



topics education
strategies for education impactSM

Issue: Global Climate Change

For many people, the documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, featuring Al Gore, was eye-opening and, for some, even life-changing. It exposed many, for the first time, to the issues of global warming and the devastating effects greenhouse emissions have on the environment. While the film certainly created awareness, not everyone left the theater ready to change how they think about and how they impact the world in which they live.

An Inconvenient Truth's Challenge

To deepen the film's impact, Participant Productions, the film's production company, realized it had to extend the message beyond the silver screen to teach people about climate change. Since youth are often arbiters of change, Participant Productions quickly figured out that a critical element would be a school-based curriculum program based on the science in the film; it is youth, after all, who stand to lose the most. But **Participant Productions needed an agency well-versed in creating school programs that engage youth.** So, they called Topics Education.

Topics Education's Solution

Topics Education and its network of curriculum architects developed a unique series of activities, geared toward high school classrooms, that simultaneously met teacher needs (and therefore got used!) and engaged students. The activities were made available free for download at participate.net as well as a through a blog forum, created and moderated by Topics Education, where educators could pose questions and converse on the topic. To promote the curriculum and its accessibility, Topics Education targeted 26,000 educators across the US with informational pamphlets that included a classroom poster promoting action against global warming.

Our Results

Not only was this project gratifying for our team, it was also tremendously successful in just about every possible measure. **The program won two national awards, including one for best science curriculum. To date over 150,000 teachers in the US have registered to download the free materials. According to our teacher surveys, on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being best) teachers rated the program's ability to "compel students into personal or community action" at an impressive 4.3. Plus, 9 out of 10 teachers told us that they want to be informed of any future materials Participant creates for teachers.** So, not only did the materials create engaging classroom discussions that pleased educators, but it moved students to create better communities for everyone.

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"Topics Education was crucial in helping us achieve our goal by realizing the importance of bringing the message to the classroom. They created unique and usable curriculum that not only met our vision, but rose above it."

- Lisa Day, Vice President, Participant Productions

an
inconvenient
truth

PARTICIPANT
PRODUCTIONS

Compelling Students
into Personal and
Community Action
Regarding Global
Climate Change

Winner of Two
Association of
Educational
Publishers Awards

AIT in the Classroom
Has Reached Over
150,000 Teachers

