



**Young Reporters  
for the Environment**

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# Step 2: Research Solutions

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Meet the people exploring solutions and discover what could work.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School/Organisation:** \_\_\_\_\_



# Where are you in your YRE journey?

Before starting this guide, you should have chosen an environmental issue, developed an investigation question and gathered some initial evidence. You can return to Step 1: Investigate whenever you need to check something or recap.

Now you will build on what you have learnt so far by listening to peoples' knowledge, experiences, and views. You may already have spoken with people in Step 1: Investigate. Their contributions can help you explore what is making a difference and what can work locally.

## In this guide you will:



By the end of this guide, you will have peoples' views to draw on, one or two possible solutions to explore in your YRE story, and evidence to explain what they could achieve.

Some people may experience the issue differently. Some have useful knowledge, some make decisions that affect it, and others may already be trying or working on solutions. Young people can be part of all these groups.

Look for what people are learning, what is helping, and what could improve. Your reporting can help useful ideas reach others in your community. Be honest about difficulties and unanswered questions, too.

## **Listen:**

Who can help you understand the issue?

Look back at the question you identified at the end of Step 1.

## **Something I still need to understand is:**

Whose knowledge, experience, or ideas could help? Think about people connected to the issue and those already trying to improve things.

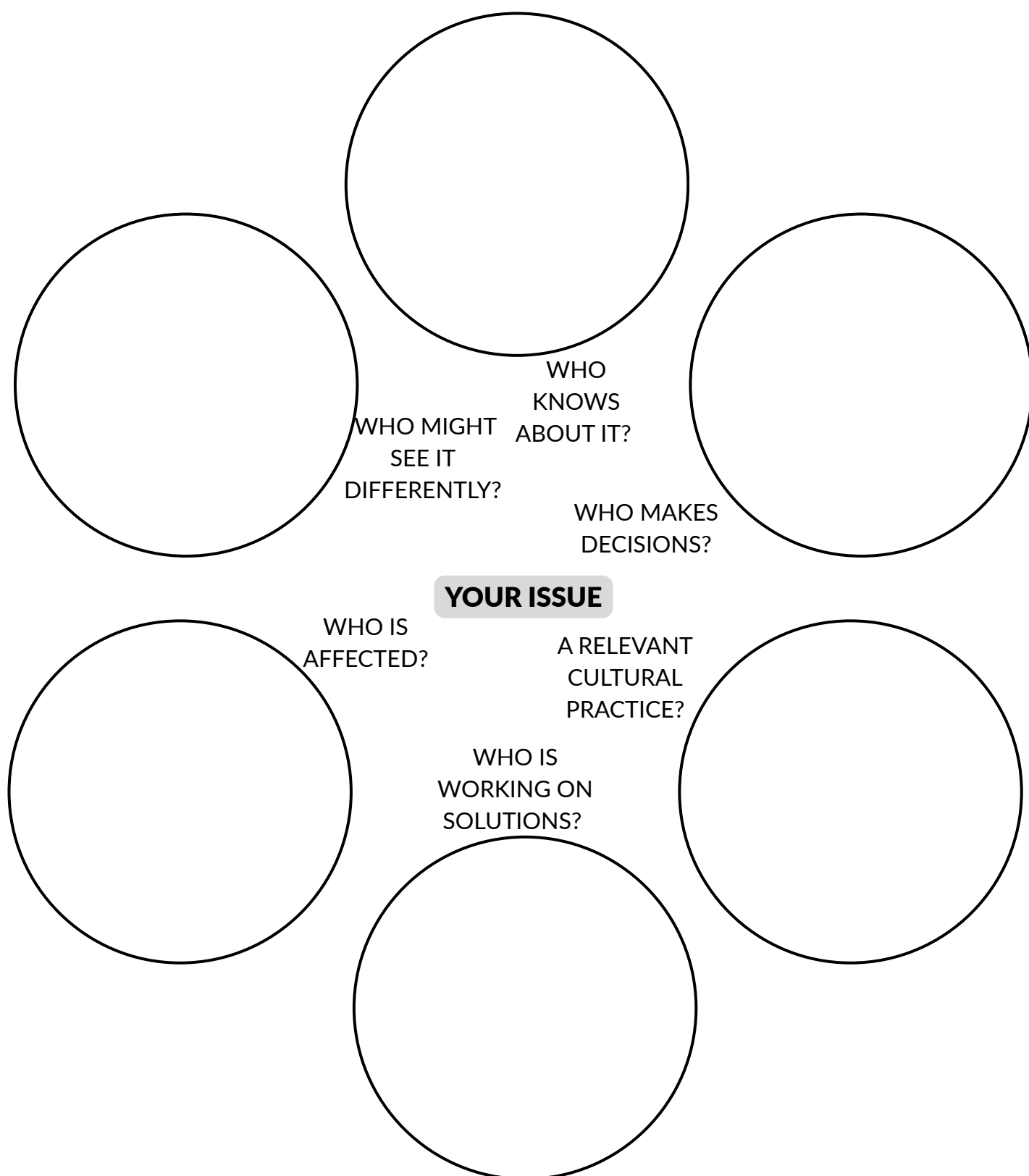
### **You might speak with:**

- people directly affected by the issue
- members of your community
- scientists, researchers, or other experts
- environmental organisations
- local businesses
- farmers, fishers, or other people working with the environment
- school or university staff
- people who make local decisions
- young people, including those whose views are often missed
- people working on possible solutions
- someone who sees the issue differently from you

Note: You do not need to speak to everyone. Start with someone who can help you understand a different part of the story. If someone cannot take part, try another source and note what you are still missing.

An interview can be a conversation with handwritten notes, a phone call, an exchange of written questions, or an online conversation. Choose a method and language that works for both of you. A teacher or trusted adult may be able to help you make contact.

# Map the people in your YRE story





**My issue:**

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**Someone who is affected:**

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**Someone with useful knowledge or experience:**

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**Someone who can influence what happens:**

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**Someone already trying to improve the situation:**

