

Creating Change



**Real World Ecosystems
Activity
Grade Level: 5-8**

Main Objectives

Learners will investigate and consider a variety of actions that may have an impact on the environment. Part of their purpose will be to evaluate possible approaches and design an action plan to minimize the effect of using the resources (background information, planning information and activity) provided.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this activity, learners will:

- Become aware of actions that can be taken to reduce their impact on the environment
- Create an action plan
- Carry out an action plan about paper recycling

Length of Activity

1.5 hours

Materials List

Creating Change Backgrounder
Creating Change Learner Worksheet

Procedure

Step 1: Backgrounder

- a. Provide the learners with copies of the Creating Change Backgrounder. Allow the class to read the backgrounder individually or in groups.
- b. As learners are finishing up their reading, be sure to remind them to discuss amongst themselves the "Think About" questions at

the end of the backgrounder.

- c. Discuss different environmental issues in the school and the community. For example, why does the school throw out so much paper? Why are there few trees in the schoolyard? Why do so many cars spend so much time idling in front of the school?

Step 2: Worksheet

- a. Provide the learners with the worksheet and have them answer the questions in Part A as a take-home assignment, or in class.
- b. Allow learners to present their ideas to share them.

Step 3: Double Your Paper Savings

- a. This section is Part B of the learner worksheet. The purpose of this activity is to create awareness of ways to reduce the amount of paper used in schools by promoting the use of both sides of paper pages whenever possible.
- b. It will be extremely important for you to inform both the custodial staff and the teaching staff/administration about the "Double Your Paper Savings" activity since they will necessarily be a part of the action.
- c. Assuming that there are recycle containers for paper at various locations in your school, it is important that those materials not be

- disposed of or taken away from the school until your two-week monitoring period is up.
- d. Learners will do a "Pre-Campaign Audit" which will take place on or before the starting date that you choose. After the pre-campaign count is recorded, all paper recycle bins must be emptied. This may take some discussion and arrangement with the custodial staff. Learners can help.
 - e. Also, learners will need access to all of the school's recycle-designated paper in order to (a) count the total number of sheets designated for recycling, (b) determine the number of sheets that have been used on only one side, and, (c) to determine the number of sheets which have been used on both sides. Totals should be calculated for the entire school and recorded as both raw data and as percentages as indicated on Part B of the learner worksheet.
 - f. It will be important that the project is explained to both staff and learner body before it begins so that the purpose of the project is understood (to reduce print paper waste) and to remind everyone that the paper recycling containers must not be cleared for exactly two weeks.
 - g. Awareness of the project may be maintained throughout the two weeks with bulletins or announcements which relate to the ongoing recycling effort. Remind everyone of the purpose.
 - h. At the end of the two-week Double Your Paper Savings campaign, the "Post-Campaign Audit" should be performed, using Part B of the learner worksheet.
 - i. Results may then be compiled, compared, and discussed. The findings should be reported to the rest of the school so they can hear how well they did. It may also be desirable to publicize the results to parents and the community at large.
 - j. Additionally, you may wish to publicize some of the information which was gathered in the Survey questions.

- Information Communication Technology extension: Have learners make a PowerPoint presentation about their eco-action.

Comprehension

You may wish to test learners' comprehension with the following prompts and questions:

- How can we take action?
- What are some activities that are relatively easy to do?
- Describe your action plan.
- Why did you choose that particular action?
- Describe a local environmental issue.
- Think about the possible consequences.
- Gather information.
- Identify possible actions and consequences.
- Organize an action plan.

Tips and Extensions

- Have learners make posters about their actions.