

Overview

Students use an online calculator to measure their carbon footprint and discuss their findings.

Length

One class period

Materials

- [Sources of Energy: A Comparison \(World101\)](#)
- [The Greenhouse Effect \(World101\)](#)
- [CoolClimate Calculator](#) (CoolClimate Network, University of California, Berkeley)

Instructional Plan

1. Ask students to predict what parts of their life contribute the most to climate change.
2. Have students complete the CoolClimate Calculator exercise. Some sections of the calculator, such as those about travel, food, and shopping, may be easier for students to calculate than others, such as heating and electricity use. You could either have students analyze only as much of their carbon footprint as they can, or assign the calculator as homework so that their family can help with some of the information.
3. Discuss:
 - What parts of your life have the biggest impact on climate change?
 - What changes would have the most impact in lowering your carbon footprint?
 - What changes would you be willing to make? Not make?