

## Our environment

Grade Level: 2-3

**Overview** Our world is in danger. Pollution of the air, water, and land is rampant, overwhelming the delicate balance of nature of the planet. Many species of plants and animals face extinction at an alarming rate. Until all of the peoples of the world are educated and informed, this destruction will continue.

**Purpose** Because children are the leaders of tomorrow, educating them today to become responsible users and protectors of their environment, will result in a more positive future for our planet.

**Objectives** Students will be able to:

- i. Present through discussion, a general overview of the world's environmental dilemmas
- ii. Discuss the conditions that led to the endangerment of Ten species
- iii. Identify five concrete steps which can be taken to improve their environment
- iv. Undertake a project which will improve their environment
- v. Present their project to a class in a creative and imaginative way.

**Resources/Materials** No special materials are required.

### Activities and Procedures

Introduction:

Teacher will read the poem by Shel Silverstein, "Sara Jane Amanda Stout Wouldn't Take the Garbage Out", or another poem about the earth and the environment. The class will then discuss the implications of the poem, the mounting garbage, and move the discussion toward the concept of disposal of the garbage. The class will then discuss the idea of all people in the world's garbage and its' size and volume. Students will then have a variety of activities to teach them about the plight of our environment:

- i. Collect the garbage cans from different classrooms. Categorize and graph it. The class will then calculate the weekly, monthly and yearly volume of each type of material, i.e., newsprint, copier paper, construction paper, etc.
- ii. Students will collect newspaper and magazine articles and share them with the class. The class will then make posters about the different issues of the environment, using the articles and making their own illustrations and lettering.
- iii. 100 Simple Things You Can Do To Save The Earth will be read by the teacher to the students if available, if not the students may make a list of all things they do that are friendly for the earth.
- iv. The class will take a field trip to a recycling center or the market to see recycled goods.

- v. The class will learn the songs and put on a play about the earth.
- vi. The student will learn about the endangered species. Students will be divided into teams to create a board game for a selected endangered species.
- vii. Students will make signs for each classroom in the building to remind them to turn out the lights and turn off the water when not in use. Recycled paper will be used.

**Tying it all together** During the entire period of the unit, students will be encouraged to write down the problems that are identified on a chart posted on the door. As the unit evolves, the list will grow. For the culminating activity, groups of four students will select one of the problems from the list and brainstorm many and varied solutions. The group will then decide which solution will be the most appropriate for their group to work on. The group will plan the steps that need to be taken to achieve the best results and implement their plan. The group will then present their project to the class in a creative manner.

**Assessment** Let the students score the classrooms in the school for environmental sanitation.

### **Suggestions/Modifications**

- The teacher may create alternative activities based on the local recycling that takes place in the community.
- Students should be able to compare the amount of garbage produced from country to country through research or estimation.
- Children may write stories about what the environment would be like without pollution. References Earth Day 1990, 1991 Packets.

**Author(s)** Michelle Fawson; Bennion Elementary, Sandy, Utah