

Saving energy at school and home



Lesson at a glance

Open by spotting anything in the classroom using energy nobody needs right now, then name wasting versus saving energy with one example each. Pairs take clipboards on a short two-stop indoor detective walk, ticking or sketching lights, screens or chargers left on. Back in class they draw one labelled saving action on the Investigation Journal page, make a bright switch-it-off reminder card, share placement ideas, and close with a quick partner talk on why saving energy helps the school and the planet.

Learning objectives

- Spot places where energy is being wasted at school
- Suggest and share one practical way to save energy at school or home

Before the bell – prep

Print one energy-detective Investigation Journal page per pupil. Gather clipboards (one per pair is fine), pencils, card, markers or crayons, and optional sticky tack. Plan a two-stop indoor route (e.g. classroom door, corridor or cloakroom) and tell nearby staff you will pass quietly.

Materials

Item	Qty	Per	Source	Low-cost substitute
clipboard	1	group	classroom	a piece of stiff card or a hardback book to rest paper on
pencil	1	pupil	classroom	crayon
blank card for reminder signs (A5 or half A4)	1	group	classroom	recycled cereal-box card cut into rectangles
markers or crayons	1	group	classroom	coloured pencils
sticky tack	1	class	classroom	masking tape loops (check surfaces first)
Investigation Journal page	1	pupil	provided printable	plain paper with a drawing box ruled on

**Safety watch-point**

Pupils must not touch switches, plugs or taps unless an adult says so. View toilets and wet areas from the doorway only; stay together on the short indoor route.

**Teaching moves**

- **What is wasted energy?:** Say the two detective words aloud in tiny chunks with one classroom example each. Head off the idea that saving means never using lights: we use them when we need them and switch off when we do not. Model the walk script once: wonder, check, decide it is waste, switch off and leave a reminder.
- **Energy detective walk:** Lead the class together to two stops only, then straight back so journal and card time stay free. At each pause ask what they notice and whether anything is using energy nobody needs. Keep the focus on lights and idle screens; frame loose charger bricks as a careful habit to check. Pupils must not touch switches, plugs or taps.
- **Record one way to save energy:** Treat the walk tick and this labelled drawing as two separate jobs on the same page. Model a clear saving picture with a short label (switch off the light / switch off the tablet). Put word cards on the board and circulate so each pair says I can save energy by... in a full sentence.
- **Make a switch-it-off card:** Model one finished card in under a minute: bold picture of a light, screen or charger plus a short board stem. Move pairs on from choosing to drawing so every pair leaves with a placeable card. If time is tight, they draw and stick a printed wording strip.
- **Share our reminder cards:** Invite four pairs only: card up, where it goes, one saving job. Revoice useful placements and fold others in with a whole-class choice question. Celebrate clear placement ideas over fancy drawing.
- **Why saving energy helps:** Put the anchor reason on the board first (school does not pay for energy nobody is using), then brief pair talk and a short share. Keep reasons simple and hopeful; frame children's everyday agency, not guilt.

**What it should show**

Typical finds are lights left on in empty corridors or cloakrooms and idle screens. Pairs should tick or sketch at least one waste spot, then draw one practical switch-off action and finish a placeable reminder card. If little is left on, celebrate the school's care and still practise noticing what would waste energy if left on.





Misconceptions & interventions

- **Saving energy means we should never use lights or screens.** — Revoice: we use lights and screens when we need them, and switch them off when we finish. Point to the classroom lamp that is on because the class is working, then mime switching it off when everyone leaves.
- **A charger brick plugged in with nothing attached always means lots of energy is being wasted right now.** — Frame it as a careful habit rather than a dramatic waste: we often unplug or switch off chargers when nothing is charging. Keep the main detective focus on lights and screens left on.

Differentiation

Emerging	Developing	Proficient
• Pair points and names one thing only (light, screen or charger) and makes a simple tick or mark on the detective page. • Offer board word cards (light, screen, switch off, save energy) and a ready stem for the reminder card.	• Pair sketches the place noticed on the walk and whispers one practical fix before drawing the labelled saving action.	• Pair names a clear placement for their card and says in a full sentence how it helps people remember to switch off, plus one home example they already know.

Cross-curricular hook

Link to SPHE caring for our shared school, and to English: short labels and the stem I can save energy by...