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Telling Stories about Circular Economy: Communication Strategies and Approaches for Teachers and Students



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TOPIC LIST



1. Circular Economy explained



2. Preparing for DST



3. Digital Tools 4 Teachers



4. Digital Tools 4 Students



5. Telling Stories about Circular Economy



6. Developing Skills



7. Implementing DST in Schools



8. Initiating Competences for the Future



**BY THE END OF
THIS SECTION,
YOU WILL BE
ABLE TO...**

- 1.** Identify effective strategies for using digital storytelling to teach Circular Economy to secondary school students.
- 2.** Know how social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube can help teachers and students communicate sustainability concepts and Circular Economy practices.
- 3.** Identify and disseminate your own engaging digital content and stories on Circular Economy topics.
- 4.** Know and recognize successful examples of digital storytelling about Circular Economy and Sustainability.

OVERVIEW



This module focuses on the role of digital storytelling as a powerful tool to communicate concepts of Circular Economy and Sustainability. It is designed for both teachers and students, offering strategies for creating engaging content and leveraging social media platforms to maximize impact.

The module is divided into **four sections**:

- **Section 1** focuses on how teachers can effectively teach and communicate Circular Economy through digital stories.
- **Section 2** gives some examples of effective educational content on Circular Economy developed by teachers, educators and content creators.
- **Section 3** explores how students can develop and share their own stories and digital content on Circular Economy and Sustainability.
- **Section 4** illustrates some examples of content on Circular Economy created by young storytellers and students.

COMMUNICATING CIRCULAR ECONOMY CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES



Digital Storytelling for Teachers

When teaching Circular Economy and Sustainability concepts and practices, Digital Storytelling can be an effective and engaging communication tool.

Its power lies in allowing teachers, educators and disseminators to **transform complex concepts like Circular Economy into relatable and engaging narratives**, making it easier to communicate with young learners by using a medium that is familiar to them.



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COMMUNICATING CIRCULAR ECONOMY CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES



Digital Storytelling for Teachers

It is important that teachers choose the right platform, such as:

- **Instagram & TikTok:** visual and short-form content for quick, engaging educational posts.
- **YouTube:** long-form content for in-depth storytelling, tutorials, and case studies.
- **Bluesky:** emerging platform focusing on open and decentralized communication, with potential, but still not largely used.



COMMUNICATING CIRCULAR ECONOMY CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES



Digital Storytelling for Teachers

There are several different approaches that teachers can use to communicate and educate about Circular Economy:

- **Story-based Lessons:** frame lessons around real-world sustainability stories, emphasizing circular practices.
- **Interactive Content:** encouraging students to engage with content, through short digital stories to watch at home, Q&A sessions related to Circular Economy, challenges, etc.
- **Use of Visuals:** incorporating infographics, animations, and videos to simplify and illustrate key concepts.



INSPIRING STORIES: EDUCATIONAL DIGITAL CONTENT ON CIRCULAR ECONOMY



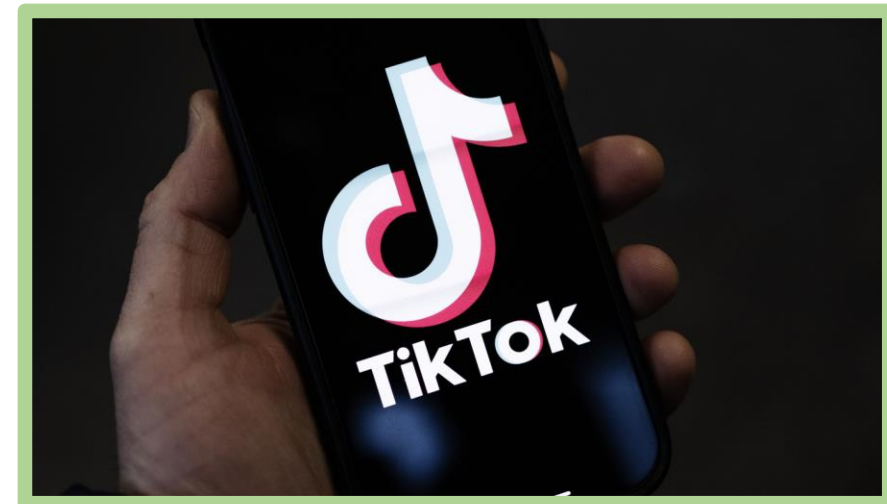
Examples of Effective Educational Content Developed by Teachers, Educators, Content Creators

[Sam Bentley](#) is a content creator from the UK, whose stories are all **“good news for our planet that we may not have heard”**.

One of his videos, about a no-electricity air conditioner build in India, has reached more than 3 millions views on TikTok so far. Another video tells the story of how a young Irish student, Fion Ferreira, has discovered an easy way to remove microplastics from water using magnets.

