3.9 VALUING PEOPLE AND NATURE

3.9.1 Stations rotation

Brief description, and rules of the implementation of the learning activity

Station Rotation is a blended-learning model in which the class is divided into several "stations." Students move from one station to the next on a set timetable. Because many elementary teachers already organize their classrooms into learning "centres," Station Rotation fits naturally into their routine. It lets teachers give targeted support to small groups while the rest of the class engages in meaningful, self-paced work.
It can be used across subjects – especially in polythematic teaching and multidisciplinary STEAM, where a theme (e.g., water, food, energy, biodiversity, community wellbeing) is explored through science, social studies, language.

Skill focus

- **Primary Skill Focus**
  - Valuing People and Nature
- **Complementary/Secondary Skill Focus**
  - Connectedness

Age group	Student number	Duration
6-10 years old	Whole class (in small groups)	40-60 minutes (5–10 minutes per station + synthesis)

Proposed step by step implementation of the learning activity

1. **Prepare the Stations (teacher):** The teacher designs a number of stations e.g. 4–6 stations that each address aspects of the topic that the teacher wants the students to know more about. Stations are arranged so small groups rotate on a timetable. Each station includes a clear task brief, materials, and a prompt
   - Choose a theme from current lessons (e.g., water, waste, food systems, school garden, local biodiversity, energy use, community wellbeing).
   - Design 4–6 stations that mix hands-on, discussion.
   - Each station includes:
     - a clear task brief (short and visual),
     - materials ready-to-go,
     - a quick product (1–3 sentences, a sketch, a card sort result, a plan).

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or Tempus Public Foundation.
Neither the European Union nor Tempus Public Foundation can be held responsible for them.

2. **Introduce the topic (2–3 minutes)**
3. **Explain the rotation rules (1–2 minutes)**
   - Groups start at different stations.
   - When the timer sounds, rotate clockwise (or numerical order).
   - Roles: speaker, recorder, materials helper, timekeeper (rotate roles each station).
   - Respectful talk and listening are part of the skill.

   Instructions to give the students: "We're going to move through stations that explore how people and nature depend on and support each other. At each stop you'll do a quick activity – a observe, talk, plan, or reflect – then rotate.
4. **Run the rotations (5–10 minutes per station):** Example station elements:
   - Physical station with observation cards (e.g., "Inspect the school garden: Who uses its produce? What helps the plants thrive?") plus a quick sketch or note.
   - Discussion station where students interview each other using question cards about how their family uses local natural resources and what it means to care for both people and place.
   - Stewardship planning station with materials to draft a small action (e.g., signage, mini-pledges, inclusive care ideas).
   - Reflection station where students record what they've learned about interdependence and commit to one small step.
   - Inclusion check station where assess whether their ideas have taken into account the needs of different people (e.g. residents of the local community).

   Running the activity – what happens at each rotation:
   Groups start at different stations. At each:

   - They read the prompt, engage in the task (observe, discuss, prototype, answer digital questions).
   - They record or submit a concise insight.
   - A facilitator or peer quick check ensures inclusivity ("Who did we think about? Who might be missing?").
   - After the allotted time, a signal cues rotation.
5. **Closing synthesis (8–12 minutes):** After all rotations, the class reconvenes. The teacher facilitates a synthesis: clusters recurring themes, highlights balanced ideas, and leads selection of one or two collective actions. Students share what station influenced them most and finalize personal or group commitments. This consolidates understanding of interdependence and moves learners toward responsibility.

Indoor/Outdoor Classroom layout notes

Indoor: stations around the room with clear walking lanes; one "teacher support table"; visual rotation chart and timer visible to all.

Outdoor: stations set up in safe, clearly marked zones (garden, yard, shaded corner). Clipboards help with writing/sketching outdoors.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or Tempus Public Foundation.
Neither the European Union nor Tempus Public Foundation can be held responsible for them.

How does this learning activity develop this particular skill?

Station Rotation is a consciously structured active learning approach based on teamwork, where each station is a repeated practice of a particular thinking routine. it boosts engagement and differentiation by combining teacher-led instruction, collaborative projects, and independent digital work, allowing for personalized, flexible learning

This activity develops both connectedness and valuing people because:

1. Developing Connectedness
   - Stronger teacher-student relationships: small teacher-led stations (4-8 students) allow for personalised attention and direct dialogue, so students feel seen and known.
   - Interdependence: in each station, students have to work face-to-face to solve problems, which naturally builds trust and stronger friendships.
   - A sense of belonging: because everyone has to participate in a small-group environment, students quickly realise that their contribution is essential to the success of the team.
2. Developing the Ability to "Value People"
   - Appreciation of different strengths: In multi-skilled groups, students learn to recognise, respect and rely on the unique abilities of their peers that they bring to the project.
   - Practising understanding others: when the teacher is busy leading another station, students need to patiently help, teach and support each other in completing tasks
   - Active listening: working together requires taking turns to talk, compromise and ensure that everyone's ideas are given a fair hearing.

