



Living Values™
Education



A climate change resource for children and young adults



Living Values Education Activities for Caring for the Earth

Diane G. Tillman



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Preface

Peace, Love, Respect, Tolerance, Honesty,
Simplicity and Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans,
Responsibility, Happiness, Cooperation, Humility, Freedom, Unity

IMAGINE what would happen if the almost eight billion people on the planet could be encouraged to begin to create their own change by adopting the above intrinsic Values into their personal lives – every day, every choice, every decision, every relationship. IMAGINE the difference this would make.

Climate Change is no longer coming, it is here now. The majority of the almost eight billion people on the planet are aware of this to varying degrees. Large numbers of people are in some way starting to experience the dynamic of a world fast disintegrating into the very real potential of global deprivation.

Weather changes affect food production, extreme weather events and temperature fluctuations. These risk crops, cause food scarcity and often threaten the safety of homes. Floods reduce safe water supplies. All cause mass migration, a reduction in sustainable living and destruction of the flora and fauna that support the biosphere. Millions of species will soon be lost. We, together with our children, are at risk of a devastating future.

Humanity is in this together, the effects of climate change will be felt by every segment of the population; forget seeking wealth and power, comfort and a good life, how do they help when every aspect of our planet's biodiversity is in crisis?

Einstein said that you cannot solve a problem from the same level of consciousness that created it. If this is true then we need to look not at a quick fix to each drama that unfolds but at the reason we have created this experience. Clearly, it is our collective Values which need to be addressed.

Embracing the Values in our lives directly impacts how we live on the planet. Rather than focusing on saving ourselves from the on-going damage of Climate Change, we could join together as a world community with the goal to change the way we live and give our world the opportunity to heal.

This book is dedicated with that objective – to bring awareness through engaging



these carefully thought-out activities for children and adults alike to stimulate action in our daily lives before it is too late.

These twelve Values are key. Each Value individually and sincerely applied to support the environment would make a difference. Embraced collectively in our daily lives, these Values have the ability to support and guide our commitment to radical change, bringing humanity together in a common goal.

Let us share in embracing such a dynamic vision and convey the importance of Values awareness, and the importance of caring for our Earth and her oceans, to every man, woman and child with a heart to make a difference. If we act together, the earth and her oceans, and all of humanity, will benefit.

Roger Miles

Deputy President

Association for Living Values Education International (ALIVE)



A note from the author

I have had the privilege of being involved with Living Values Education (LVE) for 26 years, writing educational resource books and traveling around the world to conduct workshops and seminars – at UNESCO, schools, universities, retreat centers and refugee camps. When I initially became involved with LVE, I focused on developing a program that would help all young people explore and develop values. I wanted to develop something that would involve and inspire marginalized youth and also act to challenge privileged youth to look beyond their usual circles. I was yet to deeply understand the importance of values or values education. Twenty-six years later, I now see the world through a values lens. I am honored to be part of the global LVE family as we continue to co-create LVE.

Growing from strength to strength, Living Values Education has enriched the lives and educational experience of educators and millions of young people around the world since its initial pilot in February 1997. A global endeavor dedicated to nurturing hearts and educating minds, LVE provides an approach and tools to help people connect with their own values and live them. During professional development workshops, educators and facilitators are engaged in a process to empower them to create a caring atmosphere in which young people are valued, respected, understood and safe. A values-based learning community fosters positive relationships, quality learning and quality education. With Living Values Education, educators and students become co-creators of a culture of peace and respect.

Climate Change

I love our precious planet and her oceans. I am very concerned about climate change, the disastrous effect it is having on the lives of people, the loss of many species, and its potential of great harm for future generations unless we act positively and effectively now.

In the recent update of the Living Values Education Activities books, I expanded the Simplicity unit and created activities on “Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans”. This was an attempt to help educate young people about climate change and the many things we



can do to help our planet. This book is a compilation of the “Simplicity and Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans” values units in *Living Values Education Activities for Children Ages 3-7, Book 1*, *Living Values Education Activities for Children Ages 8-14, Book 1*, and *Living Values Education Activities for Young Adults, Book 1*.

I hope you will enjoy this book, and use it with young people and adults of all ages, to educate yourself about climate change and explore the many things we can do to make a difference.

