

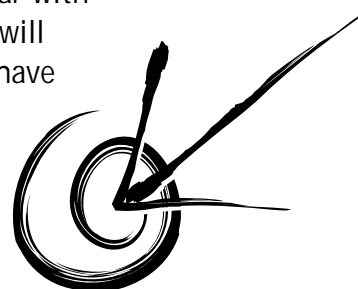


Environmental Challenge

Lesson aims

No matter how young or old we are, we can all make a difference.

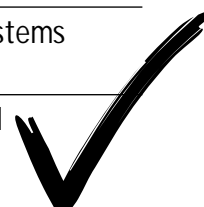
After taking part in Schools Clean Up Day students will be familiar with how rubbish can pile up in the school and community. Students will be given an opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills they have gathered during the previous lessons. Students will develop and try to implement solutions to the problem of mounting rubbish and reducing their environmental footprint. Students will be inspired to think critically about their own community.



Learning outcomes

As outlined in the National Profiles:

Studies of Society and Environment	Place and Space	Features of places; People and places; Care of places
	Resources	Use of resources; Management and enterprise
	Natural and Social Systems	Natural systems; Economic systems
Science	Life and Living	Living together; Structure and function; Biodiversity, change and continuity
	Working Scientifically	Acting responsibly
Health & Physical Education	Health of individuals and populations	Human relations



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Background information

There are lots of things that students, classes and schools can do to make a difference in their community. You may wish to find out what environmental needs exist right around you. Each school and community has different environmental problems and may already have environmental projects in place, such as recycling programs, litter clean-ups, park and beach adoptions, and so on.

Some ideas for challenges include the following projects.

- **Diverting Organic Waste**

Build a garden in your school, using compost and environmentally friendly pest control and fertilizer. Work out a schedule of garden maintenance; make the garden drought resistant so that it does not need excessive watering.

- **Saving Water**

Build toilet dams and save water every time you flush. Fill plastic bottles with water and place them in the toilet tank to reduce the amount of water that is flushed. This activity will need to be closely supervised. Create an awareness campaign around the toilet dams and make them for students to take home or to raise money.

- **Community Education**

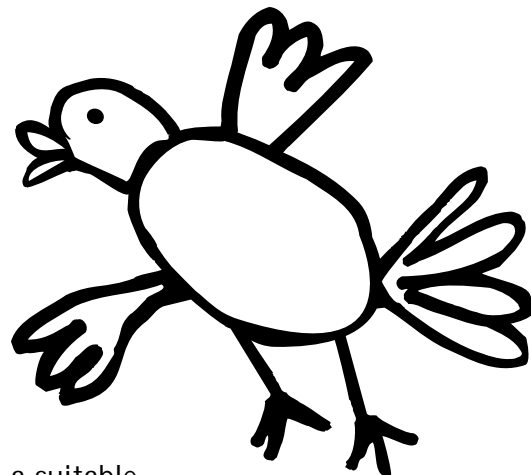
Set up a display of your environmental activities. Put the display in the school foyer or at the school open day or fete so that visitors can be educated on key environmental messages.

- **Creating Awareness**

Create and organise a panel discussion for the entire school with individuals who deal with different environmental issues. For example an environmental activist or recycler. Create a few questions for debate and provide a moderator if you are having more than one speaker. Students could role-play their own panel in the classroom to debate issues like packaging or plastic bags.

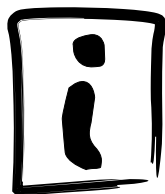
- **Repairing and Restoring a Local Area**

Adopt a local area and keep it clean. Talk to your local council about a suitable site close to the school. A sign could be put up to say the class or school has adopted the area. By doing this, the area could be cleaned up and rubbish collected.



Tips for Successful Projects

- **Be Prepared:** Gather the facts about the materials you need.
- **Stay Positive:** Work for something you care about. Remember you're committed to helping the environment.
- **Be Realistic:** Remember, you can't change everything at once.
- **Be Respectful:** Show concern and respect for the environment and for people, even those with an opposing point of view.
- **Keep Trying:** Problems wouldn't be problems if they were easy to solve.
- **Be Open to Change:** Review your challenge along the way, and don't be afraid to change direction.



Sources & further information

Eco-Innovate: The website showcases young innovators who are undertaking environmental projects to create a sustainable future. The site provides information on a sustainable living competition.

www.eco-innovation.net/

Millennium Kids: The organisation has created a great resource for kids to learn the steps to a green team project.

Millennium Kids have given permission for these steps to be reproduced in this classroom activity.

Schools have the potential to submit their projects to Millennium Kids for potential funding in line with three priority areas of concern to Millennium Kids members.

www.millenniumkids.com.au

Pachamama: Our Earth Our Future:

Developed as part of the United Nations Environment Programme the website has been put together by young people of the world. It has information about our earth, our future and what we can do to protect and conserve!

www.pachamama.org/

TUNZA: Initiated by the United Nations Environment Programme which aims to engage young people in the work of UNEP and enhance participatory action towards environmental conservation and sustainable development.

www.unep.org/tunza/

Classroom activities

The following steps are based on the Millennium Kids "Twelve Steps to a Green Team Project"



1. Identify the problem

Begin by identifying the environmental problem you would like to solve. Ask your class to brainstorm environmental problems in your community. You may be able to use the local paper to gain ideas. Some ideas are in the background information section for this activity. Ask students to think of which problems they think they can solve. Choose a challenge.

2. Discuss the problem

Once the class has chosen their environmental challenge get them to discuss the problem with teachers, classmates, family and friends about how they want to solve it. Record the students' ideas and start putting together a plan of action.

3. Research

Ask students to research the cause of the problem and how to solve the problem. You may be able to organise for a local expert to talk to the students. Ring your local council or environmental organisation for advice.

4. Set the goals

As a class, set the goals for the environmental challenge. Ask the students to think about what they want to achieve. Brainstorm ways to achieve the goals.

5. Identify owner

Determine if the environmental challenge is on private or government owned land. You may be able to contact the land owners to see if they are interested in your project ideas.

6. Who can help?

Ask students to think about who can help to get your project going and make it a reality. Students may be able to find a mentor who is willing to listen to their ideas and give them feedback as they develop their plans.

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7. Plan of action

Write down a draft plan of action. Discuss with students the steps to make their project a reality.

Some of the questions that may need to be answered include:

- How do we do it?
- Where do we do it?
- What materials and resources do we need?
- Who will do it?
- Do we need to get permission to do it?
- Will it cost money to do and how could the money be raised?

8. Consult with other groups

Consult with all stakeholders (teachers, local government, community groups). Show them the draft plan and ask them for comment.

9. Funding

Search for funds and support for your environmental challenge. Grants and/or sponsors may be interested in your project. Ask students to research the websites of organisations that have grants available to school projects.

10. Implementation

Help the students implement the action plan. Depending upon the age of your class you may need to have options available for them to choose.

Consider the following for implementation:

- What persuasive and education communication will need to take place?
- Who will perform the tasks?
- Draw up a plan of action with names, tasks and dates.

11. Discuss effect

Discuss how the environmental challenge will reduce the environmental footprint of individual students and the class.

12. Monitor

Monitor the success of the environmental challenge on an ongoing basis.