In short, by moving from a teacher-centred lecture space to a decentralised, student-centred community, the alternation of stations naturally weaves empathy, teamwork and mutual respect into the daily routine.

What do we want to achieve regarding primary skill development (student understanding and/or behaviour)?

As a result of this activity, students will be able to:

- understand that people are interconnected and affect each other
- communicate respectfully and show care for diverse people’s needs
- practice responsibility through small, realistic commitments (individual or group).

Suggested use, and practical subject-related examples

Choose 4–6 stations. Each station is a mini learning activity based on lesson content. Below are examples “Value Stations” (adapt to your theme).

- Station 1: Observation & Mapping: Students examine a shared outdoor space or classroom resource, note who benefits from it and what environmental conditions sustain it, and map those connections.
- Station 2: Peer Interview: Using question cards, students ask classmates about how their families use local resources and what caring for those resources would mean for people in different situations.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or Tempus Public Foundation.
Neither the European Union nor Tempus Public Foundation can be held responsible for them.

- Station 3: Action Design: Small groups draft inclusive stewardship ideas (e.g., a shared reuse corner, multi-user garden plan) that explicitly state benefits for people and nature and note potential challenges.
- Station 4: Inclusion Check: Students evaluate draft ideas with a checklist: “Whose voices are included?” “What environmental impacts are addressed?” and suggest one tweak to improve balance.
- Station 5: Reflection & Commitment: Students individually or in pairs reflect in writing or digitally on what they learned and record a personal next step (pledge or mini-plan).

General curriculum connection examples:

- Science: Students rotate between stations such as a hands-on experiment table (e.g., sorting objects by material or testing magnetism), an observation and drawing centre (e.g., of leaves or bugs), a video or interactive simulation on tablets, and a teacher-led discussion station.
- Math: Learners move between math games with manipulatives, a worksheet or puzzle station, a tablet-based practice app that gives instant feedback, and a teacher station where small groups get help with tricky concepts.
- Language Arts: Children rotate through a reading corner, a writing station, an audio listening centre (stories or phonics games on tablets), and a guided reading group with the teacher focused on decoding or comprehension.
- History/Social Studies: Stations include activities such as sorting images of “then and now,” building timelines with classmates, exploring an interactive digital map or story, and discussing community helpers or past events with the teacher.
- Environmental Studies/Geography: Students rotate through stations to complete a “map skills” game, build a model of landforms, watch a short video about weather or habitats, and talk with the teacher about local places and how we care for them.

Materials and tools needed for implementation

- Station labels/signs
- Rotation schedule/chart (visual timetable)
- Timer/clock/stopwatch
- Task/instruction cards for each station
- Offline materials for stations (worksheets, scenario cards, manipulatives, clipboards)
- Paper, pencils, markers, sticky notes
- Optional for outdoor: teacher device + hotspot
- Group assignment & tracking sheets (paper or digital)
- Formative check tools (quick quizzes, exit tickets, self-check prompts)
- Teacher small-group facilitation area (seating, guide/prompts)
- Display space (whiteboard/flipchart) with instructions or progress
- Storage bins/containers + cleaning wipes/sanitiser

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or Tempus Public Foundation.
Neither the European Union nor Tempus Public Foundation can be held responsible for them.

Guiding questions

- Who are the people connected to this situation? Who benefits? Who might be affected?
- Who hasn't had a chance to share – how are you inviting them in right now?
- Are you listening fully before adding your idea?
- Is everyone in your group involved – what can you do right now to include someone?