War effects people and the Earth

If you love this book and the activities, please explore the Peace Values Unit in the regular Living Values Education Activities books. War is horrible for soldiers on both sides, and terrifying, traumatic and often deadly for civilians. It often fuels a refugee crisis, impacting not only the refugees but the countries to which they flee. And, it harms our precious Earth.

If we can create war, we can create peace, kindness and harmony. What would happen if all of us were to grow circles of peace, kindness and compassion around us?

Diane G. Tillman





CHAPTER ONE:

Activities for Children Ages Three to Seven

Simplicity and Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans Lessons

Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans has been added to this updated Simplicity Unit, as simplicity is a value that allows us to recognize the beauty and importance of nature and our animal friends, and honor our planet. The six Living Green Values lessons for children ages three through seven, drawn from *Living Green Values Activities for Children and Young Adults, A Special Rio+20 Edition*, are included in this unit.

These lessons are intended to help children be more aware of the importance of taking care of the Earth and her resources. Part of that process is awakening love for nature and her creatures and learning about specific ways that they can help be a friend to the Earth. Enjoy doing the activities with the children. Thank you for helping take care of our Earth – and the children. If you wish, send us your comments and news about their activities!

Simplicity Reflection Points are used to help define the value. The points can be used as the first focus point during values time, or can be a discussion point as part of language arts. Allow the children the opportunity to share their experiences about that value.

For five- through seven-year-olds, the teacher can choose to use some of the words and sentences as content for reading, spelling, and writing. As the students continue with the unit, they can create their own Simplicity Points. They can then draw or write those, or make up short stories.

Simplicity and Caring for Our Earth and Her Oceans Reflection Points

- ◆ Simplicity is enjoying simple things.
- ◆ Simplicity is natural.
- ◆ Simplicity is learning from the earth.
- ◆ Simplicity is beautiful.
- ◆ Simplicity is using what we already have.



- ◆ Caring for Our Earth and Her Oceans is important.
- ◆ Our Earth is our home and the home of animals.
- ◆ Nature is beautiful.
- ◆ We can all be Friends of the Earth by not littering.
- ◆ We can all be Friends of the Earth by not wasting.

Simplicity and Caring for Our Earth and Her Oceans Unit Goals and Objectives

Goal: To increase understanding about simplicity and appreciation of nature, birds and animals.

Objectives:

- To identify simple pleasures and simple things they enjoy.
- To enjoy playing with simple things.
- To think and be involved in a discussion about what trees provide for humans and animals.
- To learn about where water comes from and to enjoy acting out that process.
- To be engaged in stories to develop more love for birds.
- To learn about how seeds grow into plants.

Goal: To learn a few ways to help take care of the Earth and animals.

Objectives:

- To hear that trees give oxygen to humans and animals; to understand that trees are important and to participate in cooperatively planting a tree.
- To discuss the many ways water is important and to learn about the importance of not wasting water.
- To understand how birds and animals can be hurt by people's trash and plastic.
- To learn about the importance of not littering and reusing or limiting the use of plastic and be motivated by the activities to not litter and help care for the Earth.
- To plant flower or vegetable seeds and care for the plants as they grow.
- To send love and peace to birds, animals and the Earth and Her Oceans by engaging in Quietly Being Exercises.
- To understand that conservation is using what we have and not wasting.
- To practice conservation as part of class projects, for example, using the other side of a piece of paper and recycling paper.
- To make their own learning materials as part of one activity.



- To decide as a group to do one or two things to help nature, and to carry through on the ideas.

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH
AND HER OCEANS LESSON 1
Simple Pleasures**

Begin with a song.

Introduce: “In the next few weeks we are going to learn about simplicity. Simplicity means valuing what is natural, what is simple. We will also learn about valuing our earth and her oceans. Today, I want you to think of things that are simple, things that are natural, things that you don’t have to buy. For example, a simple pleasure in life is enjoying a pretty flower, or getting a hug from someone who loves you.”

Discuss/Share

Some of the Simplicity Points are:

- ◆ Simplicity is natural.
- ◆ Simplicity is enjoying simple things.

Ask:

- What simple pleasures do you enjoy? (Perhaps singing, being read a story.)
- What are simple things you enjoy doing? (Help the children think of things they enjoy in their location, such as making throwing snowballs or making sand castles.)
- What simple things do you like to play with? (Please help them think of things they can play with in their location, such as making a fort out of discarded boxes, toys out of bamboo or puppets out of sticks.)
- What is a simple game you can play that doesn’t need anything you have to buy?

