



How to navigate and use the website

Short description: Take a comprehensive tour of the interactive map and the big ideas and goals that make it a powerful tool for understanding and taking action on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Duration	Key Concepts	Materials	Learning Styles
3 lessons, 15-35 minutes each	• Mapping • Geographic awareness • Data collection and analysis	A Sustainable World Interactive Map Shared vertical surface; examples of common maps in the student environment	• Verbal-Linguistic • Visual-Spatial • Interpersonal • Intrapersonal

		Country Data Connect 4 Educator Resource: Assessment for Learning - How to Navigate and Use the Website	
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Overview and Learning Objectives

In this lesson, students will explore how to navigate and use the interactive map and website designed to support learning about global sustainability and international development. They will learn how to access country profiles, compare data across themes (Gender, Climate, Health, and Education), explore infographics and stories, and begin asking their own questions. This skill-building lesson sets students up for success in future lessons and independent inquiry.

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Navigate key features of the interactive website.
- Locate and interpret country profiles and data summaries.
- Use filters to explore sustainability themes and indicators.
- Identify where to find stories, videos, and deeper context.
- Ask their own inquiry questions about global sustainability.

Lesson format note: Numbered text is teacher script; italic script is teacher notes.

Suggested timing: 55-70 minutes

Lesson 1:

Introduction and Big Ideas

Purpose:

To invite students to consider how a digital map and global dataset can be a powerful learning and action tool.

Suggested timing: 10-15 minutes

Suggested Teacher Script:

1. Have you ever looked at a map and thought, “What’s it like to live there? What’s school like? What do people do for work? What does the climate feel like?” We are going to learn how to use a map built to help answer those questions—and help you explore the world with real data, visuals, and stories. Before we explore it and use it to ask big questions and discover big ideas, let’s reflect on what makes a map a map.
2. Let’s begin with the reasons we create and use maps. What are some places where you have seen a map? What kinds of things do you usually look for on a map?

Examples students may be familiar with include the location map inside most malls, hiking and walking trail maps from your municipality, the driving maps they may see their parents use, and even fictional maps within video games or fantasy books.

Remind them that every smartphone has powerful mapping tools that would have been unthinkable just a few decades ago. Through the discussion, students will ideally arrive at some key concepts about maps: they represent information about space in the world, including the relationship between different kinds of data and different locations.

3. Maps can have many kinds of features depending on their purpose and audience. What kinds of features are shown on different maps? What do those features tell you about the purpose and audience of a map?

A map might show things like time zones, physical features, political boundaries (and therefore implied political claims), roads for navigation, surveys for new construction sites, weather maps.

You may wish to demonstrate how smartphone maps are also used for advertising. Businesses can pay the map publisher so they are more prominent in search results.

4. We know that all maps contain at least two basic forms of information:
 - a way of showing some part of the physical world, from the very local (your neighbourhood) to global (maps of the entire world and beyond)
 - a way of showing other related information or data connected to locations on the map
5. Maps are built with data. Data is information that can be organized, shared, and compared. The data that goes into a map can be almost anything that we observe about the world and how humans interact with it. The unique thing that maps can do is show the connection between different types of data and how they appear in different locations. The same data could be shared as a list or a set of lists, but seeing it mapped out within a representation of space can be much more powerful.

Take a moment to apply these categories to a few different common maps. For example, a mall location map represents the spatial layout of the mall through a floor plan as well as information about the various stores and amenities in the mall. These two forms of information come together in the map.
6. Why might it be useful to look at data about different countries? What about comparing the same kind of data across different countries? Next, we will look at how we can use data to better understand the challenges that different countries face as they work towards a more sustainable future.

Lesson 2:

Skill Building – How to Use the Interactive Map

Purpose:

Introduce students to the platform and walk them through its key features and functions.

Suggested timing: 30-35 minutes

For students that are prepared for independent engagement with the interactive map, the Tour interactive provides basic instructions for the map functions and data. Upon navigating to the site, a popup that reads, “Welcome to the Guided Tour” will appear. Press the “Start Tour” button to begin the tour. If the popup does not appear, press the “Take me on a guided tour” button on the left side of the screen.

Suggested Teacher Script

Provide access to the interactive map through individual devices or by projecting the website for the class. Begin with the interactive map centred on a region far from your home community. Use either the 2D or 3D projection as suits the needs of your classroom.

1. We know that maps are a powerful way to share data across different locations. This is a world map built on many different sets of data that connect to four key themes: Climate, Health, Education, and Gender, all of which draw from the UN SDGs. Let’s look at how it works.

In terms of representing space, the interactive map is a digital globe. Rather than detailed geographical features, however, its purpose is to organize and share sustainability-related data about all of the world’s countries. We can access this information through the Themes dashboard and by clicking on any of the countries on the map to pull up the Information Sliders dashboard.

Show students how the Theme toggles work by selecting one and showing how this pulls up the Theme data tile and the country information dashboard.

2. Each of the themes has two sets of data that will appear on the map. This kind of map is called a choropleth. A choropleth is a map that uses different colours or shades to represent data ranges between different areas. On this map, the darker the shade, the higher the value for that country in the first set of data.

Select a country on the map and demonstrate how the choropleth and symbols change for different themes.

3. The second set of data is represented through the symbol hovering over each country. The larger the symbol, the higher that country's ranking in the second set of data.
4. The map also holds other important thematic and geographical information. This appears when we click on a country. Doing so will pull up the Information Sliders dashboard. Here, we can analyze and compare potential relationships between data within a country, and we can also compare by selecting a second country.
5. Take a few minutes to go to the interactive map and identify:
 - The four core themes (Education, Health, Gender, Climate)
 - Where to find country profiles
 - The country comparison sliders
 - Where to find videos and stories
6. Let's try using the map to find different kinds of data. Find a country of your choice. What data is available under the "Health" theme?

