



Students learn how to cool the planet

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I teach students aged 13/14 years in the eighth grade. In the natural sciences we study aspects of the greenhouse effect and global warming. At the time I was reading the book "Como Arrefecer o Planeta" (How to cool the planet) by Professor João Lin Yun, a scientist and researcher at the University of Lisbon. I thought the book explicitly clarified this issue and would be very accessible to my students. I had an idea of teaching this academic content differently than usual. Therefore I suggested that the students read this book, which they did without exception.

As I noticed that the students had a great interest in the book, I thought to invite the author to visit our school and spend a day with us. Professor Lin Yun readily accepted the invitation. In the classroom, the students prepared the contents of the book in order to discuss the subjects with the book's author and question the author about their doubts and the clarifications they needed. They also created a PowerPoint where they conveyed their interpretation of the book. Professor Lin Yun spent a day with students, where there were moments of debate and didactic-ludic work. It was a very fascinating and enriching experience because students learn differently, outside the classroom and in the presence of the author of the book they have read. They were also prepared for the assessment test and were more sensitive to the issue of climate change and other environmental changes. In response to some questions - It was humans, each of us with our carbon footprint, we have created this problem. So if we had the ability to create the problem, we also have the ability to solve it? - Our individual contribution is important and meaningful? They concluded that in view of the current changes, we must change attitudes, to overcome these new challenges. The models of behavior and thoughts inherited from our ancestors must be replaced by modern solutions and decision-making regarding the future.

Albert Einstein said that a problem couldn't be solved by the same way of thinking that created it. It is then necessary to change the way of thinking if we want to overcome this challenge, in order to survive and cool the planet Earth.

As the poem says:

The Earth

is not an inheritance from our parents.

It is rather a loan

from our children.