Activity

Play something simple, that doesn’t require buying anything or using anything mechanical. This could be enjoying a walk outdoors, lying on the ground outside and enjoying the clouds or the trees, playing a game, dancing together, etc.

Close with a Quietly Being Exercise if it wasn’t part of your activity.



Homework: Ask them to think of more simple things they like to do when they go home. Perhaps they can ask their parent/caregiver to do something simple with them such as reading them a story, or playing a game that they enjoyed as a child.

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH
AND HER OCEANS LESSON 2
Appreciating Trees**

Begin with a song.

Discuss/Share

➤ Ask about their homework from the last lesson.

Discuss the Simplicity and Caring for Our Earth and Her Oceans Points:

- ◆ Caring for Our Earth and Her Oceans is important.
- ◆ Our Earth is our home and the home of animals.
- ◆ Nature is beautiful.

Ask:

- What do you think is beautiful in nature?

Say, "One thing that is beautiful and natural is a tree." Talk about the beauty of nature and the importance of trees. For example, "Trees give us wood for our houses, oxygen for breathing, paper to write with, paper bags to carry things in, and wood for fires. Trees provide shelter for animals, too. Some trees give us food."

Ask:

- What fruits come from trees?
- What other foods come from trees? (Nuts, olives, etc.)
- What else do trees give? (Food for animals, materials to make boxes, etc.)

Activity

Step 1. Ask the children to pretend they are different kinds of trees.

Step 2. Go out to the playground or a park to enjoy the trees and collect different types of leaves. Or, make leaves with paper and crayons or paint.

Step 3. Invite each child to take a turn stating what type of tree he or she is and what this tree gives to animals and humans.

Step 4. Invite the children to wander around the space/classroom and wave their leaves as they interact with the other trees and pretend to give them shade or food.



Step 5. Ask: “As trees, do you have a message to give to humans?” “What is your message?”

Step 6. Enjoy a minute of sending love and appreciation to the trees.

Note to Educator: If you wish, make a tree trunk and a few branches on a wall, with flat paper or by twisting old brown wrapping paper. The children could pin their leaves to the tree. In later lessons, they can add cut-outs of birds and wishes for the world.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH

AND HER OCEANS LESSON 3

Helping Our Bird Friends

Begin with a song.

Tell the children that you are going to be telling them a story about taking care of our animal friends and the earth.

Share a Story: Rosa and David Help a Little Bird

Rosa gave a big yawn and stretched. Oh, what a pretty morning. She could see the blue, clear sky through her bedroom window. There was a fresh breeze dancing in her room and she could hear the leaves rustling in the tree outside. It was a morning to wake up and be happy.

She could smell the breakfast her Mama was making and was almost to the kitchen when she heard her big brother yell.

“Rosa, quick, bring me the scissors – outside!” yelled David.

“David?” called her Mama a little sternly.

“Please, Mama? A little bird is stuck!” yelled David.

Mama and Rosa went outside and there was David with a little bird in his hand. The bird had several long pieces of thread and yarn hanging from his foot and a piece of wire was attached to the little bird’s claw.

“He was caught in the tree!” David said. “With all this yarn and thread and stuff he got stuck. Do you think we can cut it off?”

“Why, it’s a Tern,” said Mama. She smiled at David.

Soon Rosa was holding the bird gently in her hand while David carefully cut off the yarn and the string.

“He looks scared,” Rosa whispered to David. “Don’t be scared,” she whispered to the bird. We like birds.”

“Okay, now the hard part,” said David softly. “I’m going to try and get the wire off.



The wire must have been there for a long time,” muttered David, “look, it’s hurt her claw.”



Part of the bird’s little claw was limp and just hung down. Rosa kept giving the bird love through her eyes and held it gently. It took a while for David to get off the wire. As soon as he was finished, Rosa opened her hand so her palm was flat and the Tern flew away.

It flew to a nearby tree and kept hopping from one branch to another, seeming surprised that it was free and not getting caught. Rosa and her brother just stood and watched happily to see the bird so happy, and then, much to their surprise, the little bird landed on a branch only two feet from them. It stretched out its neck and chirped and chirped and chirped at them.