If students are working independently on their devices, they can proceed individually or in small groups. If the interactive map is being projected to the class, ask instead for suggestions from the class for a country to locate.

Now let's switch the theme to "Climate." What changes about how the country appears on the map? What stays the same?

7. Now let's try comparing two different countries. Switch to the "Gender" theme. Select another country to compare within the "Gender" theme by clicking on the arrow dropdown and selecting a country by name.

How do they differ? What are the most significant geographic differences between the countries?

8. To practice moving through the Interactive Map and locating data, let's try a quick activity.

Share:

Worksheet: [Country Data Connect 4](#).

The activity can be a competition for timed completion or students can work for a set amount of time to complete as many connections as they can. Remind students that they should be able to show proof for their answers by navigating the map. When the activity is complete, ask students to answer the Connect and Reflect questions on the worksheet. Invite the class to share their responses. Let them know that they will revisit these questions as they continue to explore and work with the interactive map.

9. You can also use the Resources tab to view real stories around the world of people taking action to improve health, education, gender equality, and climate resilience. Take a moment to identify how to sort the resources by theme, SDGs, and format.

Lesson 3:

Making Connections – Asking Good Questions

Purpose:

Encourage students to use the site to generate questions they're curious about.

Suggested timing: 15-20 minutes

Suggested teacher script:

1. We have spent some time exploring the different data that informs the four themes of the interactive map. Did any of your findings surprise you?

It may be beneficial to revisit the Connect 4 activity results to reorient students within the kind of data the map holds.

2. Where does Canada stand on some of these issues?

To help answer this question, students can use the comparison feature to view Canada's data against that of another country. Varied results can come from choosing countries with very different geographical features, such as distance from the equator, overall size, whether nations are islands or landlocked, as well those that have features that are similar to Canada, such as Scandinavia and Russia.

3. How do your own experiences connect (or don't connect) to the data you see?

It may help for students to consider data that connect directly to youth and/or education.

4. Exploring the way the countries of the world appear through the lens of a tool like the interactive map can lead to powerful, challenging, and thought-provoking questions. Let's look at some different questions that we might ask - and answer - using the interactive map.

5. Before we begin, let's think about what makes an effective question. An effective question doesn't just ask you to report data. It's not about what you see—it's about why you're seeing it.

A list of questions is below. How could we revise these questions to make them more effective?

- Which country has a lower life expectancy: the USA or Canada?
- Which country in Africa has the least access to early childhood education?
- Do countries with poor water quality also have lower equality?

Possible answers may vary. Some examples of improved questions are given below.

When making comparisons between countries, the first question that often comes to mind is why there are such major differences in the data from country to country. Some question formats we might use are:

- Why does _____ have a lower life expectancy than _____?
- What challenges might _____ face in providing education?
- How does climate data relate to gender equity in _____?

The map does not provide direct or easy answers to these questions. By connecting different data together, however, we can infer how different geographical, social, and economic factors can lead to different outcomes in different places.

Try drafting 2–3 of your own “big questions.” Record them on sticky notes or digital cards for future exploration.

Exit Ticket Questions:

- One new feature I learned to use today was...
- One question I still have is...
- One thing I want to tell others about the map is...
- This map gives us the tools to explore the world in a new way. What's one thing you're curious to explore next—and how might this map help you find answers?

Modifications for Grades 6–8

Focus the opening discussion on familiar maps and simple examples of how maps show both places and information.

- Use examples students already know, such as school maps, mall maps, transit maps, weather maps, video game maps, and phone maps.
- Ask students to identify what each map shows and why someone would use it.
- Introduce data as “information we can collect, compare, and show.”
- Keep the focus on the idea that maps can help us ask questions about different places.

Introduce only the most important website features first, then add more tools as students become comfortable.

- Demonstrate the map as a whole class before asking students to explore on their own.
- Focus on the four core themes: Education, Health, Gender, and Climate.
- Teach one map feature at a time: theme buttons, country profiles, symbols, choropleth shading, comparison tool, and resources.
- Begin with Canada, then compare it with one teacher-selected country.
- Provide a simple scavenger hunt or checklist so students can practise finding one country, one theme, one data point, one comparison, and one story or video.

Support students in moving from simple “what” questions to stronger “why” and “how” inquiry questions.

- Provide question stems such as:
 - What does the map show about...?
 - How is ___ different from ___?
 - Why might ___ have different results than ___?
 - What other information would help us understand this better?
- Ask students to revise one simple question into a stronger inquiry question.
- Encourage students to connect map data to real-life experiences, but avoid asking them to explain complex global issues without support.
- Let students record questions on sticky notes, a class chart, or a shared digital board for future inquiry.

For younger students, the goal is to build confidence using the website and understanding that maps can show data, patterns, and questions about the world. Students should be able to locate basic features, compare simple data between countries, and generate at least one thoughtful question for future exploration.

Assessment for Learning

For assessment opportunities that teachers can use during this introductory lesson, refer to the table provided in [Educator Resource: Assessment for Learning - How to Navigate and Use the Website](#). Rather than sustained inquiry or, this assessment focuses on tracking student fluency with the Interactive Map and related website features. The table highlights what teachers should listen and look for as students practise locating countries, selecting themes, interpreting basic map symbols and data, using comparison tools, finding stories and resources, drafting inquiry questions, and reflecting on their learning. These observations can help teachers identify which navigation skills students can use independently, where additional modelling may be needed, and how prepared students are to use the website for subsequent lessons.

Thank you for your consideration of these resources.

Please share your feedback with [this](#) survey. To be included in a prize draw for a new iPad 11, please complete your survey by Sunday, July 12!