



Name

Class

Teaching sequence

Work through this resource material in the following sequence:

10 minutes

Tune In: Continuum of empowerment

20 minutes

Find Out: Youth-led governance

25 minutes

Take Action: Collaborating for change

5 minutes

Reflection: Design thinking

Learning intentions

Students will:

- understand the role of youth in governance and decision-making
- explore how language can empower youth to influence social and environmental change.

Success criteria

Students can:

- explain how youth-led governance can shape societal decisions
- understand how language is used to advocate for change and express values.

Tune In: Youth-led governance

Step 1

Explain to students that they are going to explore how powerful youth voices can be in decision-making, whether on a school, community or global scale. Ask a student volunteer to share what the term 'empowerment' means to them.

Outline to students that being empowered means having the ability to influence decisions and actions that affect them. Youth-led movements across the world are pushing for change, but it is important to first understand how they feel about being involved in critical decision-making processes.

Step 2

Create a visible continuum either along the floor of the classroom or on the whiteboard. The continuum should have two ends, one labelled "not empowered" and the other side "completely empowered".

Learning support: You could also label mid-points such as "somewhat empowered" or "empowered, but limited" to give students more options for self-placement.

Step 3

Invite students to consider their own sense of empowerment. Ask them to reflect on personal experiences at school, home, or in their wider community.

Prompt them to think about how empowered they feel as a young person to make decisions that affect them and their:

- school
- community
- country
- world.

Allow students a few moments to think quietly and reflect on their feelings for each question before asking them to choose a position on the continuum that represents how they feel as young people in decision-making.

Step 4

As students walk to their positions, encourage them to think about why they chose their spot. After everyone has selected their position, ask a few volunteers from different parts of the continuum to share why they chose their spot.

Use open-ended prompts to guide the discussion:

- What made you place yourself there?
- What experiences or feelings influenced your position?
- What would make you feel more empowered to influence decisions?

Allow students to reflect and share, ensuring to connect their answers to personal experiences. Encourage students to discuss:

- youth involvement in their schools or communities (for example, student council, eco-club and group projects)
- barriers they face in having their voices heard (for example, age and authority)
- opportunities they feel they can act on (for example, youth movements and student advocacy).

Step 5

Explain to students that they will watch a clip from *Future Council*. Outline to students that *Future Council* is a feature documentary that takes eight kids on the ultimate school excursion, a road trip across Europe to challenge powerful leaders and find solutions to our greatest ecological challenges.

As a class, watch the following clip from the documentary where the kids form a council to advise powerful leaders.



Future Council Clip - (<https://vimeo.com/1088599714/207fa09170?ts=0&share=copy>)

Step 6

After viewing the clip, invite students to turn and talk to the person next to them about the importance of young people in positions of influence and decision-making. Prompt them to think about how language can be used to demonstrate positive or negative connotations towards particular issues and values.

Find Out: Youth-led governance

Step 1

Briefly explain the concept of youth-led governance, where young people take active roles in decision-making processes that impact their lives, communities, or the environment. Highlight that this can range from local environmental youth groups to formal councils like the UN Youth Council.

Step 2

Divide students into three groups, and assign each group a different youth-led governance case study from the [activity sheet](#).

1. UN Youth Council (Global)
2. FYA's Young Mayors Program (Australia)
3. The Y Youth Parliament (Australia)

Explain to students that these case studies examine how youth voices are incorporated into decision-making processes. Each group's task is to learn about the programs and assess the efficacy measures. Allow students time to read through the case study, conduct any further research on their devices and respond to the questions.

