

LESSON VI-4: Helpers for the Environment

Student Learning Objectives:

- VI-9. Students will name some ways to help keep the environment healthy.
- VI-10. Students will make a plan to conserve water at school and at home.
- VI-11. Students will conclude that they can make an impact on the health of their environment.

Preparation

- Gather the needed materials.
- Decide how you will divide the class into five groups for Activity 2.
- Duplicate enough copies of the Student Worksheet, Helping My Environment, so that each student can have one.
- Confirm your guest speaker if you have arranged for one to visit your class.
- Duplicate the Family Resource Sheet to be sent home following this lesson.

Materials

Resources

- Book: *How GREEN Are You? -OR- I Can Save the Earth -OR- Earth Book for Kids*
- Book: *50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth* (five copies)
- Student Worksheet: Helping My Environment
- Resource person: Water conservationist (Optional Activity)
- Family Resource Sheet: Water Conservation
- Book: *The Magic School Bus: At the Waterworks* (Integration Idea)

Realia

- Pencils or pens
- Writing paper

Time: 35 minutes, not including the Optional Activity

Lesson Procedure

Introduction: 4 minutes

Connect this lesson on water conservation with the previous lesson on environmental health.

1. Ask the students:

If you remember what the five components of our environment are and ways they might be damaged, stand up. When I call on you, name one part of the environment and how it might be damaged and then sit down. If you had the same idea that someone else said, sit down when it is shared.

Call on one student at a time until all the students are seated again.

2. State:

Did you know that each of us can do special things to take care of our world? Today our lesson will be on ways we can keep our world healthy and ways we can care for our water supply.

Activity 1: 15 minutes

Describe ways that students can care for their environment.

1. Distribute the Student Worksheet, Helping My Environment, to each student.

Teacher's Note: Check your materials to see which of the following three books is available for your use: *How GREEN Are You*, *I Can Save the Earth*, or *Earth Book for Kids*. If the book *How GREEN Are You?* is available, follow Option 1. If the book, *I Can Save the Earth*, is available, follow Option 2. If the book *Earth Book for Kids* is available, follow Option 3. Then continue with Step 2.

OPTION 1

Explain:

I am going to read more of the book, How GREEN Are You? As I read, listen carefully for ideas that you would like to try that would help your environment. Use item number one on your worksheet to jot down some notes for yourself, so you can remember what to do. Ready?

Read pages 10 through 23 of the book, *How GREEN Are You?*

OPTION 2

Explain:

I am going to read a few sections of the book, I Can Save the Earth. As I read, listen carefully for ideas that you would like to try that would help your environment. Use item number one on your worksheet to jot down some notes for yourself, so you can remember what to do. Ready?

Read the following pages. These pages have been selected to correspond with the five components of the environment presented in the previous lesson.

- Water: Pages 26-31, Sections that begin with “ I Can...” and “What Can You Do?”
- Habitat: Pages 50-51, 53, 57-60, Sections that begin with “ I Can...” and “What Can You Do?”
- Air: Pages 10, 18-20, All sections
- Life: Pages 55, 65-72, Sections that begin with “ I Can...” and “What Can I Do?”
- Energy: Pages 11-14, 16, 33, 36-44, Sections that begin with “I Can...” and “What Can You Do?”

OPTION 3

Explain:

I am going to read a few sections of the book, Earth Book for Kids. As I read, listen carefully for ideas that you would like to try that would help your environment. Use item number one on your worksheet to jot down some notes for yourself, so you can remember what to do. Ready?

Read the following pages. These pages have been selected to correspond with the five components of the environment presented in the previous lesson.

- Water: Pages 82 through 84,
- Habitat: Pages 46, and 110 through 112
- Air: Pages 102 through 104
- Life: Pages 118-119, 123, 127, and 128
- Energy: Pages 58, 59, and 66

2. Ask the students:

What ideas did you hear that you plan to use?

Call on a few students to share their ideas.

Optional Activity: 30 minutes

Presentation by a resource person—water conservationist.

1. Introduce the water conservationist.
2. Ask the water conservationist to be sure to discuss the following during his/her visit:
 - The water quality issues that affect your local community
 - What factors affect the water supply
 - How water is purified in your community
 - Ways to help conserve water

Activity 2: 15 minutes

Create a plan for conserving water.

1. Divide the class into five groups. Assign the following group roles: leader, motivator, and readers (three). Explain:
 - *The leader is the person who helps keep your small group working on the task.*
 - *The motivator is the person who makes sure everyone has a chance to contribute his/her ideas.*
 - *The readers (three) are the students in your small group who will take turns reading from the book.*
2. Give each group a copy of the book *50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth*.
3. Instruct the students:

For the next fifteen minutes, you will work together in your group to make a plan for using water wisely. Leaders, turn to page 40 in the book 50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth. It does not have a number at the bottom, but it has the title, "Preserving Our Oceans, Rivers, Lakes and Streams," on it. This chapter of the book describes eight ways to care for our water supply.

Pick two of the sections and decide how to split the reading among your group's three readers. Have Reader 1 begin reading, then Reader 2, then Reader 3.

After you have finished reading your sections, discuss ways you can conserve water. Your group may use some of the ideas from the book, and you may come up with ideas of your own.

Write your ideas on your worksheets. You will notice that you should have a plan for school and another plan for home. Everyone in your group should complete a worksheet.

Answer any questions the students may have, then circulate as the groups work.

4. When time is up, collect the worksheets and check to make sure each student has a plan. Offer suggestions as needed.
5. Post the worksheets for a couple days, so the students can read each others' ideas. Then send the worksheets home for the students to use.

Closure: 1 minute

- Summarize by stating:

I have collected your worksheets and will post them for a couple of days, so we can read about all the good ideas we came up with. After that, you may take your plans home and share them with your families. Be sure to try your ideas right away!

If you think you can do something to help our environment, clap your hands. Good for you!

- Distribute the Family Resource Sheet to go home with each student.
- State:

In our next health lesson, we will use the skill of negotiation to keep our environment healthy.

Integration Ideas

Science

- For extensive information about groundwater and pollution, a curriculum called "Classroom GEMS" (Groundwater Education in Michigan Schools), has been developed. It consists of twenty-three lessons for kindergarten through sixth grade. For more information, contact SEE-North, 03001 Church Road, Petosky, MI 49770, (616) 348-9700.
- Use other sections of the book *50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth* to conduct experiments related to environmental issues.

Social Studies

- Read other appropriate sections of the books, *How GREEN Are You?* or *Earth Book for Kids* or *I Can Save the Earth*, to explore the role of the family and the community in keeping the environment healthy.

Language Arts

- Write a paper about a person who goes through a typical day, only there is no water. Highlight the many uses of water and what modifications would have to be made in its absence.
- Write thank-you notes to the resource person who visited the class. Ask the students to describe what they learned and/or enjoyed about his/her presentation.
- Read the book *The Magic School Bus: At the Waterworks* by Joanna Cole.

