

FIFTH AND SIXTH CLASSES – CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Teacher Guidelines:

- Pages 130 - 132

Linkages:

- Living things: Plants and animals
- Materials

Integration:

- Language development – English and Gaeilge
- Visual Arts
- Mathematics
- History
- Geography

FIFTH AND SIXTH CLASSES – CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Content Objective:

- **PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT**
 - Organise collection of paper, aluminium cans or other materials for recycling*
 - Become aware of the need to use energy wisely in school and at home*
 - Compost waste for garden*

Some suggested activities:

- Participate in environmental projects e.g. clean up month run by An Taisce, local projects, Tidy Towns, Green School scheme etc.
- Establish and implement some school based projects and campaigns including composting, developing a school garden, etc.
- Collect and cut out headlines, articles, editorials and pictures from newspapers and magazines that highlight particular issues.
- Carry out a litter survey in the locality or on the schools grounds. (NB For safety reasons children should not touch the litter). Consider where the litter is found, where it might have come from, the availability of bins etc. Suggest ways in which litter in these areas could be prevented.
- Conduct an energy survey at home and/or at school (I can make a

difference—Home energy survey, available from Irish Energy Centre). Identify ways in which energy is being wasted and suggest ways in which it could be conserved.

- Research how much energy is used by various household appliances; are there some appliances which are more energy efficient?

Some suggested investigations:

- Which street/road in the locality is most littered? Investigate the possible reasons.
- Which material (e.g. leaves, paper, orange peel, apple core etc) decomposes the fastest? What could be done to the material to speed up the decomposition rate? What could be done to slow it down (ie prevent decay)? List situations where it would be appropriate to prevent decay/speed up decomposition. Investigate what effect temperature, moisture levels and air have on the rate of decomposition.
- Which brand of television/washing machine/fridge is most energy efficient?
- Which material would be best for the lagging jacket of a hot water cylinder? Use a tin can or bottle to simulate the water cylinder.

Some suggested designing and making:

- A composter (outdoor, indoor or wormery)
- Energy awareness and/or anti-litter posters
- Flower boxes and containers from reclaimable waste

FIFTH AND SIXTH CLASSES – CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Content Objective:

- **IDENTIFY AND DISCUSS A LOCAL, NATIONAL OR GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE**

Such as:

Effect of building a new factory, new roads, buildings; farming practices; traffic congestion, road safety; suggestions for environmental enhancement; an incident of pollution, deforestation, ozone depletion, nuclear energy, global warming

Investigate the causes of the issue

Appreciate the roles and different views of people involved

Identify and use ways of assessing or measuring the extent of the problem

Suggest possible actions and consider the effect of these on people and the environment

Participate in the resolution of the issue, if possible

Some suggested activities:

- Identify and explore any local environmental issues that may occur. If possible visit the area affected by the issue. Find out information about the issue from secondary sources and/or those involved
- Stimulate a debate about a local, national or global issue in the classroom
- Pretend you and your family are left without electricity for one week. Describe some of the problems you may have and some of the creative ways you might solve them.
- Write to local politician or company about an environmental issue that is a concern.
- Research water usage and pollution. Consult the ENFO pack on Water for background information and suggestions for activities and investigations.
- Discuss the renewable and non-renewable energy sources that are used at home/school. Research and list the advantages and disadvantages of each
- Research and discuss what happens the rubbish that we produce; where does it go, what affect does that have, what alternatives are there etc.
- Conduct a traffic survey

Some suggested investigations:

- Investigate the affect that air pollution is having on an area by recording which species of lichens are present and monitoring their size/growth
- Which local road/street is most traffic congested? Suggest possible

reasons and possible strategies to counteract this.

- How is our school (or home) heated?

Some suggested designing and making:

- A pizza box solar oven (The Energy File p.32)

FIFTH AND SIXTH CLASSES – CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Content Objective:

- **COME TO APPRECIATE INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY AND NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CARE**

Explore concept of custodianship and its practical implications

Become familiar with the concept of sustainable development

Appreciate the need to protect environments for present and future inhabitants.

Some suggested activities:

- Choose one dinner that you had this week and write down all the foods you ate. Beside each food list the materials used to package the food.
- Examine and sort the rubbish that is produced by the class in one day (NB wear gloves). Where will this rubbish end up? What else could be done to it? Count the amount of drinks cartons, cans, plastic bottles etc produced by the class in one day and calculate what this number would be for the week/month. Discuss and implement strategies for re-using, reducing and recycling the classroom waste.
- Scavenger hunt for the recycled symbol
- Collect rainwater for watering school garden.
- Adopt a local pond or stream
- Identify some indigenous plants and animals that have become extinct and research the possible reasons for this. Are there any living things in our world that are now also endangered? (E.g. cod, song thrush, frog spawn, corncrake) How have humans affected this process? What could be done to protect them?
- Time how long it takes the kettle to boil when half filled, full etc.
- Conduct a packaging scavenger hunt in the local supermarket. See how many foods you can find with no wrapping, one wrapping, two wrappings or more than two wrappings.
- Involve the children in some simple projects to enhance the school environment eg. planting bulbs, sunflowers, trees etc
- Identify and implement simple strategies to conserve energy at school and at home.

Some suggested investigations:

- Investigate watering plants/seeds with tap water and one with rain water. What differences if any do you notice in their development?
- How much water does your shower use? Turn the shower on for 10 seconds and collect the water in a container. How much water would you use if you spent 5 minutes in the shower? How does that compare to taking a bath?

Some suggested designing and making:

- Design a rain butt
- Design a collage/montage from plastic collected from the beach/woodlands to share the message of recycling