Watch Sam Bentley's TikTok video:

- [No electricity air-conditioner](#)
- [Fion Ferreira's Discovery](#)



INSPIRING STORIES: EDUCATIONAL DIGITAL CONTENT ON CIRCULAR ECONOMY



Examples of Effective Educational Content Developed by Teachers, Educators, Content Creators

Lillygol Sedaghat is a **National Geographic Explorer and multimedia storyteller focused on climate solutions and the circular economy in the Asia-Pacific region**. As the host and producer of the Webby-nominated podcast *Expedition: Earth*, and creator of the *Lilly Visits* series, she travels extensively to document and share stories of innovative circular and sustainable practices from around the world.

Her work emphasizes the full life cycle of products - encouraging audiences not only to consider recyclability but also the origins and future potential of materials. Through compelling videos and multimedia storytelling, Sedaghat highlights how rethinking design, consumption, and waste can foster a more sustainable planet.

Watch Lillygol's video on Instagram: ["Can the Lifecycle of Beauty Products Go Greener?"](#)



**"How Choices Lead to Change",
Lillygol Sedaghat at TEDxYouth**

INSPIRING STORIES: EDUCATIONAL DIGITAL CONTENT ON CIRCULAR ECONOMY



Examples of Effective Educational Content Developed by Teachers, Educators, Content Creators

The informative and educational video [How a City Becomes “Circular”](#) explains what a circular city is, and how a city can become circular.

It was created by [freethink](#) and dedicated to the city of Amsterdam. This is a very good example, of immediate, engaging and effective communication about Circular Economy made on social media.

Also, it is part of a series of episodes titled “Future of Cities”, available on the FreeThink Instagram profile.



EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO COMMUNICATE CIRCULAR ECONOMY



Students and Youngsters as Digital Storytellers

Students can also be skilled storytellers and communicate about Circular Economy to their peers.

Student-created content matters, since:

- peers are more likely to engage with content created by fellow students.
- it promotes creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking on sustainability issues.



EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO COMMUNICATE CIRCULAR ECONOMY



Students and Youngsters as Digital Storytellers

The steps to be followed by students to tell stories about Circular Economy are:

- 1. Identify a Circular Economy Theme:** encourage peers to focus on topics like recycling, waste reduction, or sustainable consumption.
- 2. Develop a Story:** guide fellow students in creating a narrative structure, highlighting challenges and solutions.
- 3. Choose a Platform:**
 - TikTok: for short, impactful videos or challenges.
 - Instagram Reels: for visually engaging mini-stories.
 - YouTube Shorts: for quick, educational snippets.



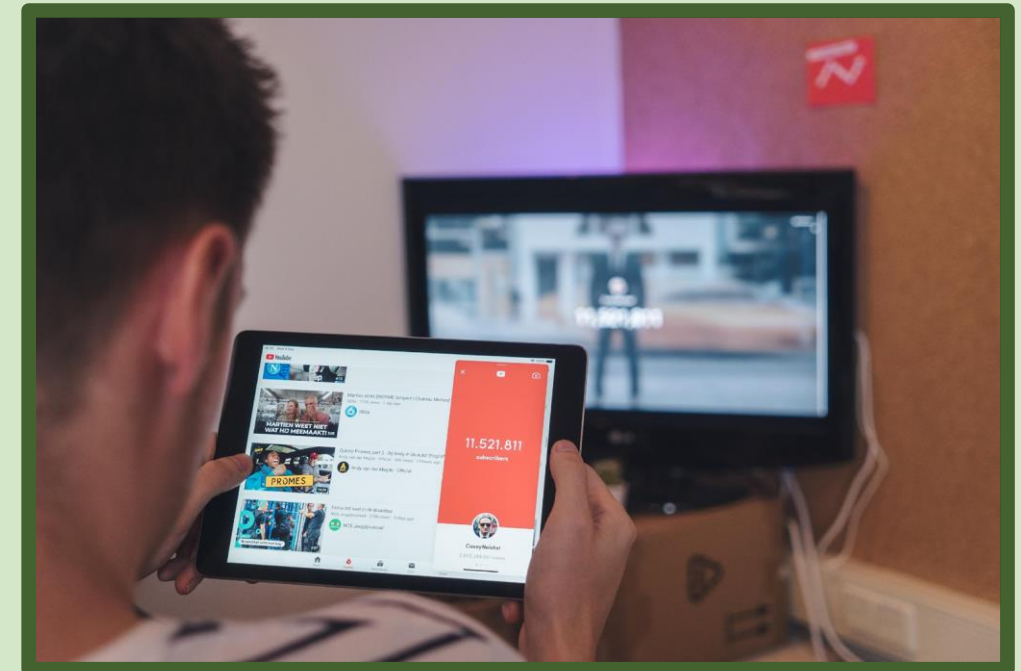
EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO COMMUNICATE CIRCULAR ECONOMY



Students and Youngsters as Digital Storytellers

Some possible engagement strategies to be implemented by students are

- **Collaborative Projects:** they can work in groups to create and share content.
- **Social Media and Communication Campaigns:** individually or collaboratively launch class-wide or school-wide campaigns to promote sustainability on social media.
- **Use of Hashtags:** leverage popular sustainability-related hashtags to increase reach.