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**Someone who might see things differently:**

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**Note: Make room for a different view**

Imagine you are investigating why you have noticed few pollinators around your school. Speaking to someone who studies local wildlife could help you understand what pollinators need.

What could you also learn from the person responsible for maintaining the school grounds?

- Why is the grass cut when it is?
- How are planting decisions made?
- How do they keep the school grounds safe, affordable to care for, and accessible to all?
- What health and safety needs must the school consider?

You may not understand the reason behind a decision until you ask.

Understanding complexity makes your reporting stronger.

## **Prepare questions that open conversations**

Try open questions that invite people to say more than 'yes' or 'no'. Ask one question at a time and leave space for the person to explain.

**Try:**

"How are decisions about mowing the school grounds made?"

**Instead of:**

"Don't you think the school should stop cutting the grass?"

**Then follow what you hear:**

- "Could you tell me more about that?"
- "Can you give me an example?"
- "What has helped and what is still difficult?"
- "What do you think could improve the situation?"
- "Is there something important I have not asked you?" *is always a useful last final question.*

# PLAN AN INTERVIEW

I would like to speak with:

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Because they could help me understand:

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Three questions I want to ask:

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One question I could ask different people:

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*Note: Asking different people one question in common can help you compare perspectives.*

**For example:** “What is already helping, and what could improve?”

*Adapt your questions to the person and follow up on what interests you.*

**Keep a short interview record:**

*Record whom you spoke with, the date, what they said, and what you need to check. You can write notes; a recording is optional. If you miss something, ask them to repeat or explain it. Use quotation marks only for words you recorded accurately. Otherwise, summarise the meaning in your own words.*

## Optional AI support

**You do not need to use AI for your YRE project.** If your teacher and project rules allow it, you could use AI to suggest follow-up questions or help you understand unfamiliar words.

- Write your own questions first and choose what fits your story.
- If you use AI to translate an answer, check that it keeps the person’s meaning.
- Never use generated answers as an interview.
- Do not upload anyone’s personal information or private interview material.
- Keep a note of any AI help you use.
- If you plan to submit to the YRE Competition, check the current YRE rules with your teacher or National Coordinator before submitting.

# Remember: Safety, Respect, and Do-no-Harm Reporting

Good environmental reporting gives people space to share their knowledge and treats, people, places, and nature with care.

