



The global treaty

Lesson plan: the history and deadlock of the UN plastics treaty talks, and a mock negotiation on plastic production



Ages	14 to 18 (grades 9 to 12)
Time	75 minutes, or two lessons
Group	Six groups
Where	Any classroom, arranged like a conference
You need	The slides and one set of role cards

What students learn

- How the global plastics treaty negotiations began and why they have stalled.
- The main positions and why they conflict.
- How consensus decision-making works, and its strengths and weaknesses.
- What negotiating and compromise involve.

Before the lesson

1. Print and cut the **role cards**, one per group.
2. Arrange desks in a circle, with name cards for each bloc.
3. Check the latest news on the treaty before teaching: things may have moved since September 2026.

The lesson

- 1 The road so far **10 minutes, slides 1 and 2.**
- 2 The disagreement **10 minutes, slides 3 and 4.**
- 3 Mock negotiation **45 minutes, slide 5.** Run three rounds. The teacher chairs.
- 4 Debrief **10 minutes, slide 6.**

Answers and what to listen for

What usually happens: classes often fail to reach consensus on production limits, just like the real talks. That is a useful outcome. Common compromises include phased targets, financial support for developing countries, or letting willing countries go further.

Making it easier or harder

- **Older groups:** research one real country's position and replace a bloc with it.
- **Link:** lesson 2's policy tools show what countries can do on their own.

Curriculum links

- **Social studies and Araling Panlipunan:** international relations and global issues.
- **English:** speaking and negotiation.
- **Science:** plastic pollution.

The teacher reading has the science behind every slide, with links to the sources.

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