“Wow,” said Rosa softly. “I think it is saying thank you.”

“Me too!” said David with an excited grin.

The little bird chirped for a whole minute, and then flew away.

“I’ll race you to the kitchen – I’m hungry!” yelled David.

“David,” said Mama after breakfast, “I want you to go to the little grocery store to get a couple of things, you know, the one with Mr. Ralph. You can take Rosa with you.”

“But, Mama, it’s Saturday,” said David with a little whine in his voice, “I have soccer!”

“You’ll be back in time to go to soccer,” smiled Mama. “But I want you to get a



couple of things for dinner. You're big now, you're seven. Take Rosa with you and take very good care of her. Don't leave her alone."



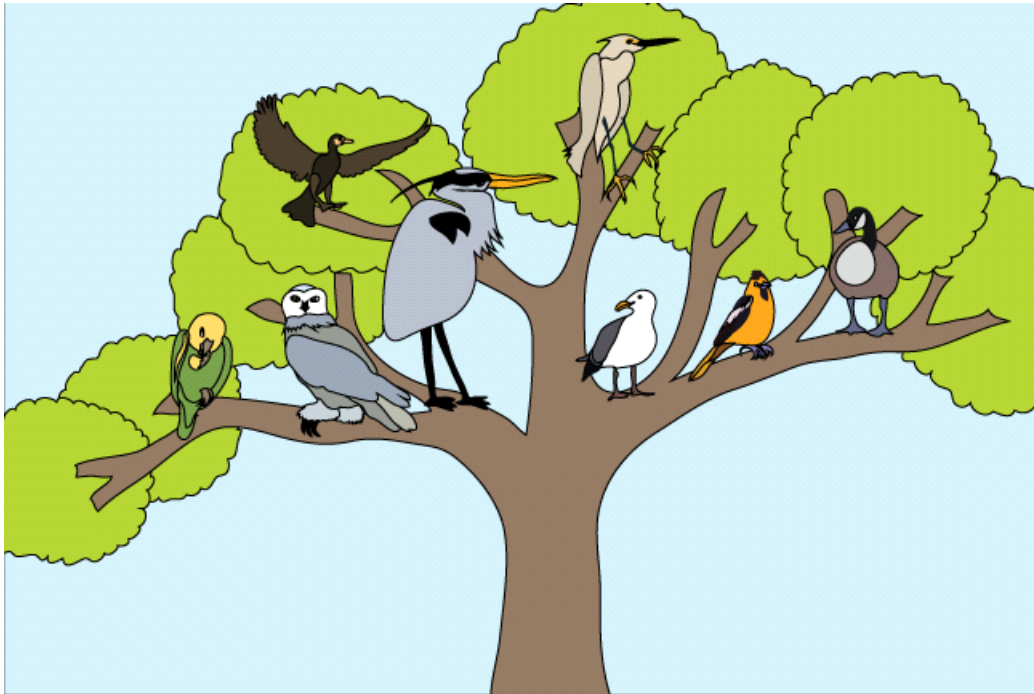
David smiled in relief. "I will," he said. He was a little proud inside. This was the first time Mama was going to let him go to the grocery store around the corner by himself. Rosa was only five, so she wasn't big enough to stay alone.

On the way to the store, a funny thing happened.

David was marching along, holding his little sister's hand as if he was very important. All of the sudden he stopped and stared with his mouth hanging open. He dropped her hand and pointed.

Rosa looked and saw the most unusual thing. There on this rather small tree right next to where they were walking, there were lots of birds.

Birds perching on a tree are very common. But usually when there are lots of birds on a tree, they are of one kind, like a flock of little finches that flutter away as soon as you're close. But, not on this tree! On this tree there was a very big gray bird with a big beak, and a very tall white bird with a long neck, and a green and yellow and purple parrot, and a medium-sized black bird, and a little yellow bird with black wings, and a squat white bird with pink feet and a funny bird with a big head and feathers all around a rather big head, and a big gray and brown and white bird that was fat with a long curved neck! The big fat gray and brown and white bird was so fat that it actually stood on the ground with its wide feet. They all seemed to be looking at Rosa and David. And, they were all quiet and they didn't move.