Step 3

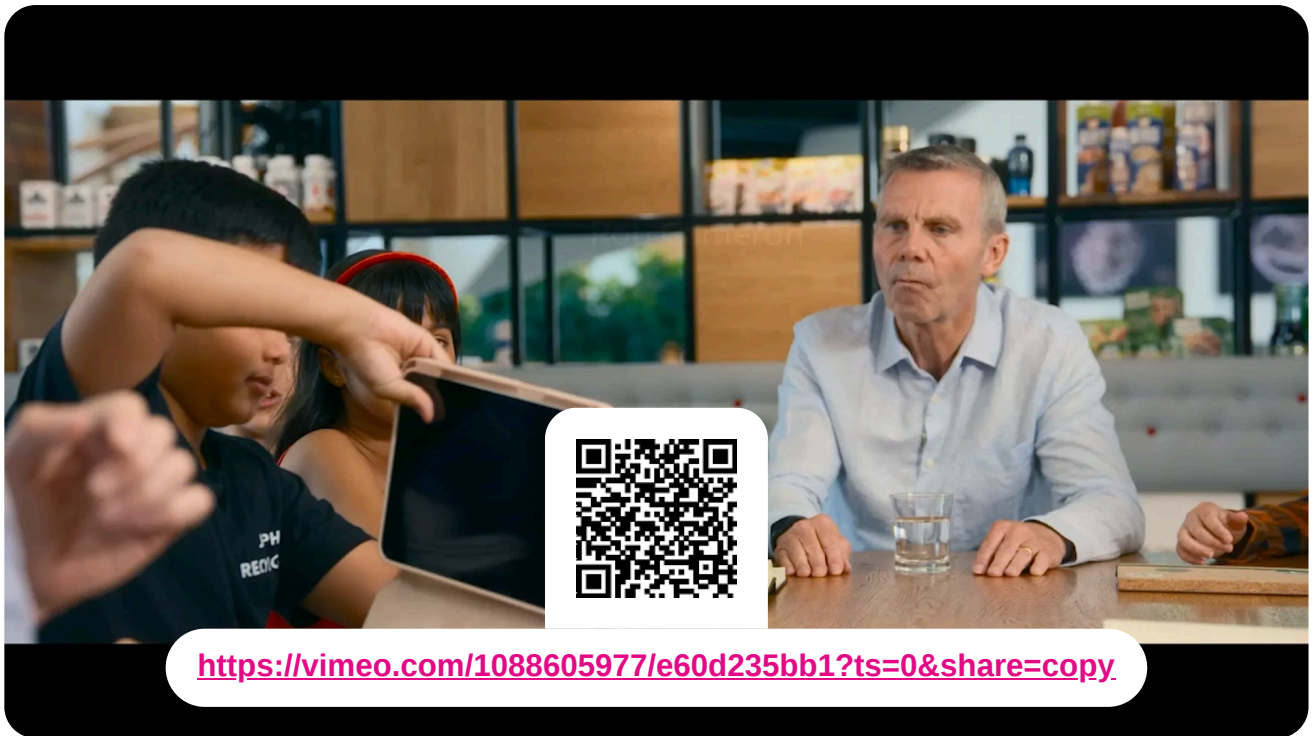
Once completed, invite each group to present a brief summary of their case study and their overall assessment to the class. After all groups have presented, facilitate a class-wide discussion on the following:

- What can we learn from these different youth-led governance models?
- What role do you think youth should play in decision-making, and why?
- How can we improve youth involvement in our local communities?
- How does the Future Council's approach differ from these established programs?

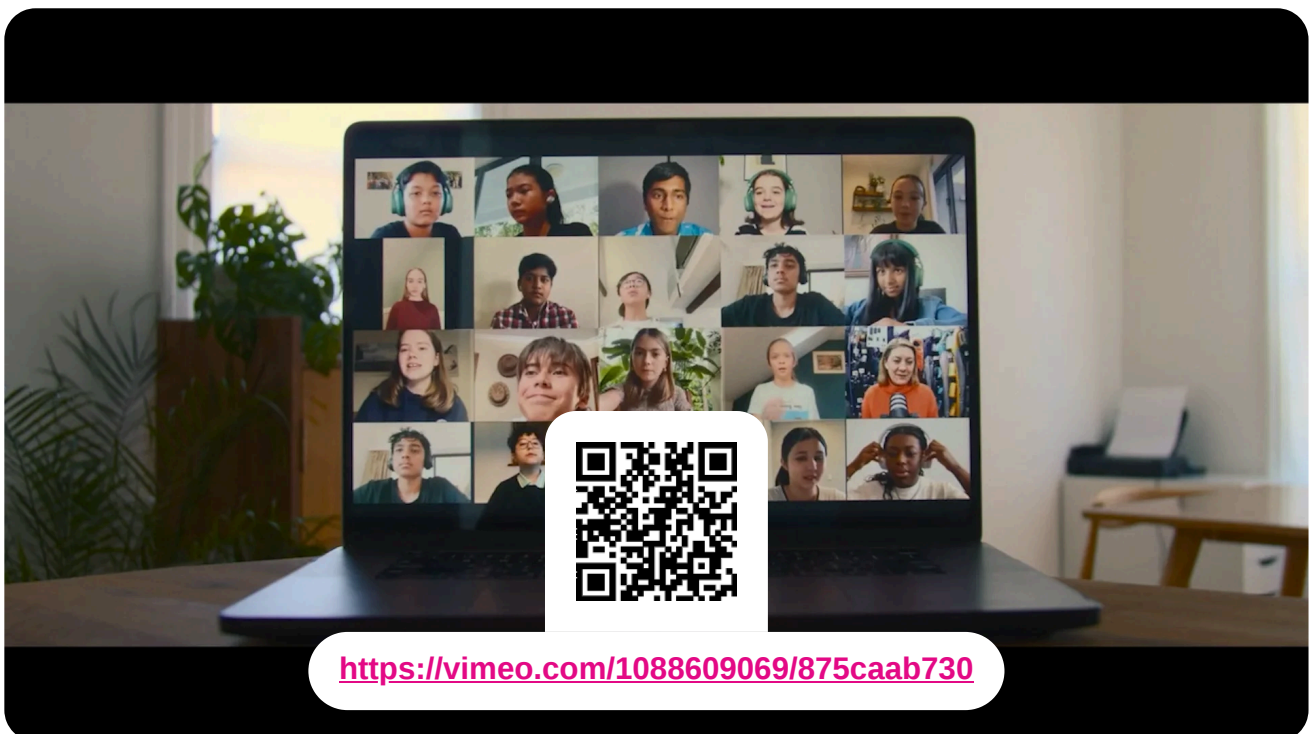
Take Action: Collaborating for change

Step 1

As a class, watch the following clips from *Future Council*, in which they speak to Nestle and Decathlon about their ecological responsibilities as major companies.



