## MM3: Step into the Future(s)

## Research and Development

## Lesson 1: Introduction to Futures Thinking and Understanding Trends

## Subject Areas: CSPE Climate Action and Sustainable Development, English SPHE



### Lesson Title and Summary: Introduction to Futures Thinking and Understanding Trends

In this lesson, learners are introduced to key terms and concepts e.g. futures, foresight horizon scanning and begin to understand why these are important.

Learners will begin to consider trends and develop skills in identifying and test their skills in understanding the three major trend types in the lesson. Learners will will define trends, mega trends, emerging and outliers and learn to how to find and identify trends by horizon scanning.

### Vocabulary: Futures Thinking, Megatrends, Emerging trends, Outliers, Signals,

### In this lesson, the learner will:

- develop critical thinking by analyzing societal trends and their potential impacts.
- recognise emerging trends and their implications for the future.
- expand their interdisciplinary thinking as learners identify trends across various domains.
- cultivate communication skills as learners discuss and present their identified trends.
- develop collaborative skills as learners work together to identify trends within their community.

### Materials

- Introduction Video: Future(s) Thinking
- Worksheet: Trends Matching
- Internet Access
- Markers, Sticky notes, Tape

# Activity Instructions

**Activity 1: Introduction to Foresight and Major Trend Types (25 min)**

1. Explain to learners, they will watch the Introduction video: Future(s) Thinking [5:19 mins] and note what they find new or interesting

   - they will then discuss in pairs for 5 mins what they what they found new or interesting
   - someone in the group should make notes as they then share for 5 mins the key points with another pair, to see what was similar / different in their interests or new discoveries
   - this will be shared with the class.

2. Watch the Introduction video: Futures [5:19 mins] while learners note their interests.
3. Allow 5 mins for the first pair to discuss their thinking
4. Allow a further 5 mins for x2 pairs to share and discuss
5. Finally, ask the class, a group of 4 at a time to share the key similarities and differences on what was new or interesting to them as a group.

**Activity 2: Trends Matching (25 mins)**

1. Have learners individually complete the Worksheet: Matching Trends to test their understanding of the three major trend types explored in the video.
2. Ask learners to work in twos to compare their answers and discuss variations in their answers. Did any trends cause disagreement? If so, which ones and why?
3. Ask learners to consider if anything has changed since their first discussions in activity 1.
4. As a class, ask learners to share if anything has changed since their first discussions in activity 1

# REFLECTIVE EXERCISE: 3-2-1 (10 mins)

- Three things they feel they have learnt from the tasks
- Two things they found most interesting and would like to explore more
- One – their opinion they have about the tasks

Use Post-its or a mentimeter survey - www.mentimeter.com - to gather reflections

## EXTENSION / REDUCTION ACTIVITIES

Reduction: For a shorter lesson, reduce activity 1 by having learners work in a pair and not share their discussion with another pair. If necessary, also reduce / remove the class sharing.

Option B: Have learners complete the worksheets in pairs to reduce time by 5 minutes.

Extension: For a longer lesson, explore the following questions with the class. This can be done as a class or in small groups of 2 - 4. Use a timer, and allow 1-2 minutes per question to focus their answers

- What might society look like in the future?
-  Who decides?
- What if different people choose differently?
- How much control do we really have, as individuals and as communities?

Option B: Use the article in the media box 'What is Futures Thinking?' to introduce learners to the concept and discuss what it is and what it is not.

## MEDIA BOX: (materials, online video links, extra resources, case studies etc)

Activity 1 Video: Introduction to Future(s) Thinking https://youtu.be/yYy5ZR-0Bow

Video: What is Futures Thinking? [3:27 mins] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0GjAHJSHDTs

Video: Futures Thinking Principles [1:59 mins] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JizaMjdDVB0

Article: What is Futures Thinking https://futuresframework.com/insights/what-is-futures-thinking/

## LOCAL TRIP / EXPERTISE / ADDITIONAL WORK AND ASSESSMENTS

Use the questions in the extension activity to undertake a survey in school, within the local community or with key local organisations to gather insights for developing futures projects.

Contact your local authorities / county council to invite the community development officer or Climate Change officer to discuss the questions with the class to hear about strategic action being taken locally.

# L1: MM3 TRENDS MATCHING



Instructions: Draw a line from each trend to the appropriate trend type. Once completed discuss with a partner or share your work in small groups. Did any trends cause disagreement in your group?

What were they and why?



Mind Melding
Collective Thinking



Digital Surveillance



Virtual Reality

MEGA TREND

EMERGING TREND
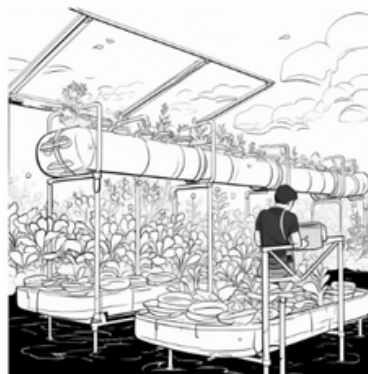
OUTLIER



Artificial Intelligence
Everywhere



First Contact
Encounters



Personal Drone Delivery



Urban Farming
Aquaponics + Vertical
Farming



An Aging Population