Except one. Right on a branch closest to them, there was a little bird that Mama had called a Tern. That little bird chirped at Rosa and then at David and then at all the birds in the tree. They all seemed to nod.

“Is that the little bird we helped this morning?” asked David slowly.

Rosa smiled a great big smile. “Yes, I think it is.”

Rosa and David stood and just looked and looked at the birds, and the birds just looked at them.

When David finally pulled Rosa away, she thought she heard the little Tern chirp, “Those are the two I told you about.” But that was impossible. Birds don’t talk.

Discuss

Say, “We’ll continue the story about Rosa and David at our next Living Values lesson.”

Ask:

- Do you like birds?
- What other animals do you like?
- Did Rosa and David know how to be gentle with a little bird?
- Why did cutting off the thread, yarn and wire off the little bird’s claw help it so much?
- What values did Rosa and David show?



- Rosa and David had love for the little bird. What does love feel like?
- How do we show love to animals?
- Have you ever helped a bird or another animal? (If yes, “Please tell me about it.”)

Activity Options

Provide the opportunity for the children to make birds out of paper or leaves. Some of them may wish to make one of the birds in the story or they may wish to make a picture of a local bird. The cut-out birds could be pinned to the tree, used to decorate the Peace Tent or hung from the ceiling with string.

End with the following Quietly Being Exercise. Please play some relaxation music.

Sending Love to the Birds and Animals, A Quietly Being Exercise

Slowly speak the following, pausing appropriately. “Sit comfortably and let yourself be still inside. . . . Let all your muscles relax. . . . Let’s pretend there is a soft rose-colored circle of light all around us. . . . That rose light is full of love. . . . This love is so soft and safe . . . the light reminds me that I am full of love inside. . . . Let yourself feel that rose light inside . . . be very still and think . . . I am me . . . I am naturally full of love. . . . That love naturally goes outward to the birds in the trees . . . and the birds flying in the sky . . . and to the animals large and small. . . . I am one who gives love and respect . . . I am one who has love and respect for animals. . . . I know how to be gentle. . . . Whenever I want to feel love inside, I can tune into the factory of love inside me and make lots more. . . . Now be aware of where you are sitting and bring your attention back to this room.”

Note to Educator regarding Preparation for the Next Lesson: Please plan to do some sort of ecological project with the children, such as an organic gardening project. Perhaps plant seeds in a small garden or plant seeds in individual cups inside the classroom. Think about if it would be best to plant flower or vegetable seeds. If there is not a little garden available, please make sure that you do not use Styrofoam containers to plant the seeds in, but recycle food containers or use natural materials such as paper or ceramic cups.



**SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH
AND HER OCEANS LESSON 4
Helping Our Animal Friends and the Earth**

Begin by singing a song together. Please choose a song about peace, love, respect or caring for the earth.

Share a Story: Rosa and David Find a Tree Full of Surprises

Rosa and David left the little grocery store around the corner from their home. David was feeling proud of himself. He found the two things his Mama needed for dinner, with just a little help from Mr. Ralph. Mr. Ralph had even smiled and said, “My, you are getting big, David, shopping all by yourself.”

David remembered to take Rosa’s hand on the way back home, carrying the little bag of groceries in his other hand.



Rosa skipped a little she was so happy. “Do you think the birds will still be there?” she said.

“No,” said David, “of course not. Birds don’t stay still that long.”

They slowed down when they got to the corner near the tree with all the birds, and Rosa started to tip-toe. What if the birds were still there? They didn’t want to scare them away. As soon as they turned the corner, they stopped suddenly. All the birds were still



there, and they were quiet! The birds looked at Rosa and David, almost as if they were waiting for them.

Rosa and David slowly approached the tree. Rosa smiled wider than she had ever smiled before. "Hello, little Tern," she said softly. "It's so nice to see you again."

"Hello," said the Tern. "It's lovely to see you. Thank you both for your help this morning."

"Did you just speak to me?" asked Rosa, shocked.

"Yes," said the little bird. "I've never spoken to a human in their language before, but I am today because we need your help."

All the birds on the tree, even the fat gray and brown one and the white one with the long curved neck that stood on the ground, solemnly nodded.

"Our help?" asked Rosa very surprised, "but we're just little children."

"Yes," said the little bird, "but you have good hearts and you know how to hear us."

"How can we help?" asked David hesitantly.