YOUTH VOICES: SUCCESSFUL DIGITAL STORIES ON CIRCULAR ECONOMY



Examples of content about Circular Economy created by young storytellers and students

The young content creator and green entrepreneur Anna Masiello - who on social media is known as hero to zero - centres her communication on “imperfect sustainable living”, teaching her young followers about environment, sustainability, circular economy practices and strategies. Her content is mainly in English, but she has created digital stories and given TedTalks and conferences also in Italian and Portuguese.

One of the most effective series of digital stories created by this young storyteller is called “A more Sustainable 2023”: a series of 100 short videos about how to make our everyday life more sustainable by using easy circular economy practices and actions, launched as a sort of challenge or call to action. The videos generated thousands of interaction, shares and were viewed and commented by students and youngsters all over Europe.

[Day 76 of a more sustainable 2023 - Let's get creative and upcycle broken umbrella](#)

[Day 61 of a more sustainable 2023 - Let's ditch plastic sponges and look into natural products](#)

YOUTH VOICES: SUCCESSFUL DIGITAL STORIES ON CIRCULAR ECONOMY



Examples of content about Circular Economy created by young storytellers and students

The **Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE)** program is an international network of students producing investigative content and storytelling around sustainability, available on platforms like Instagram and YouTube. Its aim is to empower young people to engage with environmental issues through journalism.

The initiative encourages youth to investigate local environmental challenges, propose solutions, and share their findings through articles, photos, or videos. YRE provides a structured methodology that guides participants from researching environmental topics to disseminating their work via various media platforms. This process not only raises awareness but also develops critical skills in environmental journalism, teamwork, and leadership.

YRE platforms offer resources for educators, students, and participants, such as lesson plans, online courses on environmental topics like pollution and the Circular Economy, and information about international competitions where young reporters can showcase their work and impact.

Watch this video campaign created by young reporters from Canada, aged 11-14:
[SPILL THE TEA: TOXIC TRUTH ABOUT TEA BAGS](#)

USEFUL CONCEPTS

- 1. Digital Storytelling for Circular Economy**
Digital Storytelling is a powerful tool to simplify complex sustainability concepts through engaging, relatable narratives.
- 2. Platform-specific Strategies**
Tailored content for different platforms should be created: short, visual posts for TikTok/Instagram and in-depth stories for YouTube.
- 3. Students as Storytellers**
It is important to empower students to create and share content, fostering creativity, collaboration, and sustainability awareness.

CONCEPT 1

Digital Storytelling for Circular Economy

Digital storytelling transforms abstract concepts of the Circular Economy into compelling, human-centered stories that resonate with diverse audiences. By using visuals, personal experiences, and real-world examples, it bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical action, making sustainability accessible, engaging, and memorable for learners.

CONCEPT 2

Platform-specific Strategies

To maximize engagement and reach, digital content should align with the strengths of each social media platform. TikTok and Instagram favor dynamic, short-form visuals that quickly capture attention, making them ideal for concise educational messages or challenges. In contrast, YouTube supports long-form storytelling, allowing for deeper exploration of topics like Circular Economy through tutorials, interviews, or case studies, fostering a more comprehensive understanding among viewers.

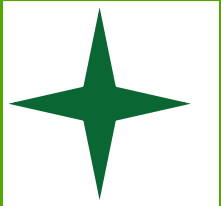


CONCEPT 3

Students as Storytellers

Students and young people are powerful advocates for sustainability when they become storytellers. By creating digital content, they not only enhance their communication skills but also inspire their peers to take action on environmental issues. Through storytelling, youngsters can transform abstract concepts like Circular Economy into relatable experiences, making sustainable practices more accessible and engaging for their communities.

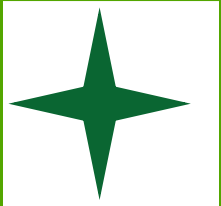
PRACTICAL TIP #1



FOR TEACHERS

- Create relatable, real-world stories to explain Circular Economy and Sustainability concepts.
- Use multimedia elements like videos, infographics, and animations to enhance learning.
- Encourage student participation through interactive challenges or social media campaigns.

PRACTICAL TIP #2



FOR STUDENTS

- Start small with short, impactful stories on Circular Economy and Sustainability issues and practices.
- Use popular platforms like TikTok or Instagram to share your content with peers.
- Collaborate with classmates to create engaging, visually appealing narratives.

CHECK WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED

01. The power of digital storytelling in communicating Circular Economy concepts.
02. How to choose the right social media platform for your message.
03. The importance of visuals and narratives in simplifying complex ideas.
04. How students can lead sustainability campaigns through storytelling.



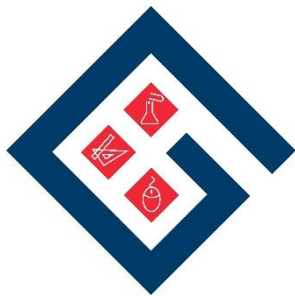
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