the midst of these connections, human awareness is a gift of personal and communal potential.” - Dr. Barbara Holmes

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
What are the “greatest challenges” of our time?
What is the relationship between storytelling and social change?

OVERVIEW

ACTIVITIES
- Imagining the Future, with existing science - what are the possibilities?
- Media, Climate Bingo, Literacy and Writing prompts, extensions
- Mini-Challenge: What are the 5 things that give you hope?
- Films: Imagine the Future, Redford Center Trailer

Common Core - ELA, History
Next Generation Science
SEL, Social Justice Standards
UN Sustainable Dev. Goals

Ch. 1
Wisdom and Wonder
a foundation for justice
OVERVIEW
The oldest human tradition is to gather to share stories to better understand ourselves and the world. Over 50 years after Apollo 8 and the iconic Earthrise photo, what new perspectives are needed now? How can we redefine who is an “environmentalist”; in ways that honor, uplift and amplify underrepresented communities, visions and voices, and create healing and care for all?

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
What is the history, meaning, future of gathering in circles to tell stories?
What is the meaning of “environment”; “environmentalist”?

“It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated.”
- Martin Luther King Jr.

ACTIVITIES
- Considering poet Wendell Berry’s words
- Examine the potential for ripples of change
- Story of an image: Earthrise
- Earth’s ecosystem with Kahoot, Stars, Planets, Earth
- Mini-Challenge: A story told from a different point of view
- Films: Global Climate Summit, Art of Activism, Ellen Choy

Ch. 2
Awakening
Hope for the Future

GLOBAL CLIMATE
SUMMIT, ART OF ACTIVISM, ELLEN CHOY

OVERVIEW
Common Core - ELA, History
Next Generation Science
SEL, Social Justice Standards
UN Sustainable Dev. Goals
OVERVIEW
This lesson explores our relationship to water. Students are invited to think deeply about how water impacts conditions for life and health—for the planet and people. Water is the Earth’s first resource, and connects us all. How is ocean health connected to community health, and who is thinking about environmental justice, protection and repair with respect to the ocean?

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
Why are oceans important and how are humans in relationship with water/salt water?
What are causes of ocean pollution, and how does it impact communities differently?

“Water is something humanity has cherished since the beginning of history, and it means something different to everyone.
- Brian Fagan

ACTIVITIES
- Students reflect on their relationship to the ocean
- Media, Sylvia Earle’s quote, Literacy and Writing prompts, extensions, Kahoot Quiz
- Consider Marine Biology, Coral Reefs, Ocean/Human Health
- Mini-Challenge: Create a PSA that creates awareness about a problem facing the world’s oceans/the impact.

Ch. 3
The Sea Around Us
Life and reciprocity: part 1
COLLABORATORS (partial list)
Cafeteria Culture
California Academy of Sciences
California Film Institute
Climate Emergency Fund
Coral Reef Alliance
Earth Day Network
EarthxFilm
National Writing Project
NatureBridge
Teach for America
Create a 90 second film answering one of the following prompts:

Deadline for entry is March 31, 2021.
"I LIVE HERE."

Take the opportunity to tell the story of your environment (the good and the bad). Fighting for environmental health doesn’t only take place in the forest. Show us your block, your neighborhood, your street, your city or town.

"I’M NOT WHO YOU THINK I AM... I’M AN ENVIRONMENTALIST."

Stake your claim as an “environmentalist.” What are you fighting for? How are you investing in environmental justice, protection, and/or regeneration?

OPEN — TELL US YOUR STORY!

Share your experience or interpretation of what environmental justice looks like or sounds like.

#REDFORDCENTERSORIESCHALLENGE
MEET OUR JUDGES

Dylan Redford
CO-CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert Redford
CO-FOUNDER, THE REDFORD CENTER

Sibylle Szaggars Redford
MULTIMEDIA ARTIST

Lisa Jackson
APPLE’S VP OF ENVIRONMENT, POLICY AND SOCIAL INITIATIVES

Coyote Peterson
YOUTUBE PERSONALITY, HOST OF ANIMAL PLANET’S "BRAVE THE WILD"

Katie Eder
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FUTURE COALITION

Faith E. Briggs
FILMMAKER

Dr. Elizabeth Lindsey
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EXPLORER

Chloe Mei Espinosa & Ella Lin Espinosa
YOUTH STEWARDS
RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

MAKING FILMS

One minute video tips (Michael Hernandez (Apple Distinguished Educator), Five Minute Film School) Resources for making and sharing videos with Apple Clips; Clips User Guide; Everyone Can Create Video Images: Original (or you might look for royalty free images/video clips for use at: pexels.com or unsplash)

Sound: Original/self-produced (or you might look for royalty free tracks/clips at a site like: bensound)

Some examples you might look at again/for further inspiration:

- Ode to the Earth
- Why Oceans Matter
- Earthrise - Amanda Gorman
- The Nature Film
- A Brief History of Environmental Justice
- Xiye Bastida - Imagine the Future
- The Art of Activism, Ellen Choy
- Sacred Strides - Bear Ears Prayer Runners
- Student Example - Water (EarthXFilm)
- Conservation International - Water

RESEARCHING ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ISSUES

World Wildlife Foundation
(English/Spanish)

Areas of emphasis include:
- Climate; Oceans; Freshwater; Wildlife; Forests; Food

National Geographic
(English/Spanish)

Areas of emphasis include:
- Climate; Biodiversity; Oceans; Freshwater; Wildlife; Trees; Soil/Food

New York Times Climate

California Academy of Science:
Citizen Science/Biographic

NASA Climate

United Nations:
Sustainable Development Goals (in detail)
- English
- Spanish
- French
- Mandarin

Our Climate Our Future website

Earth Day Network Resource Library

Inside the Climate News website

Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson articles
marine biology; climate change/racial justice

Biomimicry Institute website

This Land resources website

Inventing Tomorrow on PBS website