## Before and during an interview:

- **Explain** who you are, what you are investigating, and where you plan to share your YRE story.
- **Ask** permission before photographing, filming, recording, or quoting people and agree on how you may use the person's name and words.
- **Agree** on a safe space for the interview. Ask permission before entering private, protected, or community-managed areas.
- **Keep** sensitive information private, such as contact details or anything shared in confidence. Check with your teacher or trusted adult if sharing a name, image, or location could put someone at risk. Listen without interrupting.
- **Represent** what people tell you accurately and keep quotations in context. Check names, and roles, and verify important factual claims.
- **Respect** someone's decision to skip a question, stop the interview, or decline to be photographed or recorded.
- **Honour** local cultures and Indigenous knowledge. Ask what can be shared publicly and how people or groups contributing would like to be credited. Avoid blaming communities for environmental problems and check the evidence behind any claim about who is responsible.
- **Show** people's experiences, ideas, skills, and choices, including how they are responding to the issue. Let them explain what matters to them; they do not have to give you a positive story.
- **Choose** ways of working that let everyone contribute. Plan safe contact and interview arrangements. Tell a parent, guardian, teacher, or trusted adult where you are going.
- **Work** in groups where possible and avoid risky locations such as unstable riverbanks, polluted water, roadsides, unsafe buildings, or isolated areas.

**If a place or a conversation feels unsafe, stop and seek support. You can use another person, source, or interview method.**

## 5. EXPLORE: What could change?

Now bring together observations, research, interviews, and conversations. What is already being done about the issue? What else might improve the situation? What needs to change?

Start by looking for solutions, responses, and positive practices that already exist.

A solution may improve one part of an issue without solving everything. Find out what it achieves, what people are learning, and what support could help it go further. If you have a new idea, explore it too and clearly identify what has not yet been tested.

### Ask:

**Who is already doing something about this issue?**

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**Are there positive practices in my community that could be improved or supported?**

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**What has been tried before?**

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**What worked? What didn't?**

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**Has another school, community, city, or country tried something useful?  
Could it fit our local needs?**

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**Are there traditional or local practices we could learn from?**

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**What ideas have the people I interviewed suggested?**

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# Solution Check

Choose one or two ideas to explore more closely. Look for evidence of what they achieve and what helps them work. Checking a solution carefully helps you tell a hopeful story that people can trust.

**The solution or idea I want to explore:**

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**Is it already being used, being tested, or still an idea?**

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**What evidence suggests it could help?**

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**Where does this evidence come from, and what does it not tell me?**

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**Who or what would benefit and how?**

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**Who is already involved, and who else would need to be involved?**

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**What would need to change for this to happen locally?**

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**What could make it difficult, and what might help overcome these difficulties?**

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**Could it create another problem or unintended consequence? How might this be avoided or reduced?**

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**If it has helped elsewhere, what was similar or different here? What might need to be adapted?**

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*If you cannot answer every question yet, record what you know and what you would need to find out. An honest “not yet known” is useful reporting.*

#### **EXAMPLE TO EXPLORE**

Imagine the person caring for the school grounds suggests keeping some flowering areas uncut while maintaining clear paths. You could ask what has already been tried, look for records of insect visits, and speak to people who use the space. If there are no records, describe the idea as a possible approach to investigate. A small, agreed comparison of insect visits could help, using the same observation method and noting the weather and timing. You do not have to carry out the trial to report on the proposal.

- What now seems most promising, and why?
- What question would help me understand it better?

# Before you move on

- ☐ I have explored views of different people connected with the issue.
- ☐ I have included views beyond my own.
- ☐ I have recorded people's contributions accurately and know what I have permission to share.
- ☐ I can identify people or organisations who could help improve the situation.
- ☐ I have explored what people are already doing or trying to do.
- ☐ I can explain the evidence for a possible solution or idea and what it still uncertain.
- ☐ I have considered both opportunities and challenges for the solution to work locally, including who or what it may affect.
- ☐ My conclusions reflect what I discovered, not only what I believed at the beginning.

## Where next?

You now have the building blocks of your story:

**The issue + evidence + people's views + possible solutions or ideas.**

In the next guide for **Step 3: Report**, you will decide how to tell your story in your own voice and who you want it to reach.

**Your reporting can show people what is possible, what is being learned, and what is still needs attention.**