

# María's World



Education Resource for  
**Early Years**

# About This Resource

This resource explores the impact of climate change in a coastal community in Honduras, as seen through the eyes of María, a six-year-old girl. The activities are designed to support the aims of Aistear, Síolta, and the Northern Ireland Curriculum Foundation Stage; please refer to the margins of the resource for the relevant curricular links.

The resource provides opportunities for young children to build on their own perceptions, knowledge and experiences by learning about María and about some of the issues facing María's community. It also will encourage children to take appropriate actions for a more just and sustainable world. This resource is a companion to Trócaire's 2016 Early Years Lenten Resource, Daisy's World, which focused on climate change in Kenya.

## Climate Change and Climate Justice

Climate change refers to a significant change in temperature, rain and wind over a prolonged period of time. Climate change is caused by human activity, such as burning fossil fuels. For Trócaire, climate change is the greatest injustice of our time. Globally, those who are contributing least to climate change are suffering the most from droughts and flooding, while those with the most power are failing to address the issue. Trócaire is supporting communities affected by climate change. In Honduras, a country particularly vulnerable to extreme weather events, Trócaire is working with local partners to support disaster risk reduction and emergency response programmes. Alongside our work abroad, Trócaire works in Ireland to raise awareness of the urgent need to address justice issues related to climate change, and is calling for action by our government at national and international levels.

### Honduras at a Glance



**Flag:** The stars on the flag represent the five nations of Central America, surrounded by blue seas.



**National Emblem:** The volcano between the two golden towers represents the independence of Honduras. The triangle symbolises equality and freedom. The landscape with oaks, pines, farms and mines shows the natural resources of the country.



**Population:** 8.1 million

**Capital:** Tegucigalpa (tay-goo-see-gahl-pah)

**Language:** Spanish is the official language. English is spoken on the Bay Islands and various Maya groups still speak Maya languages.

**Climate:** Tropical, with cooler more temperate weather in the mountains.

Honduras is a hotspot for biodiversity, with a vast number of species of plants and birds. The Scarlet Macaw is the national bird. The orchid is the national flower.



Copán, in west Honduras, was a great city during the classical period of the Mayan Empire (AD 300–900). Copán is a UNESCO world heritage site.



## Engaging Young Children with Global Justice Issues

Research carried out by Trócaire and St Patrick's College of Education, Drumcondra indicates that children aged three to six can effectively engage with global justice issues at an age-appropriate level. They are aware of the wider world, can take into account the perspectives of others, and have a sense of what is fair or unfair. They can identify basic needs and can explore the consequences if these needs are not met. They can recognise the causes of problems, predict consequences and take actions to solve problems.

Tips for teaching about communities, near and far:

- Encourage children to recognise that every country contains a wide variety of landscapes, cultures and communities.
- Help children to see that children in distant localities have daily experiences which are both similar and different to their own daily lives.
- Emphasise the positive strength and resilience of communities, at home and abroad.

## Icons Used in this Resource



This icon links the activities to the relevant areas of Aistear, Síolta, and the Northern Ireland Curriculum Foundation Stage.



This icon highlights ideas for your Trócaire Better World Award entry.



This icon directs you online to [trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears](http://trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears), where you can download the video, additional photos, slideshow and the worksheets that are referred to in the activity instructions.

## Better World Award



Trócaire's Better World Award acknowledges the work children do while exploring this education resource. As you carry out the activities with the children, record what you do and send it to Trócaire at the end of Lent. We love to see creative responses to our resources.

### Who can take part?

The award is open to all children in all types of Early Years settings and in primary school classes. The entry should be submitted from the full class or group – we do not accept individual entries.

### Why should we participate?

The award is an interesting and fun way for children to explore what is happening in the world around them. It motivates them to take action and to work together for a better world. To acknowledge their work, each child will receive a Better World Award certificate and badge.

### How do we enter?

You can enter the work in any format, including posters, scrapbooks, photos, videos, PowerPoint presentations. For example, you could send us:

- Photos of the children carrying out the activities.
- Samples of the children's art work.
- Photos of parents' involvement in the activities.

Submissions are welcome via post or email.

Please make sure that your submission includes: Early Years setting name, address, phone number and email, plus Early Years Educator's name and the number of children participating. Post entries to Better World Award, Trócaire, Maynooth, Co. Kildare or email to [mary.boyce@trocaire.org](mailto:mary.boyce@trocaire.org).

Please submit your entry to Trócaire by Friday, 5 May 2017.



# Introducing María and her Community

**Aistear**  
Exploring and  
Thinking; Identity &  
Belonging

**Síolta**  
S5 Interactions  
S6 Play  
S7 Curriculum

**NI Curriculum**  
The World Around  
Us



Take photos of the children at circle time, doing the journey simulation and discussing the photos of María. Include these in your Better World Award submission.



