

Climate Comedy Workshop

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For support and encouragement in using this with your community or class

Message from Beth: This Climate Comedy Workshop is a continual “work in progress!” We are developing it and making improvements every time we offer it and receive feedback from participants. It is designed to share the recipe for our “secret sauce” for climate comedy that Max and I have been honing for over eleven years of guiding and producing climate comedy with youth. Over the years we have found incredible partners among professional comedians from around the world, organizations like Hip Hop Caucus, Yellow Dot Studios, Center for Media and Social Impact, and beyond. Since what we have learned has been infused by all the flavors and ingredients from our friends in this work, we make all of our offerings open source with collective credit for authorship. Below is an example of the workshop offered by Beth and Max on June 5, 2026 for the *Right Here, Right Now* Global Youth Climate Summit. Check out [resources](#) at the University of Colorado’s SPIKE Center for Sustainability Education website for continual offerings related to climate comedy.

Check out our [Climate Comedy](#) YouTube Cannel

Warm Up:

-Relaxation

-Patting- <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/877707230>

-Wiping Away- <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/877706435>

-Shake it out, <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/877709827>

-Expand your Expressive Range

-swing arms up as you inhale, exhale arms down with an open “Ahhh”

-everything as big as it can, everything as small as you can

-Exaggerate enunciating “Eee, Aey, Ah, Oh, Oo” 5xs, then with various consonants in front of each vowel and add making unique gestures for each syllable (Ex. L, T, P)

-Commitment to the bit

-5-meter slow-motion race, line us and run as slowly as you possibly can for 5 meters

-Flow—creative impulses need to be able to flow from one part of your body to another, strong imagination, physical and sensory imagination needs to be strengthened and made nuanced

-right arm up—holding up a fat juicy lemon, when I say squeeze it, have the sour travel through your entire body down to your toes

-left hand hold a baby bird that you have cupped in your hand, let delight and love travel through you as you find a place to safely place your bird

Before you get your creative juices flowing, is your climate comedy really about a *climate* issue?

It's a climate issue if it directly relates to changes in the Earth's climate system. This includes things that contribute to climate change or are affected by climate change, such as:

1. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Anything that release carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, mostly from burning fossil fuels, deforestation, and industrial processes.

2. Environmental Impacts

- Changes in weather patterns, rising sea levels, and more extreme weather happening-- things like hurricanes, droughts, and floods, which are linked to climate change.

3. Messing with Ecosystems

- Effects on biodiversity, including species going extinct, destroying the places species live, when ecosystems struggle then the species that live in that ecosystem have to struggle to adapt to changes in the climates (remember we humans are a species too!)

4. Human Health and Socioeconomic Factors

- Impacts on agriculture, water supply, and public health, which can make life even more unfair for people who are struggling because of inequalities, this can lead to social unrest

See more on Environmental & Racial Justice Issues below!

Template for Writing Your Own Climate Comedy:

There are many ways you can create climate comedy—this is one template for beginning to write original climate comedy that is solutions-focused!

What's a climate solution you wish everyone knew about? Something that you have direct experience with, something specific, not general—

Introduce your climate solution, be specific, not general, describe as briefly and as clearly as possible.

1. Reason why this climate solution is so great—

2. Another different reason why this climate solution is so great—

3. Another different reason why this climate solution is so great and make this one systems-based or collective in some way—demonstrate how this solution is impactful beyond just the personal sphere—

Conclusion, wrap it up briefly and clearly, try and find a hook from something you said from one of your reasons (pull in something from one of your reasons and position it in a new way for comedic delight)

Example #1 for Writing Your Own Climate Comedy

What's a climate solution you wish everyone knew about? Something that you have direct experience with, something specific, not general—**Being a member of a city-owned electric bikes program is so much better than owning your own electric bike**

Introduce your climate solution, briefly and as clearly

I don't have a super expensive electric bike, but I do have a membership to the city-owned electric bike program called BCycle. I just have an app on my phone that lets me check out a bike from one of the stations they have all over town. In fact, there is a station just a block from my house.

1. Reason why this climate solution is so great—

I don't want to have to lock up my own electric bike. The locks that would be strong enough are super hard to manage. A U lock is gonna be too small because an electric bike is thicker in the middle. Moving down the alphabet, the jointed double z locks are super awkward and strangely unidimensional, then there's the ultimate chain and lock that is as thick as my arm and weighs 15 pounds—that's how much a 4-month-old baby weighs—in New York City, they call this lock the Fahgettaboudit.

2. Another different reason why this climate solution is so great—

Electric bikes are a thief magnet, so much so that I would feel bad locking an electric bike on my front porch to lure some otherwise law-abiding person to transgress my property line and steal my bike. Nobody needs bike theft on their record, nor do I need that person's demise on my conscience

3. Another different reason why this climate solution is so great and make this one systems-based or collective in some way—demonstrate how this solution is impactful beyond just the personal sphere—
Using the city bikes teaches me about sharing. As a grown up I don't really have to share most of my stuff and a person can get out of practice. Remember how you felt about your bike when you were a kid? That was your prized possession—my bike! Sharing bikes is profound. It makes me feel a sense of belonging, I feel solidarity when I see people riding *our* bikes. And if we can figure out how to share our bikes, what else could we learn how to share?

Conclusion, wrap it up briefly and clearly, try and find a hook from something you said from one of your reasons

So sure, I could get my own electric bike if I really saved up, but like I said, I don't want the trouble of locking up an electric bike as much as I don't want somebody else getting locked up because of my bike. With all the perks of BCycle, buy my own? Fahgettaboudit!

