

# City Classroom CAP - Series

PBL support for using your City Climate Action Plan as a Living Textbook for local relevance, student agency, and community impact.



Credit: Kevin Lisota

## Ranking Sustainable Solutions

Student teams interact with a table set of 36, 4x5 images of [Sustainable Solutions](#) that range from personal actions and consumption choices, to equipment investments, to advocacy for systems change. Information on "[why it matters](#)" is shared on the back of each card.



## Sort, Rank, and Debate the Most Important Sustainable Solutions

Students work as a group to physically sort and rank the images to make their case for the top 5-10 sustainable solutions that meet all three of the **criteria listed below**. The creative tension between the three criteria stimulates deeper dialogue within the team.

## 36 Sustainable Solutions

- |                       |                                   |                                   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. LED Light Bulbs    | 13. Electric Vehicle              | 25. I Heart Storm Drains          |
| 2. Vampire Plug Loads | 14. Plant-Based Diet              | 26. Garden at Home                |
| 3. Thermostat         | 15. Shorter Showers               | 27. Eliminate Food Waste          |
| 4. Insulation         | 16. Full Loads Dishes and Clothes | 28. Thrift shopping               |
| 5. Weatherization     | 17. Boycott Bottled Water         | 29. Social Media Matters          |
| 6. Solar Panels       | 18. Use the WaterSense Label      | 30. Combat Misinformation         |
| 7. Heat Pump          | 19. Irrigation Efficiencies       | 31. Know your Consumer Power      |
| 8. Bike Riding        | 20. Fix Toilet Leaks              | 32. Know your Representatives     |
| 9. Carpool            | 21. Don't Flush That!             | 33. Use your Voice!               |
| 10. Public Transit    | 22. Shrink Your Lawn              | 34. Engage Your Representatives   |
| 11. Light Rail        | 23. Compost and Top Mulch         | 35. Advocate! Advocate! Advocate! |
| 12. Fly Less          | 24. Tree planting                 | 36. Support a Frontline Community |

### RANKING CRITERIA: Can you balance all three?

1. What sustainable solutions are the easiest to implement?
2. What sustainable solutions generate the biggest reduction in CO2 emissions?
3. What sustainable solutions are the most affordable for the most people?

Try a small practice set of 3 Solutions as a class to get familiar with the criteria. You may also want to jigsaw this activity by dividing groups based on the three criteria.

**The Challenge:** Given the above criteria, and your conversation as a team, what are **your top 5-10 actions**? Why? Where do you feel you would like more information? What are you curious about? Learn more about [why it matters](#). The right answer is not important. The value in this game is for you to use your own experience, language, and reasoning to build your case.

[Get the Image Set](#) and print two-sided on cardstock in color. Cut into individual cards and laminate for durability.

**OPTION #1:** Provide each table group their own set of 36 solutions. Or a small selected batch based on the unit you are working on. There are sets for energy, transportation, waste, water, food, trees, and advocacy. Start the first round of ranking by keeping the photo side up so students can puzzle out what each image might represent as a sustainable solution. For a second round, students can flip the Ranking Cards over and read the text on the back that describes what each action is and why it matters.

**OPTION #2:** Use just one set or 36 solutions distributed randomly around the classroom and invite students to move about discovering, negotiating, collaborating, or trading for their best ideas for ranking the top 5-10 solutions.

**OPTION #3:** To work digitally, you can use the [Sustainable Solutions SLIDES](#). Student teams download their own copy of the slide deck and reorder them, selecting for the top 5-10 that they think best meet the criteria. They justify their decision in a short slide presentation to the class or to another table group. NOTE: The slides are in random order so students are challenged to debate how they might be categorized and prioritized.

### **Go Deeper (Revisit as a formative assessment)**

Rearrange the collection by grouping those actions that you are **personally taking** as an individual or a family. Return to this same activity numerous times to deepen the conversation and commit to application through student [Impact Project Design](#).

*Also explore...*

### **Current Habits Checklist - Start with What's Working**

**Lesson Resources:** Students conduct a family or caregiver survey on current home habits related to climate change to invite cultural knowledge, encourage a solutions mindset, and establish a baseline for analyzing next steps.

### **The Language We Use (When We talk About Climate Change)**

**Lesson Resources:** Students practice and then facilitate conversations with family or caregivers, or with adult mentors or guides from teen centers, cultural centers, or faith communities, people they look up to, to explore the language folks use when they talk about climate change, climate justice, and climate solutions.