You can download the video and additional photos of María's community at [trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears](http://trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears). For more information about working with photos of children around the world, see Trócaire's Watoto resource for Early Years.

Activity  
**1**

## Activity 1: Journey to Honduras

**You will need:** A globe or world map; two gold sticky stars; a piece of ribbon; a 'magic microphone' (any item shaped like a microphone will do).

Gather in a circle and explain that you are going to learn about a girl named María who lives in Honduras, a country in Latin America. Find Ireland on a globe or world map, and then find Honduras. Place a gold star on both countries and connect with a ribbon. Using a 'magic microphone', allow children to consider and share their thoughts about faraway places they have heard of, or have visited. Share thoughts about what Honduras might be like, in terms of weather, homes, animals, food or other aspects that interest the children.

Now let's think about travelling to Honduras. Look at the globe again and discuss how you might travel to Honduras. Could you go by boat? By plane? Imagine travelling by plane to Honduras. If suitable, you can do this part of the activity outdoors, so that the children

can move freely while imagining the journey. Invite the children to stand up and extend their arms like a plane in flight, and run along until they take off.

Talk through the journey, asking: What is happening as we take off? What do you see out of the window? Now we are flying over the sea, what can you see out the window? How long is it taking? Shout out when you finally see land again. We have reached Honduras! We land in an airport in Tegucigalpa, which is a big city. What is the weather like? What can you see and hear? We get on a bus. Who else is on the bus? What do you see as we drive through the city? Now, as we leave the city, the road is big at first. As we drive along, the road is getting smaller and very sandy. Do you think we are getting close to the sea? Can you smell the sea air? Finally, we arrive at a village that is on a sandy strip of land right next to the sea. The village is called Cuyamel (Koo-yah-mel) and this is where María lives.

Activity  
**2**

## Activity 2: María's Day

**You will need:** Four photo cards (included in resource pack); video (available at [trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears](http://trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears)).

Look at each of the photos in turn. Encourage the children to talk about what they see in Photo 1. Provide them with the information from the back of the photo. Read out and discuss the questions on the back of the

photo. Repeat this process with photos 2, 3 and 4.

Watch the short video about María. As you watch the video, pause when the questions appear on the screen, so that the children can think and respond. (You will refer back to the video when doing some of the other activities in the resource.)



**Tips for working with the photos in this resource:**

- Use open-ended questions to encourage full sentences instead of yes/no answers.
- Encourage the children to examine and describe details in the photos.
- Explore feelings to develop empathy, e.g. how do you think María feels in this photo?

Activity

3

## Activity 3: Say it in Spanish

**You will need:** Video (available at [trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears/](http://trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears/)); a soft ball.

Ask the children if they can guess what language is spoken in Honduras. Then ask if anyone knows any words in Spanish. Watch and listen to the video again as María and her friend Jazly introduce themselves. They are asked, *Cómo te llamas?* (What is your name?) and they reply, *Me llamo Jazly* (My name is Jazly) and *Me llamo María José* (My name is María José). To ask a new friend his/her name, you say, *Cómo te llamas?* (Komo-tay-yamas), and they reply *Me llamo* (May-yamo) [their name]. Invite the children to get into

pairs and introduce themselves by saying the words, then shaking hands or doing a high-five.

Now count to three in Spanish: uno, dos, tres. Play a counting catch game. Gather into a circle and give one child a ball. He/She says 'uno' and throws the ball to another child, who says 'dos' and throws the ball to a third child, who starts again with 'uno'. Older children can go up to five or higher. (Guides to Spanish numbers and pronunciations are widely available online.)



**Aistear**  
**Communicating;**  
**Well-being**

**Síolta**  
**S6 Play**  
**S7 Curriculum**  
**S9 Health & Welfare**

**NI Curriculum**  
**Language & Literacy;**  
**Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**

Activity

4

## Activity 4: Helping at Home - Preparing Tortillas

**You will need:** Packets of tortillas (available in most supermarkets); cooked rice; cooked red kidney beans; optional extras of chopped tomato, onion and avocado; a selection of different colours and shapes of uncooked beans (available in health food shops); tortilla recipe and rhyme sheet (available [trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears/](http://trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears/)). You do not need cooking facilities for this activity, but you will need an area suitable for serving food.

