



An Inconvenient Youth

Alec Loorz, iMatter
Olympia, Washington

☀ Call to Action

Visit the Climate Reality Project
climaterealityproject.org

☀ Values

- Dedication
- Commitment
- Creativity
- Communication
- Environmentalism

☀ Lessons Learned

Let your passion be your inspiration and your guide.

Reach out to those you admire, make your voice be heard, and let your passion shine through your words.

Make connections with people through the things you are both passionate about.

After watching Al Gore’s documentary film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, Alec Loorz was inspired to mobilize other young people to learn about the climate crisis.

He was the youngest person to attend Al Gore’s Climate Reality training. First, he founded Kids vs. Global Warming, and then iMatter. In 2011, Alec was represented by Our Children’s Trust when he led the legal battle against the U.S. government, claiming that they haven’t done their part in preventing the global climate crisis.

Alec has received numerous awards from environmental groups, including the Young Environmental Hero award, the Ventura County Global Warming Activist Award, and the International Eco-Hero Award. He has acted in an advisory capacity for various climate advocacy groups, including Inconvenient Youth, the Alliance for Climate Education, and The Future We Want. He is now pursuing his passion for film and photography, using these media to help preserve and protect the beauty of nature.

☀ Language Arts

Write a letter to your favorite climate change activist.

Explain to them how they have inspired you, and how you plan to aid their cause. After you finish your letter, save it as a PDF and post a copy on social media.

Create your own “Inconvenient Truth”: create a short film (between 15 and 25 minutes), in which you use data, interviews, etc. to explain the current state of climate change in the world, what is being done to help curb it, and what else needs to be done.

Write a research essay on Alec’s iMatter lawsuit. How and where did the idea start, and where does it stand now? Then, create a short presentation (no more than 10 slides) to explain the lawsuit and its significance to your peers.

STEM Activities

Alec wanted to do more than just write letters and stage protests, so he decided to go out and experience other ways of being involved with climate justice, such as visiting organic sustainable farms. Conduct a mini research project on technological advances throughout agricultural history, and their impact on sustainability. How can agricultural technology contribute to fighting the effects of climate change? Have students work in teams to design a type of technology (tools, app, etc.) that would help farms be more sustainable.

Are there relationships between solar energy, global energy transfer processes, climate, and biomes? What evidence suggests that our climate may be changing more rapidly than living species can adapt to? Is human activity causing climate change? How can we reduce our impact on the biosphere and on our global climate, while still meeting human needs?

Every year, land is destroyed by mining processes. In this [activity](#)¹, students will learn about the resource extraction process, how minerals are used in our daily lives, and the impact it has on the environment. Then, in groups, students will think of ways to reduce the adverse effects mining has on the environment.

Sustainability Innovations

As a teenager, Alec realized that students were not engaged in sustainability issues at an adequate level, so he took matters into his own hands. Today, students have many more options of sustainable programs to become involved with, such as [Ecorise](#)². EcoRise is an online platform that helps students tackle real world challenges in their schools and communities while highlighting sustainability issues. Check out EcoRise to see their innovative projects and the impact they are having.

When it comes to sustainability, kids often want to be involved, but don't know where to start. In this [podcast on UNGA Guide Virtual](#)³, Julia Zimmerman and Olyindamola Adegboye address Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) micro-projects, and how their inclusion of young people's environmental advocacy and projects could make the world a different place. What SDG micro-projects could you implement in your community?

One of Alec's greatest accomplishments stems from the development of iMatter Youth. Visit [imatteryouth.org](#)⁴ and identify projects that you would like to participate in.

Sustainability Career Pathways

Storyteller. Telling stories is a powerful way to mobilize people, as An Inconvenient Truth so clearly demonstrates. Stories can inspire, inform, and encourage others to take action, as Alec learned in his own efforts to tell his story. Becoming a journalist (including for your school paper), blogger, novelist, filmmaker, or other type of communicator can channel your storytelling skills to make a difference in the world. Learn more and receive training in climate communications at the [Climate Reality Project](#)⁵.

Carbon Mitigation Specialist. Humanity will need work collectively to create a carbon-restorative economy by 2050 (meaning actually pulling more co2 out of the air than we are putting in) if we are to slow down and reverse the adverse effects of climate change. To do this, a whole new sector of carbon mitigation will crop up in the years to come: through afforestation and forest management, effective landscaping, restorative agriculture, energy efficiency, renewables, even painting roofs white to reflect sunlight into space--all sectors that will offer an abundance of jobs). But to be most effective, these actions will need to be coordinated. Perhaps that's a job for

you? One group, [The Carbon Trust](#)⁶, demonstrates the integrated approach specialists can provide in this complex process.

Park Ranger. Alec was dismayed by the efforts to reduce the size of Bears Ears National Monument. Parks are a key place where the public learns about nature--including what's native and non-native to their area. Park rangers are both educators and leading protectors of the world's parklands. This is a career opportunity for those who want to educate and care for forests and parks. [Learn more about being a park ranger here](#)⁷.

1 <https://uasmat.edmethods.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Lesson-plan-Impact-of-mining-on-the-environment.pdf>

2 <https://www.ecorise.org/>

3 <https://ungaguide.com/event/innovative-solutions-youth-activism-changing-the-game-with-sdg-micro-projects/>

4 <https://www.imatteryouth.org/>

5 <https://www.climatealityproject.org/training>

6 <https://www.carbontrust.com/who-we-are/purpose>

7 <https://www.parkrangeredu.org/>