"Well," said the little Tern, "we birds are having a lot more troubles lately. We're getting hurt a lot more with all the trash. When the wire got caught around my foot, the thread and yarn got caught on that and then I would get caught on branches, and it would pull on my claw."



"That must have hurt," said Rosa softly.

The little Tern nodded.



The squat white bird with pink feet cleared his throat. "Squawk!" He cleared his throat again. "Squawk! Excuse me, I've never talked before . . . but I wanted to say that my brother got really hurt by a hook. It got caught in his cheek . . . and he died after a few weeks."

"I'm so sorry," said David. "You must have loved your brother."

The Western Gull nodded.

"We all have stories," said the big gray bird with the big beak in a deep voice.

"Are you a Blue Heron?" asked Rosa. "Our Mama has told us about Blue Herons."

"Yes, I think that is what you humans call me," said the big tall bird with a kind look in his eyes. "We all decided to come and talk to you because the animals and the Earth need your help."

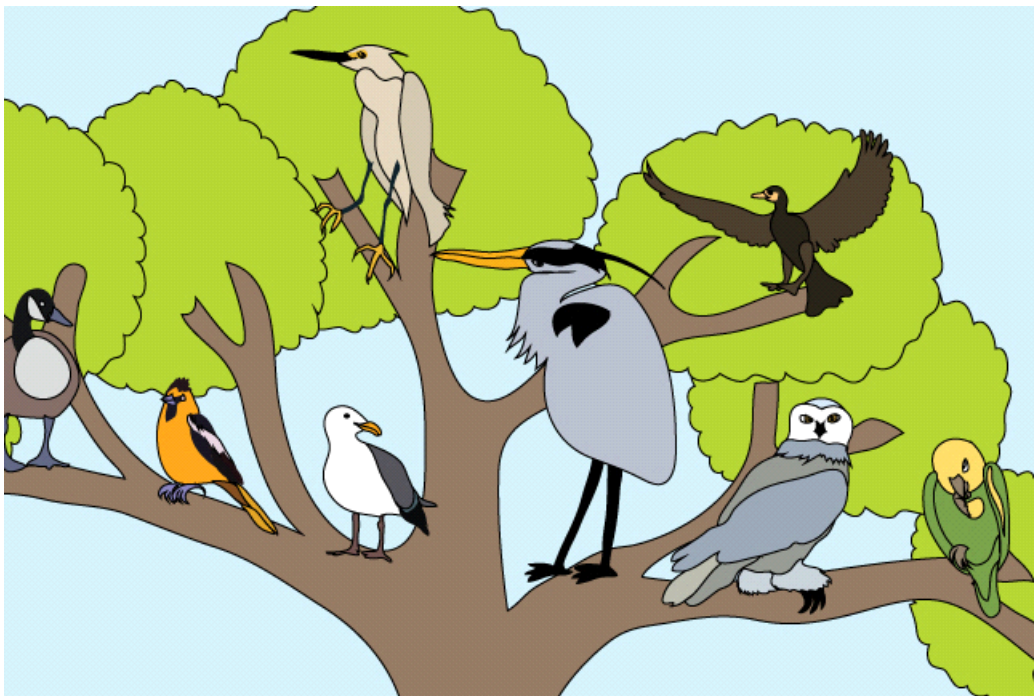
"The Earth?" said Rosa and David together.

"The animals are getting sick," nodded the Blue Heron, "and the Earth. The little Tern told the Earth that you were loving little humans, ones with good hearts. So, she agreed that we could talk to you."

"Wow!" said David.

"How can we help?" asked Rosa.

All the birds started talking at one. Such a gabbler you have never heard! They were so excited to be asked that they all started talking in their own languages! The squawks, chirps, shrills and quakes were quite loud!





“Shhhhh,” said the Blue Heron in his deep voice, “you’ll attract attention.”

All the birds instantly stopped.

“You tell them, little Tern,” said the Blue Heron, nodding encouragingly.

“Okay,” said the little Tern with a little chirp. “Our Earth and the animals are getting sick because the humans have forgotten about love and respect for each other, and us, and the Earth. Maybe it’ll be easier if I say it in a poem (or a song) ...?”

(Song: The Tern’s Song)

Be friends with each other,
Be loving and sweet,
To girls and boys and all you meet!
Be friends to the birds, the cats and the dogs,
The horses, the geese, the goats and the frogs,
Pick up your trash. . . .