Talk with the children about how María helps her mother to prepare a meal of tortillas. Tortillas are a very popular food in Honduras. They are made by mixing maize meal or flour with water to form a dough, which is rolled and then cooked on a flat pan. Tortillas are eaten with rice and beans and sometimes with other vegetables. You can see on the video how quickly some people can cook tortillas! Explain that in María's home they usually make fresh tortillas every day but today we are going to use tortillas bought from a shop. Explain that beans are usually eaten with tortillas. Pass around bowls filled



with different types of uncooked beans and allow the children to sift and sort the beans according to size, shape or colour. Then set out tortillas (shop-bought), cooked beans, cooked rice, and chopped tomatoes, onions and avocados. Talk about why this is a tasty and healthy meal. Invite each child to select ingredients and experiment with different ways of filling and folding/rolling tortillas. After eating, say and clap the traditional rhyme about tortillas. You can encourage the children to make a meal like this at home, including making home-made tortillas if they enjoy cooking. You can print copies of the tortilla recipe and rhyme sheet and send these home with the children. On the website, there is also a colouring sheet showing some of the many delicious fruits that grow in Honduras.



**Watch the video at [trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears](http://trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears) to hear María and Jazly introduce themselves.**



**Photograph the children experimenting with tortillas and include in your Better World Award submission.**

Activity

5

## Activity 5: Role Play

**You will need:** Props from play corner.

Referring back to the photos and activities from Activity 2, review María's day.

Encourage the children to role play a scene from María's day; for example, play time at María's school. You can add in extra

characters as the children see fit.

During the role play, you can say 'freeze', at which point action stops but the children stay in role. You can then ask questions about how the characters feel, or how they think the other characters feel. 'Unfreeze' to get the action rolling again.



**Aistear**  
Exploring  
& Thinking;  
Communicating

**Síolta**  
S2 Environments  
S5 Interactions

**NI Curriculum**  
The Arts;  
The World Around  
Us



Photos of floods are available at: [trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears](http://trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears)

Honduras evacuation animation available at: [trocaire.org/education/lent2017/primary](http://trocaire.org/education/lent2017/primary)



Make a 'Stormy Weather' display with the children's rain paintings plus photos of them outside observing the rain. Include this in your Better World Award submission. You also could make a video or audio recording of the 'sound storm'.

# Living with Stormy Weather: Ireland and Honduras

## Activity 6: Storm Sounds

Activity  
**6**

Invite the children to form a fairly close circle and say that you are going to make a storm. Explain that you are going to start by making a sound with your hands. You are going to look around the circle, and each child should wait until you look at her/him, and then imitate the sound you are making. You start the action by rubbing your hands together quietly (like the rustling of leaves) and then make silent eye contact with each child in turn, who imitates and continues the action and sound until you have gone

around the full circle. Then initiate a new, slightly louder sound (light handclapping to sound like the first drops of rain) and go around the circle as before, then move on to a louder sound (hands slapping thighs to sound like heavy rainfall), and finally loud feet-stamping as the storm's crescendo. Then reverse the stages to simulate the storm dying down, with a final round of no sound at all. Enjoy a minute of still and quiet, and then discuss: What is it like to be outside in a storm?

## Activity 7: Painting the Rain

Activity  
**7**

**You will need:** Video (available at [trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears](http://trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears)); waterproof clothing for each child; items for creative painting – paper, paint, sponges, straws, etc.

Refer back to the rain that we saw in the video about María, and explain that it rains a lot in María's community. It rains a lot in Ireland too! On a rainy day, put on raincoats, hats and wellie boots,

and go outside and observe the rain. What does it feel like? How does it sound? What does it look like – in the sky, on the ground, on plants, against windows? Does it have a smell? A taste? Investigate puddles, where they form and how deep they are. Then come inside, dry off and get out painting materials. Encourage the children to paint their own interpretations of rain.

## Activity 8: Floods Near and Far

Activity  
**8**

**You will need:** Photos of floods in Ireland and Honduras (available at [trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears](http://trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears)).

Talk about floods and share experiences of floods. Has anyone seen a flood near their home or somewhere else in Ireland? What did people do when the flood came? Look at the photos of floods. Can you guess which ones are of Ireland

and which are of Honduras? What clues did you use to help you to guess? What is the same or different about the photos of floods in different locations?

Talk about how sometimes the floods in María's community are so severe that everyone has to leave until the water level goes down.

## Activity 9: Packing your Bag

Activity  
**9**

**You will need:** Four or five items that you would take with you on an emergency evacuation (e.g. torch, first aid kit, bottle of water); plus six or seven items not suitable to bring with you in an emergency (e.g. electronic, breakable or bulky items); 'Take' and 'Leave Behind' picture cards (on website).

Gather the children into a circle. Place all of the items in a pile in the centre of the circle, with the 'Take' and 'Leave Behind' picture cards on either side of the pile. Invite the children to imagine that a big flood is coming and that we will have to leave this building until the water level goes down again. Say that we have to leave via rescue boats that are not very large, so we can only take things that we really need. Invite one child to step in to the circle, select an item from the pile and hold it up so that everyone can see it. The children discuss as a group and collectively decide whether it goes in the 'Take' or 'Leave Behind' pile. If there are divided opinions, allow the child holding the item to make the final

decision. Then invite another child to come in to select another item, and repeat the procedure until all the items have been categorised. If the 'Take' pile has more items than the 'Leave Behind', encourage the children to discuss and negotiate until more items are transferred into the 'Leave Behind' pile and only the bare necessities are in the 'Take' pile. Then discuss how you felt about deciding to leave things behind. What do you think it is like for María and her family when they have to leave their home because of flooding? Note: When you finish the activity, reassure the children that this was just a pretend situation and that a flood is not really coming to your setting.