Video 1 - Nestle - (<https://vimeo.com/1088605977/e60d235bb1?ts=0&share=copy>)



Video 2 - Decathlon - (<https://vimeo.com/1088609069/875caab730>)

After viewing, invite students to share their thoughts with the class. Encourage students to think about the key messages the Future Council had for Nestle and Decathlon and how the Future Council strongly advocated for these companies to take action and accept responsibility for their environmental impact.

Lead students to identify how the language used by Nestle's leader demonstrated subtle or implied values that they hold, either from a company or individual perspective.

Step 2

Next, divide students into 2 groups. Explain to students that they will participate in a role-play activity.

- Group 1 represents leaders from companies with a large environmental footprint who are looking for sustainable solutions and consultation.
- Group 2 represents members of a Future Council advocating for sustainable solutions for future generations.

Step 3

Provide Group 1 with 5 minutes to research 2 companies to represent or provide them with the list of suggested companies (below). It is important that students work together to research the companies they plan to represent. On the [**Student Worksheet**](#), they can record:

- What does the company do?
- What environmental issues are they facing?
- What has been their track record on sustainability?
- How can they contribute to a healthier planet?

Suggested companies:

Amazon	Amazon's massive distribution network, packaging waste, and energy consumption in warehouses and data centres contribute heavily to its carbon footprint. Amazon's logistics operations generate significant emissions from transportation.
Coca-Cola	Coca-Cola is one of the largest producers of bottled beverages, which creates significant plastic waste and contributes to water shortages in certain regions due to excessive water usage for production.
Shell	Shell is a major player in the fossil fuel industry. Its operations contribute significantly to climate change through high carbon emissions. The company has also been involved in environmental disasters like oil spills.
Volkswagen Group	Volkswagen is one of the largest car manufacturers globally and has been involved in the "Dieselgate" scandal, where it was found to have cheated emissions tests. The automotive industry, in general, contributes to significant carbon emissions through production and the use of fossil-fuel-powered vehicles.

While Group 1 are researching, allow Group 2 to brainstorm a list of sustainable solutions to potential issues the companies may raise on the [Student Worksheet](#), similar to those that the Future Council suggested to Nestle. Encourage students to think of solutions that may reduce carbon emissions, promote the use of clean energy and reduce waste.

Step 4

Invite Group 1 to share potential issues they'd like to solve in their companies, and how they wish to seek the help of the Future Council. Allow Group 2 to provide feedback to Group 1.

Step 5

After Group 2 has provided feedback, both groups will collaborate to brainstorm sustainable solutions to the issues raised by Group 1. Encourage students to think creatively about how they could integrate youth-led governance into the solutions, using the "Future Council" approach of inclusivity and collaboration.

As students brainstorm, scribe key ideas and suggestions on the whiteboard. These ideas could include solutions like adopting renewable energy, reducing waste, ideas for youth engagement, and how involving young people in decision-making could lead to better outcomes.

Learning extension: Allow groups to come together to explore the campaigns led by **Market Forces**, a company that believes banks, superannuation funds and governments that have custody of our money should use it to protect our environment, rather than damage it by financing environmentally destructive projects.

Step 6

Invite students to reflect on the activity and pose the question: How can language be used to advocate for change and express values?

Outline to students that, as they demonstrated in the role-play activity, language can be used to empower people, advocate for change and express values. Language does this by:

- **Influencing opinions:** Language can be used to change minds by presenting facts, emotions, and persuasive arguments to inspire action.
- **Framing the issue:** The way we talk about an issue shapes how others perceive it, making problems seem more urgent and encouraging action.
- **Empowering others:** Language can motivate people by making them feel that their voice matters, encouraging participation in a cause.
- **Building solidarity:** Inclusive language like 'we' and 'our' helps unite people and create a sense of community around a common goal.
- **Expressing values and beliefs:** Language allows us to communicate personal or cultural values, helping others understand the ethical foundations of a cause.
- **Creating calls to action:** Action-oriented language (such as 'join,' 'act' and 'change') inspires people to take specific actions, such as signing petitions or attending events.
- **Challenging the status quo:** Language can question norms and assumptions, advocating for more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable systems.

Reflection: Design thinking

Step 1

Direct students to the [Student Worksheet](#) to use the 5 process stages of design thinking to explore the potential of a Future Council at their school.

Learning extension: Are your students interested in getting involved with the Future Council? Direct them to the [Regenerators website](#) to learn more and express their interest in contributing to the Future Council.

These lessons have been created in partnership with

Future Council and Regen Studios

