

Saving energy for the planet



Lesson at a glance

Open with a photo or nearby empty room where the lights are still on and ask whether energy is being used when nobody needs it. Teach the two child-facing ideas—energy waste and saving energy—then lead a short whole-class indoor walk spotting lights, heaters near open doors, and boards left on. Back in class, harvest finds on the IWB, record two on the Investigation Journal page, agree three doable class energy-saving rules, and make pair signs to share.

Learning objectives

- Find examples of energy waste at school and say why saving energy helps the planet
- Agree and present simple class energy-saving rules

Before the bell – prep

Print one Investigation Journal page per pupil and leave journals and pencils in class until after the walk. Plan a short indoor route (classroom, corridor, hall entrance, toilet doorway) and tell nearby staff you will pass quietly. Have spare card and markers ready for the pair signs; keep a photo of a wasteful scene in case the school is already careful.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	classroom	a plain A4 sheet ruled into two boxes labelled waste found and our rule
pencil	1	pupil	classroom	any writing or drawing tool the child already uses
card for energy-saving signs	1	pair	classroom	the back of a used cereal box cut into a rectangle
markers or crayons	1	pair	classroom	coloured pencils
blu-tack or masking tape for displaying signs later	1	class	classroom	ask the caretaker to pin signs on a noticeboard

Safety watch-point

Stay together in one calm line; no running. Do not enter rooms without permission; mind wet floors near sinks; an adult opens any outside door if used.

**Teaching moves**

- **Getting Started:** Show the empty-room photo on the IWB, or point to a nearby lit empty space. Ask only: is energy being used, and is anyone using it? Take a few quick ideas, accept every answer, and do not start the walk yet.
- **What is energy waste?:** Keep the board to the two short child-facing lines only. Model the wonder–predict–check cycle aloud once, then take hands-up guesses about where the walk will find waste. Head off ‘never use lights or heat’ before you leave.
- **Energy-waste walk:** Lead one calm whole-class line on the planned short route. Pause at two or three spots and prompt: Is energy being used? Does anybody need it right now? What could we change? Keep voices low; no journals leave the room. At the last stop, restate: remember two finds to write about when we get back.
- **Record our findings:** Before any journals open, harvest two or three finds on the IWB for about one minute so every child has something real. Then hand out paper pages and pencils. Circulate with spoken starters: I found... Energy was being wasted because... We could save energy by... Match the saving idea to the waste they named.
- **Agree our class rules:** Spend about one minute on the planet reason, pointing back to something they just saw, then about four minutes crafting three short already-exemplified promises from the IWB finds. Name the phrase energy-saving rule only now. Write the three agreed rules large for the sign step; keep them kind and doable, not blameful.
- **Make and share our signs:** Give each pair one piece of card and markers: one short rule from the class list plus one simple picture, large clear letters. Sample three or four pairs only—hold up, read, name the place, one kind clap. Collect the rest for later display with principal or caretaker permission.

What it should show

Common finds are corridor lights on, interactive whiteboards or screens left on, doors propped open near heaters, and empty rooms still lit. A successful Journal page names at least one real walk find and a matching save (e.g. switch lights off when leaving). If little waste is visible, celebrate care and still name one improvement, or use the prepared photo so the science still lands.

Misconceptions & interventions

- **Saving energy means we must sit in the dark or be cold and never use lights or heat.** — Revoice the board line: we use what we need for comfort and safety, then switch off when we finish. Point to a real example—lights on while working is fine; lights on in an empty room is waste.
- **Any waste counts the same, so a dripping tap is the main energy-waste find.** — Steer back to the three look-fors—lights, heat beside open doors, boards/screens. Briefly allow that supplying water also uses energy, then return to the energy idea so the walk stays clear.



Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Let the pupil draw the waste and dictate a short saving idea while you or a partner scribe key words; they may record a class find from the shared IWB naming talk if their own memory blanks.	• Prompt a second matched pair on the Journal page: another waste spotted on the walk plus the save that fits it.	• Ask them to add where the rule should be used in the school on their Journal page or sign, and to say in their own words how the rule helps the world we share.

Cross-curricular hook

Link to English instructional writing—short clear rule sentences on the signs—and SESE Geography caring for the local environment.