

About “Eyes on the Climate”

“Eyes on the Climate” is a community outreach tool to promote awareness of climate change and to emphasize that many technical mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change already exist and are developing in our own communities. We feel that awareness is a necessary step to planning and taking action on climate change issues.

“Eyes on the Climate” was developed for the October 2019 Fall Celebration of the Friends of Black Bayou (FoBB), the volunteer support organization for the Black Bayou Lake-National Wildlife Refuge (BBL-NWR). There are three components: 1. hands-on, one-on-one, demo, 2. handout brochure, 3. poster. Many people contributed to the development of this ongoing project – particularly in the concept of the demo, and the brochure content. Those who helped include FOBB members, community educators at BBL-NWR and the Ouachita Parish Public Library, members of the Louisiana Master Naturalists-Northeast, family members, and friends. We welcome constructive comments to help us continue to improve the presentation!

The hands-on demo is an activity for elementary school aged children and older. It focuses on a familiar graph of global surface temperature from 1880-2018. It uses a clipboard with 4 blank graph grids and 2 grids with the plot of actual global surface temperature data. These are in separate clear plastic page protectors. You also need “dry erase” markers of two different colors, and paper towels to wipe the page protectors clean between demo presentations. The fact that weather temperature measurements are the basic data used to determine annual global surface temperature, helps participants understand what’s meant by the term “global warming” and to really focus on the data set itself.

The handout brochure is for families to take away, and hopefully look over later at home. It emphasizes key points from the demo such as the difference between weather and climate. There’s a word search activity to reinforce vocabulary. It includes a map of the USA annual temperature anomaly for 2018, which shows the range of temperature anomalies that occurred in different climate regions. There’s brief mention of climate change impacts, especially those experienced locally. There’s also brief mention of the causes of global warming, *i.e.* the increasing release of heat-trapping gases into the atmosphere. The rest of the brochure gives four examples of young people who’ve responded to climate change challenges (one African and three Europeans), presented in a matching activity, and actions people can and have taken locally to adapt to, or mitigate, climate change challenges. {Note: print out the brochure file two-sided on one sheet of paper & fold it in half to get the four-page handout. Pages are numbered.}

The poster has four parts. First is more background information for the global surface temperature graph. Second is four examples chosen from the many groups who have expressed concern about climate change (U.S. Military, actuaries – the experts who help set insurance rates, science academies, and religious leaders). Third is more information about the four young people mentioned in the brochure for their inspiring responses to climate change challenges. Fourth is technical solutions to the challenges of climate change giving local or Louisiana examples as much as possible in the areas of: building sustainably, energy efficiency, energy generation that is non-emitting for carbon dioxide, agriculture and forestry practices, natural climate solutions, green infrastructure, companies cutting emissions of carbon dioxide as part of their business model, and public transportation. NOTE: Local examples hit home with participants.

A final word. We hope this effort is helpful to others working on community outreach. If you like the demo, we’d be gratified if you make use of it. The brochure and poster show connections we hope to highlight for our community, and expect you’ll come up with different ones for your community, but again, please use anything that you find helpful!