If appropriate for your age group, you can watch an animated video from María's community. This is used to help children to prepare for emergency evacuations. Discuss. Afterwards, practise an emergency plan (e.g. fire drill) that you have in place for your setting.

## Activity 10: Our Common Home

Activity  
10

**You will need:** Slideshow with script (available on [trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears](http://trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears)).



Invite the children to watch the slides while you read the script. The slideshow highlights that the earth is our common home and that we all need to look after it. Our wasteful behaviour is damaging the earth and causing extreme weather events all over the world, like the floods in Maria's community in Honduras. Discuss: Is this fair? What can we do to treat the earth better?

## Activity 11: Looking After Our Earth

Activity  
11

**You will need:** Materials to make a display board and/or scrapbook (e.g. photos, coloured paper); plus materials needed for the suggested activities (e.g. seeds and pots)

Following on from the discussion above, talk about the things that you already do, in your setting and at home, to look after the earth. Think about how you could do even better. You could focus on:

- **Grow it yourself:** Plant easy-to-grow vegetable seeds (e.g. mustard and cress) and look after them as they grow. If your locality has a community garden (See Community Gardens Ireland), visit the garden and ask questions, or invite a keen gardener to come in to give a demonstration to the children.
- **Earth-friendly transport:** Distribute old magazines and newspapers and help the children to find and cut out pictures of people 'on the move' in various ways. Gather up the images and discuss which modes of transport

are earth-friendly and which are not, and why. Make a big collage of the earth-friendly options. Over the next fortnight, check in with the children daily and ask who has made an earth-friendly journey. If a child can describe an earth-friendly journey that she/he took the previous day (e.g. walked with dad to the shops, or took the train to granny's house), invite her/him to put a sticky star on an appropriate photo on the collage.

- **Turning waste into art:** You can transform discarded materials into wonderful and useful constructions. There are many ideas available online. A good starting point is the Green Schools arts and crafts resource sheet, (available at [greenschoolsireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Pre-School-Primary-Arts-and-Crafts-Resources.pdf](http://greenschoolsireland.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Pre-School-Primary-Arts-and-Crafts-Resources.pdf)).

Take photos of these measures and put them up on a 'Looking After Our Earth' display board, or assemble them in a scrapbook.

## Involve Parents

- Invite parents to come in to view the children's work done in relation to this resource.
- Encourage parents to listen to and implement the children's ideas about more earth-friendly habits. Parents could take photos of the family doing earth-friendly activities at home, and send them in to be included in the 'Looking After Our Earth' display board or scrapbook.
- Have a local/global feast. Invite parents and friends to bring in food grown in their own gardens or locally. Also serve tortillas, and talk about how people all over the world enjoy sharing food with friends and neighbours.

Trócaire Lent Campaign: Another way to take action is to fundraise for Trócaire by ordering a Trócaire box. This year's Lent Campaign focuses on the story of María and her community in Honduras. Trócaire is working to support vulnerable communities across the world to adapt to climate change. Contact Trócaire if you would like to order boxes.



*Aistear*  
Well-being;  
Identity and  
Belonging

*Síolta*  
S2 Environments  
S3 Parents &  
Families  
S4 Consultation

*NI Foundation*  
Stage  
The World Around  
Us; Personal  
Development  
and Mutual  
Understanding



PowerPoint and  
script available  
at [trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears](http://trocaire.org/education/lent2017/earlyyears).



Include samples  
of your work  
and photos of  
your actions  
in your **Better  
World Award**  
submission.  
Don't forget to  
send us your  
**Better World  
Award submission**  
by Friday, 5 May  
2017.

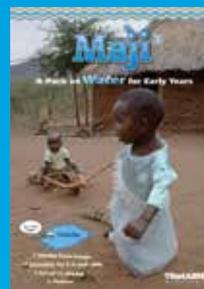
# Trócaire is the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland

Visit [trocaire.org/education](http://trocaire.org/education) for more resources

## Explore global justice issues further



Just Children story sack is a global citizenship education programme for Early Years. It includes a storybook set in Kenya, a puppet, eight photos and educators' handbook.



Maji water pack includes stories from Kenya, activities for three to six year olds, twelve photos and a poster.

To order these resources log onto: [www.trocaire.org/education](http://www.trocaire.org/education)

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-  Snapchat: [trocaireireland](https://trocaireireland) - follow our snap stories
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Working for a just world.