Transforming Our School into a Sustainable Community

"Sustainable School – Our Shared Responsibility"

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SYNAPSES

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I will implement my scenario in: 8th grade

The duration of the implementation is: 2025/2026

My scenario goals are:

- **Recognize school sustainability challenges;**
- **Apply science and technology in context;**
- **Collaborate in civic initiatives;**
- **Develop and carry out sustainable projects**
- **Share results and raise awareness**

How will I achieve my educational goals?

Imagine **your school as a micro-planet**, with its own ecosystem, population, economy, and culture.
Every day, **decisions** are made that **impact** this planet's health, resources, and future.
Now imagine if ***you*** were one of the planet's young leaders — **responsible for protecting** its air, water, biodiversity, and social well-being.

What would you change?
What would you protect?
What would you invent?

We (my students and myself) will collaborate with:

- **Other classes/teachers/staff in the same school**
- **CAF (Parents Association of our school)**
- **Other Schools in our area and with schools from Almada city**
- **Faculty of Sciences of the University of Lisbon (FCUL)**
- **Junta de Freguesia da Costa de Caparica**
- **Câmara Municipal de Almada**
- **ONG - Projeto TERRAMAR**
- **Restaurants/Bars near the school**

In the end of the project…

Expected Outputs

- School sustainability audit report;
- Action Plan for Sustainable Practices in School;
- Eco-awareness materials (infographics, videos, posters);
- A student-led sustainability initiative implemented;
- Oral presentation or exhibition to peers, parents, staff and others.

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This scenario promotes interdisciplinary learning aligned with the following Sustainable Development Goals :

SDG 4 – Quality Education (target 4.7: Education for sustainable development and global citizenship)
SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities
SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production
SDG 13 – Climate Action
SDG 15 – Life on Land
SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals

Curricular Link: Natural Sciences, Citizenship and Development, Geography, Portuguese, English, Technology.
Framework: Inquiry-Based Learning + Challenge-Based Learning

Key Competencies Developed (Aligned with the Portuguese National Curriculum and ESD)

Scientific literacy (Natural Sciences)
Territorial awareness and environmental responsibility (Geography)
Civic and democratic participation (Citizenship and Development)
Critical and creative thinking
Communication in Portuguese and in English
Digital skills (through data collection and media production)

The green competences promoted by this scenario include:

Embodying Sustainable Values	Valuing Sustainability	Supporting Fairness	Promoting Nature
Embracing Complexity in Sustainability	Systems Thinking	Critical Thinking	Problem Framing
Envisioning Sustainable Futures	Futures Literacy	Adaptability	Exploratory Thinking
Acting for Sustainability	Political Agency	Collective Action	Individual Initiative

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My Message to the Students

🌱 **Be an Agent of Sustainability!** 🌱
Observe. Question. Act.
You have the power to lead meaningful change.
Let's transform our school
into a greener, more responsible, and inspiring community.
Think critically. Act responsibly. Inspire others.

Here is my plan for integrating this scenario in my school this year:

PHASE 1 – OBSERVATION & EXPLORATION (CBL Step: ENGAGE)

Purpose: Spark curiosity and student ownership by identifying real challenges in the school environment.

Active Learning Method Used: Eco-Walk + Thinking Routine ("See–Think–Wonder")

Activities:

Eco-Walk around the school grounds:
Students explore key areas (canteen, bathrooms, classrooms, outdoor spaces) with observation guides, documenting issues related to waste, energy use, biodiversity, and inclusion.

Thinking Routine – "See / Think / Wonder"
Students record:

- ***What do you SEE?*** (e.g., overflowing bins, lights left on, unused spaces)
- ***What do you THINK is happening?***
- ***What do you WONDER about this situation?***

Intermediate Outcome:
"Sustainability Problem Wall" — a physical or digital display board where students post their findings and begin formulating challenge statements.

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PHASE 2 – RESEARCH & PROPOSAL (CBL Step: INVESTIGATE)

Purpose: Guide students in exploring causes, gathering data, and proposing evidence-based solutions.

Active Learning Method Used: Research-Based Learning + Design Thinking Sprint

Activities:

Group Research Projects:
Each group selects one problem (e.g., plastic use, food waste, energy inefficiency) and investigates possible sustainable solutions already implemented in other schools or communities (local and global).

Stakeholder Interviews:
Students conduct short interviews with key school staff (e.g., canteen workers, janitors, administration) to understand operational constraints and gain insight.

Mini Design Thinking Sprint:

Empathize & Define → Who is affected? Why does this matter?