Example #2 for Writing Your Own Climate Comedy

What's a climate solution you wish everyone knew about? Something that you have direct experience with, something specific, not general— **Stop Buying Disposable Paper Towels**

Introduce your climate solution, briefly and as clearly

So many of my friends still buy expensive paper towels for their kitchens. I bought a pack of 20 rags to use instead, wash them when they get dirty, and I always have one when I need one. I highly recommend it.

1. Reason why this climate solution is so great—

When you throw paper away with the regular inorganic garbage, when that paper towel gets buried in the landfill—instead of being composted-- it decomposes just like food because paper is made from wood pulp which is an organic material and ultimately ends up emitting methane which is a greenhouse gas that is 20 times more powerful than CO₂ that causes global warming.

2. Another different reason why this climate solution is so great—

You don't have to buy rags. You could buy the fancy Swedish reusable cloth kitchen towels that are the same size as paper towels that you wash after use and wind them around a wooden pole that fits into its own wooden stand, so you get the feeling of having paper towels on a roll *and* the feeling of being Swedish.

3. Another different reason why this climate solution is so great and make this one systems-based or collective in some way—demonstrate how this solution is impactful beyond just the personal sphere—**But there is a societal reason for eradicating paper towels across the country, a reason that is truly for the public good, that reason is to once and for all get rid of Bounty commercials with their unrealistic swipe demonstrations. Come on, one paper towel absorbing that much spilled blue liquid? I don't think so. And another thing that is unrealistic? That anyone would own and then spill that much blue Gatorade.**

Conclusion, wrap it up briefly and clearly, try and find a hook from something you said from one of your reasons

So in conclusion, I say we trust the country that brought us IKEA, ABBA, and cloth paper towels. Those Sweds, they're really on a roll!

Environmental & Racial Justice Issues

Want to dig deeper? What in this list below has impacted you? Your life!? Your hometown? Your future?

Environmental-racial justice means making sure all people—especially communities that are often ignored or treated unfairly—have clean air, safe water, healthy neighborhoods, and protection from environmental harm.

Climate Change & Natural Disasters

These issues are caused or made worse by climate change:

- Rising sea levels threatening islands and low-lying coastal areas
 - Stronger and more dangerous storms
 - Hotter temperatures and heat waves
 - More extreme droughts and water shortages
 - Climate disasters hurting lower-income communities the most
 - Climate change forcing people to move or become refugees
 - Loss of plants, animals, and biodiversity because ecosystems are changing
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Pollution & Health Problems

Some communities face more pollution and health risks than others:

- Pollution affecting Black, Brown, Indigenous, and low-income communities more than others
 - Highways and heavy traffic built near neighborhoods, causing poor air quality
 - Asthma and breathing problems caused by fossil fuel pollution
 - Toxic waste sites placed near neighborhoods or waterways
 - Plastic plants, chemical factories, and oil refineries releasing harmful chemicals
 - Crop burning creating dangerous air pollution
 - Pesticide exposure harming farm workers
 - Higher cancer rates connected to uranium and coal mining
 - Negative health effects caused by industrial pollution and government failures
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Water Issues

Clean water is a major environmental justice concern:

- Lack of access to safe drinking water
 - Drinking water contaminated with lead, bacteria, or chemicals
 - Water rights and fair access to limited freshwater supplies
 - Pollution of rivers, lakes, and groundwater from industry and mining
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Environmental Racism & “Sacrifice Zones”

Some communities are treated as less important and forced to live near pollution:

- “Sacrifice zones” where factories and polluting industries are concentrated
 - Fracking wells placed too close to homes and schools
 - Abandoned fracking wells leaking dangerous substances
 - Oil pipelines crossing protected Indigenous lands
 - Mining operations damaging Indigenous communities and land
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Food & Agriculture Justice

Access to healthy food is not equal everywhere:

- Food deserts where grocery stores are hard to find
 - Neighborhoods relying mostly on convenience stores and fast food
 - Harder access to affordable healthy or plant-based foods
 - Health problems linked to poor food access
 - Need for green urban spaces where people can grow food locally
 - Overfishing harming ocean ecosystems and food supplies
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Green Spaces & Community Health

Healthy neighborhoods need nature and safe public spaces:

- Lack of trees and shade in hotter neighborhoods
 - Need for greener neighborhoods to improve air quality and reduce heat
 - Limited access to parks and outdoor cooling spaces
 - Lack of composting and food waste programs
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Energy, Industry & Jobs

Environmental justice also includes fair access to clean energy and safe jobs:

- Need for stronger pollution regulations on industries
 - Weak emissions laws allowing more pollution
 - Need for inspectors and funding to enforce environmental laws
 - Clean energy investments in underserved communities
 - Access to clean energy and environmental jobs
 - AI technology increasing energy and water use
 - Fast fashion encouraging waste and pollution, especially targeting youth and lower-income people
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Transportation & Housing

Where people live and how they travel affects health and opportunity:

- Lack of safe and reliable public transportation
 - Transportation systems that expose communities to pollution
 - Older low-income housing containing environmental dangers like lead paint
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Education, Rights & Fairness

Environmental justice is also about power, education, and human rights:

- Lack of access to quality environmental education
- Limited legal resources to fight environmental injustice
- Access to reproductive healthcare and reproductive rights
- Gender inequality making climate change impacts worse for women and girls
- Intergenerational justice—protecting the planet for future generations
- Need for fast disaster relief after climate emergencies

From Environmental-Racial Justice to Climate Comedy

Start at the core, work your way out to “find the funny”

Exaggeration

Unlikely
Comparisons

Outlandish
solutions
w/ element of truth

fully
committing

Surprise! 3rd example is
surprising and revealing

Sexual innuendo &
scatological humor

Telling the truth