Don’t pollute the water,
Don’t waste things please,
Don’t poison the ground,
the water, sky or trees . . .
Pick up your trash. . . .

Be a friend to each other,
All countries and groups,
Love and respect us animals,
And the Earth, too.
Recycle, don’t waste,
Pick up your trash....

Humans are powerful and smart,
But learn to be kind,
Then we’ll all live safely,
And have a wonderful glorious time!

The colors of the Earth will sparkle,
The meadows and flowers will bloom,
We birds will sing happily then,
And not be in a state of gloom!



Rosa and David applauded and the birds all flapped their wings in approval. Well, all but the Blue Heron.

He said in his deep voice, "Well done, little Tern." All the birds became very quiet. They all looked solemnly at Rosa and David and seemed to be waiting.

"I promise to help," said Rosa.

"Me too," said David.

Discuss

Ask the following questions, acknowledging their answers.

- Were Rosa and David surprised that the birds talked to them?
- Why did the birds want to talk to Rosa and David?
- How were the birds getting hurt?
- Have you ever seen a bird that was hurt?
- What can we do to help the birds?

Say, "Let's listen to the little Tern's poem (song) again." Please read the poem or sing it as a song.

Ask:

- What does respect mean?
- How can we respect each other?
- How can we respect all animals?
- How can we respect the Earth?
- What can you do to help the Earth?
- What can we do in our classroom?
- What can you do at your home?
- What can we do on the playground?

Help the children come up with practical ideas that they can do to be a Friend of the Earth. Write down the ideas in a simple way, perhaps using pictures as symbols. Select a couple that you can do in your class.

Activity

Implement one of the ideas. For example, if you don't yet have a trash can, trash box or place for recycling materials, perhaps now would be a good time to set one up. Children can also recycle sheets of paper by using the other side.



Begin an ecological organic gardening project with the children (or another ecological project). Perhaps plant seeds in a small garden or plant seeds in individual cups. Talk about how we can help our Earth by not littering and not putting poisons on the ground.

Close with the Quietly Being Exercise, Sending Love to the Birds and Animals.

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH
AND HER OCEANS LESSON 5
Being a Friend of the Earth**

Begin with a song. Please choose a song about peace, love, respect or caring for the earth or sing the poem of the Tern in the last lesson.

Share a Story: Rosa and David Help the Earth

Rosa and David waved goodbye to the birds and ran all the way home.

“Mama, mama!” they called out of breath when they opened the front door. Their words tumbled out as they told her what had happened.



Mama looked at them with surprise when they told her the story, then she looked puzzled. She sat silently for a while as though she was really thinking before asking, “Can you tell me the poem (song) again?”

Rosa and David tried to remember it all.



“Well, children, this is amazing,” Mama said. “How is this possible? I don’t understand, but I do know the words are truth. Our Earth is sick and the animals are having many troubles . . . and it is the fault of humans for some humans do hurt the earth and each other with violence and meanness and pollution and waste.”

“Will you help us then?” asked David.

“Please, Mama?” said Rosa.

So, Rosa and David and their Mama, gathered a little circle of their friends. Another family joined them with their children. Their Papa was really surprised when he came home from being away at his job and heard all the things they were doing!

They started to walk more and bicycle when they wanted to go somewhere close by instead of using the car or the bus. That made it easier to notice what was on the ground. Rosa asked Mama, “Maybe we can pick up trash when we see it?”

“We could carry a bag for trash!” said David.

“Great ideas,” said Mama. “Maybe we can especially pick up trash that hurts animals and the Earth.”



“Like styrofoam and fishing hooks and wires?” asked David.

“Yes, and plastic bags and trash near rivers and the ocean,” said Mama. “Sometimes animals in the sea are hurt by plastic bags.”

They stopped buying water in plastic bottles, because making all the bottles was wasting. It was taking from the Earth something that was unnecessary. Instead, they used one bottle and refilled it.



And they planted a little organic garden.

One day, Rosa and David were out in the garden. She and David had planted watermelon seeds and the green shoots were coming up. The sun shone on the green of the leaves, and on the red of the tomatoes that Mama had planted. Rosa whispered to the Earth, "See Earth, we're not using poison on you. We love you Earth ... and I love your flowers and the smells, and oh look how beautiful your sky is!"