Ideate → Brainstorm ideas without judgment

Prototype → Create a draft model, visual, sketch, or small mock-up of their proposed solution

Intermediate Outcome:

"Sustainability Pitches" — Each group presents a 2-minute proposal pitch with a prototype or concept plan to the class or a mini student panel.

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PHASE 3 – IMPLEMENTATION & ENGAGEMENT (CBL Step: ACT)

Purpose: Enable students to act on their ideas and engage the broader school community.

Active Learning Method Used: Project-Based Learning (PBL)

Activities:

Real-World Implementation of a Micro-Project (1 per group):
Examples of student-led actions include:

- Installing a waste separation station with creative signs and student monitoring
- Running a "No Waste Week" campaign in the canteen, including posters and measurement tools
- Building a vertical garden or biodiversity zone in the underused school areas
- Developing a simple digital awareness campaign or app prototype (in collaboration with ICT)

Community Engagement:
Students run awareness activities during a "Green Week" (quizzes, games, workshops, eco-posters, QR codes linking to videos).

Intermediate Outcome:

A Sustainability Initiative visibly implemented and promoted within the school.

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PHASE 4 – REFLECTION & SHARING

Purpose: Evaluate the impact, reflect on learning, and communicate outcomes.

Active Learning Method Used: Reflective Learning + Peer Assessment + Public Presentation

Activities:

Reflective Practices:
Students fill in guided self-assessment forms and participate in group reflections on:

- What impact did we make?
- What would we do differently?
- What surprised us?

Creative Reflection Products:
Groups produce a short video diary or podcast answering the question:

"How did this experience change how I see sustainability in daily life?"

Final Sharing Event:
An open event ("Green School Showcase") where students present their action outcomes to the school community (teachers, parents, staff, younger students).
It may include stands, multimedia presentations and guided tours of implemented changes.

Final Outcome:

Student Sustainability Showcase + Impact Report + Reflections Portfolio

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What YOU will have to do…

Explore and Observe

- Investigate how your school uses energy, water, and materials.
- Observe problems like waste, pollution, or lack of green spaces.
- Use maps, diagrams, or checklists to record your findings.

Research and Ask

- Look at real examples of eco-friendly schools in Portugal and other countries.
- Interview teachers, school staff, and students to gather ideas and concerns.
- Take notes on what works and what could be improved at your school.

Design a Solution

- Choose one sustainability problem your group wants to solve.
- Brainstorm creative and realistic ideas for improvement.
- Design a solution (recycling station, eco-code, school garden, awareness campaign, etc.).
- Make a simple proposal using sketches, slides, or posters.

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What You will have to do more…

Take Action

- Plan and implement your solution in the school community.
- Organize a class or school activity to promote your project.
- Create posters, short videos, or presentations to raise awareness.

Measure and Reflect

- Monitor what changed (Did waste decrease? Did students participate?).
- Reflect on your experience: What worked well? What did you learn?
- Prepare a final product (poster, video, slideshow, etc.) to present your results.

Share Your Work

- Present your group's project at a school-wide event (Eco-Schools Assembly, Citizenship Day, etc.).
- Inspire others to act for sustainability!

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Rubric for Sustainability Action Project (8th Grade)

Assessment Criteria	Very Good	Good	Needing Improvement
Observation & Data Collection	Detailed and clear observations using maps, photos, and notes. Strong understanding of sustainability issues.	Observations mostly clear and relevant with some details missing.	Observations incomplete or unclear; important details missing.
Research & Idea Generation	Researched diverse examples; insightful interviews; creative and realistic ideas.	Adequate research and interviews; practical ideas.	Little research or interviews; ideas undeveloped or unrealistic.
Planning & Design of Intervention	Clear and detailed plan or prototype; innovative and effective solution.	Plan mostly clear and feasible; some details missing.	Plan unclear or incomplete; solution not well thought out.
Implementation & Engagement	Action fully implemented with strong school community involvement and awareness campaign.	Action implemented with moderate community involvement.	Action poorly implemented or limited community involvement.
Monitoring & Reflection	Thoughtful reflection with evidence; clear evaluation of impact and future ideas.	Reflection includes some evidence and ideas for improvement.	Reflection missing, superficial, or lacks evidence.
Presentation & Communication	Clear, confident presentation; engaging visuals and good audience connection.	Presentation understandable with some visuals; moderate engagement.	Presentation unclear or incomplete; poor communication.

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Rubric for Sustainability Action Project (8th Grade)

Assessment Criteria	Very Good ( )	Good ( )	Needing Improvement ( )	Comments
Observation & Data Collection				
Research & Idea Generation				
Planning & Design of Intervention				
Implementation & Engagement				
Monitoring & Reflection				
Presentation & Communication				

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