



students  
r\_build

# OCEAN CHALLENGE FLOATING SCHOOLS

PABNA, BANGLADESH

2018-2019 MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL  
DISCUSSION GUIDE



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# OCEAN CHALLENGE

## EDUCATOR NOTE:

Below is an introduction to Floating Schools with discussion questions to use with your class. You may utilize all or some of the provided questions as you guide your class in discussion.

Video Length: 4 minutes

Estimated Time to Complete: 1-2 Class Periods

## OVERVIEW

The ocean connects us all. As noted marine biologist Sylvia Earle said, “With every drop of water you drink, every breath you take, you’re connected to the sea.” The ocean covers more than 70 percent of the surface of our planet and is home to 97 percent of the world’s water.

No matter where you live, whether on a remote island or in a landlocked area far from the beach, the ocean affects you, and you you affect the ocean. It’s up to all of us to protect the ocean against the threats it faces. We can make a difference by taking action locally and joining forces globally.

## GLOBAL NOMADS GROUP

Global Nomads Group (GNG) is an international non-profit organization that fosters dialogue and understanding among the world’s youth. Since its founding in 1998, GNG has conducted programs in 60 countries on all seven continents, reaching one million young people. By providing opportunities to interact and engage with different perspectives, GNG helps youth break down stereotypes, address community challenges, develop 21st century skills, and explore what it means to be a global citizen.

Since 2010, GNG and Students Rebuild have partnered on each annual Challenge, bringing awareness to critical global issues and youth stories of taking action.

## STUDENTS REBUILD

Students Rebuild, a program of the Bezos Family Foundation, is a free, ready-made adventure in global learning that asks students to put their creativity and compassion to work in support of other young people in need.

Students Rebuild issues an annual Challenge that invites students to respond to global problems affecting young people somewhere in the world. Teachers and students explore the issue in class and, in the process, connect with students around the globe. Then students create art based on what they learn and send it to Students Rebuild. For every piece of artwork they submit, the Bezos Family Foundation makes a financial donation to a respected community-based organization serving youth.

# FLOATING SCHOOLS

## GETTING STARTED

We recommend that ahead of showing the video to your students you (a) pre-watch the video or read the transcript below, noting any vocabulary or concepts that may be unfamiliar to your students and (b) review the unfamiliar words with your students before showing the video.



Floating Schools  
4 minutes

## FRAMING

Bangladesh is a country in Southeast Asia that sits between India and Myanmar. Relying on the health of the ocean for the survival of its people, Bangladesh is home to over 700 rivers and waterways that connect to the Bay of Bengal and eventually reach the Indian Ocean. Recent changes in our global climate, especially rising atmospheric temperatures, have intensified and lengthened the monsoon--or heavy rain--season. Previously only one-third of the country was affected by the longer rains, but now two-thirds of Bangladesh is affected by the heavy, prolonged rains and swelling rivers. In Bhangura and Faridpur, two farming communities in Pabna, people are often landless, living below the poverty line, and forced to reside in areas that endure the most intense flooding. Though the river is integral to life in Pabna, it also threatens the safety and livelihood of residents. Due to the flooding caused by these changes in climate, already limited resources have become less available and people's daily lives--including their access to schools and healthcare--are interrupted.

In Floating Classrooms, we learn about the direct impact of ocean health and climate change on Bhangura and Faridpur. We meet architect Mohammed Rezwan and a fifteen-year-old student named Sumon. Mohammed is the founder of a local non-profit, Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha, that was founded as a creative, local response to the negative impact of climate change on the community's access to basic services. Sumon attends one of the floating schools where he learns about the importance of our ocean's health and the connection between the climate, the ocean, and the local river pollution in his community.

Floating Classrooms will inspire students to create local responses to the global challenge of maintaining healthy oceans. At the end of this video, students are asked to consider: What is one thing YOU will do for the ocean?

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Please Note: You may utilize all or some of the provided questions as you guide your class in discussion.

**1.** Locate the country of Bangladesh on a map. Can you find the city of Pabna? Can you trace the waterways from Pabna to the nearest ocean? What is the name of that ocean?

**2.** Bangladesh is a small country in southern Asia with over 700 rivers and waterways running through it. For many people, the river is directly intertwined with their livelihood.

In what ways does Sumon say the people of Pabna rely the river? What are other ways the people of this community likely use the river?

**3.** The video shows us a community that has had to adapt to their changing environment, which is a necessary skill for survival. What are some of the adaptive behaviors that you saw in the video?

**4.** Mohammed Rezwan explains that due to climate change, Bangladesh used to have 6 seasons and now has 2-3.

What is happening in the atmosphere/environment that has caused the shift in the number of seasons? What human actions contribute to the change in climate and ultimately the reduction in seasons?

**5.** Define the following terms: Atmospheric Temperature; Ocean levels; River levels; Monsoons

Draw a diagram that demonstrates how these environmental factors interact with one another. How are these natural systems affected by climate change?

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

6. At a time when the rains came at an expected and reasonable rate, it was beneficial to Bangladesh's rice crops and dairy farms -- two of their most profitable industries. Though heavy rainfall has been the norm for Bangladesh, the monsoon season becoming more prolonged and intense has caused damaging floods.

