

Lesson Plan

Climate Change and Infectious Diseases

Length

one 45-minute period

Grade Level

High School

Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to identify the wide range of ways in which climate change is affecting our health
- Students will be able to articulate how these effects can be addressed

[How Climate Change Affects Our Health](#)



[Perilous Pathogens: How Climate Change Is Increasing the Threat of Diseases \(cfr.org\)](#)



[Handout](#)



[Google Slides template for activity](#)



Homework

- Read: CFR Education | “How Climate Change Affects Our Health”
- Complete the handout (attached)

Class

- **(5 minutes) Review homework:** Make sure that students:
 - Have identified the full range of harms
 - Are considering both adaptation and mitigation as responses
- **(25 minutes)** Break students into four groups and assign each group one of the diseases discussed in Perilous Pathogens. Share a copy of the attached slideshow template with students—it contains a section for each group, already labeled with their disease. If you teach multiple sections, create a separate copy of the template for each section. Ask students to complete the following tasks and fill in the corresponding slides in their section of the template:
 - Explain what the disease is
 - Explain the impact of climate change on the disease
 - Explain what can be done about the disease
- **(15 minutes)** Have each group briefly present their findings
 - As students listen to the presentations, they should consider: what more could/should countries be doing to address the threat of climate change on diseases more effectively? If time allows, lead a short discussion on this question.

Vocabulary

infectious disease

also called communicable, a disease that spreads via people, animals, insects, or contaminated food and water —such as the flu, chickenpox, or Ebola.

World Health Organization

UN agency meant to lead global public health research and response.

emissions

refers to the amount of greenhouse gases an entity, such as a country or company, produces.

fossil fuels

hydrocarbon energy sources such as oil, coal, or natural gas.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

U.S. federal agency that researches and responds to outbreaks of infectious diseases and researches some noninfectious diseases.

deforestation

the clearing or thinning of forests by people for materials, land-use, medicinal ingredients, farming, paper production, or other non-forest purposes.

adaptation

term for the actions and strategies that aim to reduce the exposure of people and places to climate change's effects.