Tips and Tricks for dealing with challenges

- **Challenge:** Students rush through stations like a race.
  Tip: Use a must-do exit check at every station: Only rotate after the recorder shows all three.
- **Challenge:** Students focus only on people or only on nature, without linking both.
  Tip: Place sentence stems at every station and model one example aloud before starting.
- **Challenge:** One student dominates; others disengage.
  Tip: Assign rotating roles and require "one idea from each person" before submitting the group response.
- **Challenge:** Students propose unrealistic actions.
  Tip: Add a "Doable this week?" filter and provide a menu of small-step actions.
- **Challenge:** Confusion about expectations / directions
  Tip: Make instructions very clear, visual, and consistent at each station (use icons, step-by-step cards, or short pictorial "how-to" posters). Model one rotation as a class before launching. Use simple checklists or "I'm done" cards so students' self-monitor.
- **Challenge:** Chaotic or slow transitions
  Tip: Establish and practice a predictable signal (chime, countdown, hand signal) for moving. Display a visible rotation chart/timer so students know when and where to go. Build in a brief "buffer" transition time and rehearse transitions with small groups first.
- **Challenge:** Noise and off-task behaviour
  Tip: Set and rehearse noise-level norms (use visual noise meters or coloured signal cards). Teach and practice what good collaboration looks/sounds like. Positive reinforcement (praise, class points) for on-task behaviour helps reinforce expectations.
- **Challenge:** Teacher time pressure for monitoring multiple stations
  Tip: Use quick formative checks (thumbs up/down, mini whiteboard responses) and rotate your attention systematically (e.g., a brief 1-minute pulse check per group). Train student helpers or peer buddies to handle simple station routines.
- **Challenge:** Resource constraints
  Tip: Reuse materials across rotations, have students prepare or manage some materials (e.g., rotating manipulatives in labelled tubs), and design low-prep stations that rely on discussion or reflection rather than consumables.
- **Challenge:** Engagement dropping in repetitive cycles
  Tip: Refresh station tasks periodically, incorporate movement, choice, or gamified elements (e.g., "mystery mission" at a station). Vary modalities—some stations can be hands-on, some verbal, some digital.
- **Challenge:** Tracking learning and follow-up
  Tip: Use simple tracking sheets or stickers to note who completed what and any observation notes. Collect a quick artifact from each student (photo, short reflection, exit ticket) to inform next steps.

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or Tempus Public Foundation.
Neither the European Union nor Tempus Public Foundation can be held responsible for them.

Communicate the structure to students with a "rotation map" they can refer to and briefly debrief at the end, so learners reflect on what they did and why it mattered—reinforcing understanding of valuing people and nature or whatever the targeted skill is.

Difficulty level tailoring

Teachers can tailor Station Rotation to three difficulty levels to meet learners' needs, adjusting guidance, complexity, and feedback while keeping the core structure (multiple stations, targeted small-group support, and self-paced work) consistent.

- **Beginner learner (6-7 years old):**
  - fewer stations (3–4), highly concrete tasks (observe/sort/draw).
  - picture prompts + sentence starters.
  - teacher-directed actions;
  - scripted collaboration;
  - guided reflection.
- **Advanced learners (8-9 years old):**
  - add trade-off thinking ("If we do X, what might happen to Y?").
  - strengthen inclusion checks ("Who is missing?").
  - adaptive/branching feedback;
  - small-group discussion with coaching;
  - group-planned short interventions; basic self-assessment.
  - require one improvement to an idea after feedback.
- **Expert learners (9-10 years old):**
  - high learner ownership;
  - rich feedback loops (dashboards, goal-setting, peer review);
  - student-led collaboration and multi-step actions;
  - metacognitive reflection and adjustment.

Debriefing and Reflection questions

Awareness / Understanding

- What did you notice today about how people and nature need care?
- What's one new thing you learned about why people or nature are important?
- Which station helped you understand valuing others or the environment most, and why?
- Did anything surprise you about how our actions affect people or nature?

Collaboration / Relationships

- How did you work with your group to show respect or help each other?
- Did you listen to someone's idea that changed how you thought? Tell us about it.
- Who in your group helped you understand something better? What did they do?
- What could your group do next time to include everyone and care for the environment better?

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or Tempus Public Foundation.
Neither the European Union nor Tempus Public Foundation can be held responsible for them.

Action / Responsibility

- What is one thing you (or your group) did today to show you value people or nature?
- What is one thing you will do soon to keep showing care – at school or at home?
- If you could make a class promise about valuing people and nature, what would it be?

Self-assessment (can be a simple checklist or emoji scale)

- I showed respect to others: 😊 / 😐 / 😕
- I helped take care of nature: 😊 / 😐 / 😕
- I listened to my teammates: 😊 / 😐 / 😕
- I can explain one way my actions matter to people or nature. (Yes / Not yet)

Peer feedback (pair/share)

- Tell a partner something they did well today related to valuing people or nature.
- Suggest one small thing your partner could try next time to show even more care.

Teacher facilitation prompts

- What connections do you see between how we treated each other and how we treated the environment?
- What would make our next activity even better at showing care?

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or Tempus Public Foundation.
Neither the European Union nor Tempus Public Foundation can be held responsible for them.