



UNESCO Chair
on Visual Anticipation
and Futures Literacy
towards Visual Literacy



LETTER TO AN UNBORN CHILD

The tool invites learners to reflect on the legacy, values, and hopes they wish to impart future generations with; on their aspirations for the future; and on current challenges. The process of writing a letter transforms the abstract concept of responsibility into a tangible and emotionally engaging experience and is especially powerful on topics involving ethics, sustainability, social studies, and personal development. In addition, writing a letter to someone who is not yet born prompts expression of thoughts in a more intimate manner and encourages honesty since children symbolize innocence and evoke a sense of responsibility for their protection and well-being.

The tool **aims** to:

- Promote introspection and encourage participants to examine their personal values, dreams, and life experiences.
- Foster empathy by challenging participants to consider the needs and opportunities of future generations.
- Encourage responsibility by highlighting the ethical and practical implications of present-day actions in shaping the world for those who come.
- Facilitate dialogue between the present and the future, and recognition of individual and collective action.
- Stimulate imagination and inspire creative thinking about ideal futures, societal change, and transformative visions for humanity.



How to apply it

This tool supports a reflective activity. Prior to it, it is advised that learners have experienced projections of alternative futures, i.e. probable/expected and ideal futures, during which they gained new insights on the available possibilities; the discrepancies between them; their assumptions and the impact they have on their thought patterns and actions. The letter helps learners to recollect the deeper thoughts generated during these previous learning activities and smoothly open to ‘what if’ questions and quests.

Facilitators ask learners to individually write a letter to an unborn child. This process might take approximately 15 minutes. Once all have finished, they share their letter, and discussion can follow on how their envisions can become actions in the present.

Suggested combination with other Visual Literacy tools

The “Letter to an unborn child” combines effectively with the “Identity Triangle”, the “Role-playing”, and the “Visuality Iceberg” tools.

NOTE: This tool was co-developed with Sebastian Plate, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sebastian-plate-109360119/>