What are the short-term and long-term adverse effects of flooding on the community?

7. How would your life be affected if your community experienced a 5-6 month monsoon? What would change in the food you eat, the way you get around, the clothes you wear and the place where you live?

8. What environmental, social or economic challenges does your local community face due to changes in climate?

How is your community adapting to any of those changes, both proactively and reactively? How would you like your community to adapt?

9. Take a moment to consider your recreational activities, the types of foods you eat, where your food comes from, how you travel, and how you dispose of food or other waste.

How do any of your activities, behaviors, consumption patterns and waste disposal systems affect the lives of people in Bangladesh?

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 10.** The non-profit organization Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha manages a fleet of over 100 different boats that provides basic services to the community.

If you had to plan an evaluation of the impact of their work, what would be your top three indicators of success? What types of data would you look at to determine whether the organization was successful?

- 11.** The floating schools and playboats address an immediate community need in Bangladesh.

How do the local floating schools also support global efforts to address challenges to our oceans' health?

What long-term benefits do the boats offer to the community and the world, both as a practical response and as an example?

- 12.** Mohammed Rezwan uses his skills as an architect to help the community adapt to climate change.

How might your skills, whatever they may be, serve to create local solutions to climate change in your community?

“The one thing I will do to protect our oceans is to implement laws and regulations so that the river does not get polluted. If the river becomes polluted, the ocean will also get polluted. I want to make people aware of it.” - Sumon

What is one thing YOU will do for the ocean?



# VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

## FLOATING SCHOOLS

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Time	Speaker	Dialogue
00:00:17	Sumon	My name is Sumon and I am 15 years old.
00:00:22		Everyone in my village is a farmer. And for farming they are dependent on this river. The river is a very important part of our lives. We enjoy swimming in it. We also depend on the river as a route for commuting.
00:00:44	Mohammed	My name is Mohammed Rezwan. I am an architect. And I am the founder of a non-profit organization, Shidulai Swanirvar Sanstha in Bangladesh.
00:00:55		In Bangladesh, we used to have six seasons. And because of the changing climate, now we have two or three seasons. The big season is the monsoon. When the water comes during the monsoon season, this area gets flooded. People cannot grow crops. Houses get isolated. Children cannot go to school because all the ways to school get flooded. I thought if the children cannot go to school, then the schools should go to them by boat.
00:01:29		We started the floating school in 2002. My idea was to bring education, information, and all the basic services to the community. With these services, the children will have education that will not only help this generation, but it will help the future generations.
00:01:52	Sumon	I started going to the floating school when I was five years old. During the rainy season it is difficult to go outside the house. The school comes and picks us up from our home and gives us lessons. The kids are really enthusiastic about this.
00:02:17	Mohammed	We teach young people water quality monitoring, river conservation, the relationship between people and the river. The relationship between the river and the ocean.
00:02:32	Sumon	The first time I learned about protecting the river from pollution was from this floating school. I'm excited that we're getting this training about keeping the river unpolluted and that we're able to make others aware of it.

# VIDEO TRANSCRIPT (CONTINUED)

## FLOATING SCHOOLS

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Time	Speaker	Dialogue
00:02:55	Mohammed	We have different types of boats. We have boats for schools, libraries, training centers, health clinics. And recently we introduced the floating playground.
00:03:12		Here they develop motor skills, social skills. They improve their problem solving abilities. And they develop confidence.
00:03:25		And on the top we have an observation deck. Where they get to know their environment. We say they get a bird's eye view.
00:03:37	Sumon	The one thing I will do to protect our oceans is to implement laws and regulations so that the river does not get polluted. If the river becomes polluted, the ocean will also get polluted. I want to make people aware of it.
00:03:57	Mohammed	In Bangladesh our lifeline is the river. Our people, they depend on the river. If the river lives, we live. And we have to save it.

# TAKE ACTION

## TAKE ACTION

Thank you for participating in the 2018-19 Students Rebuild Ocean Challenge, which invites teachers and students worldwide to help save marine life and support coastal communities.

### MAKE A SEA CREATURE

Students will make sea creatures out of paper or other recycled materials as they reflect on what they've learned and what they can do to help protect ocean health.

Each submitted piece of ocean art will generate a \$2 donation from the Bezos Family Foundation to support global conservation programs.

Register a team and submit artwork at [studentsrebuild.org/ocean](http://studentsrebuild.org/ocean)

### JOIN THE CONVERSATION

As part of the Ocean Challenge, Global Nomads Group will be hosting the final of three virtual webcast discussions on May 16, 2019 at 12 PM ET. The webcasts are live-streamed conversations that explore the changing state of the ocean and feature youth involved in ocean-related programs and other Students Rebuild teams. Your class/team can submit questions and/or answers to the on-air participants through a facilitated chat room. All you need to join is an Internet connection. Register at [gng.org/studentsrebuild](http://gng.org/studentsrebuild)

The floating playground featured in the video was made possible by the funding donation generated by students taking action through the Students Rebuild Ocean Challenge and the hard work and effort of the local Pabna community. The brand new floating playground, which is featured in our video, joined a fleet of over 100 boats that provide services in education, healthcare, and recreation.

Learn More about Shidulai Swanirvar Sanstha: <http://www.shidhulai.org/>