David was digging in the dirt a few feet away. "Hey, these worms are happy. Look how many we're getting. Papa said they help the dirt be healthier."

Rosa and David loved being outside and playing in the garden. Mama and Papa were teaching them about the different kinds of birds and how to tell which kind they were from far away by watching how they fly.

Almost all of their classmates at school were helping pick up trash that could hurt animals or the Earth. And no one was littering. Mama and Papa said they could have a special picnic with their friends to celebrate picking the first vegetables from their organic garden.

The day of the picnic, Rosa and David were outside picking flowers and vegetables when David noticed a Blue Heron flying overhead.



"Look, Rosa, does that remind you of anything?"



Rosa laughed, and then gasped as the Blue Heron glided down, closer and closer and closer, and then landed just a few feet from her and David. The big bird nodded, just as a little Tern landed right in front of him.

“Little Tern and Blue Heron, is that you? Our friends?” asked Rosa.

David laughed and said, “I think so,” as the Blue Heron nodded solemnly and the little Tern seemed to dance as she happily hopped up and down.

And then as the little Tern chirped, Rosa and David heard very clearly, “Thank you for being good friends of the animals and the Earth.”

Discuss

Ask the following questions, acknowledging their answers.

- How do you think Rosa and David felt when the Blue Heron and the little Tern came to visit them to say thank you for being good friends?
- What things did the children do to help the animals?
- What things did they do to help the Earth?
- Were they showing respect to the Earth?
- What are you doing to help the animals and the Earth?

Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans Reflection Points:

- ◆ Caring for Our Earth and Her Oceans is important.
- ◆ We can all be Friends of the Earth by not littering.

Activity

Allow the children to paint or draw a picture of their favorite part of the story. Or they can draw a picture of what the world will look like when everyone learned to love and respect the animals and the Earth.

Allow the children who wish to do so to share their picture if there is time. Each one can hold up his or her picture and say a sentence or two.

End with the following Quietly Being Exercise. Please play some relaxation music.

Sending Love and Peace to the Earth, A Quietly Being Exercise

Slowly speak the following, pausing appropriately. “Everyone, please sit comfortably and let yourself be still inside. . . . Take in a big deep breath . . . and as you breathe out, relax your feet and your tummy and your shoulders. . . . Take in another big deep breath . . . and relax all your muscles. . . . Now let the light of peace surround you . . . breath in the light of peace. . . . This peace is quiet and safe . . . it reminds me that I am full of peace and love inside. . . . Let yourself be very still and



think . . . I am me . . . I am naturally full of peace and love. . . . When I am full of love it naturally goes outward to the birds in the trees . . . and the birds flying in the sky . . . and to the animals large and small. . . . I am one who gives love and peace . . . I let myself be full of peace . . . and that peace naturally goes outward to the Earth . . . to the rivers and ocean . . . to the trees and the meadows . . . to the mountains and the sky. . . . I am full of peace. . . . I picture the light of peace all around the Earth. . . . Now be aware of where you are sitting . . . wiggle your toes . . . and bring your attention back to this room.”

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH
AND HER OCEANS LESSON 6
Appreciating Nature – and Water**

Begin with a song.

Enjoy looking at the flower or vegetable seeds you have planted. Are they sprouting yet?

Discuss/Share

Ask, acknowledging and valuing their replies:

- Would anyone like to share about simple things you enjoyed doing at home or with your friends?
- Would anyone like to share how you were a Friend to the Earth?
- Let’s think about water for a minute. What do we use water for?
- Great. What else do people use water for?
- Do we need water every day?
- Do the seeds we planted the other day need water?
- What would happen if we didn’t give them water?
- Where does water come from? (From the ocean to clouds, from rain to rivers to us.)
- What happens if the water in the rivers is dirty (gets polluted)?
- How can we help the water stay clean?
- What other natural things are beautiful?

Continue the conversation with the natural things they bring up, ending with the note that nature provides us with simple but very important things.



Activity Options

Environmental Task: Do a task to help the environment, such as picking up trash from the playground or a river, or planting flowers.

Dance/Movement as Water: Or, invite the children to pretend they are water. Put on some music and invite them to move around the room and be water in the ocean, then as the sun shines its rays and is nice and hot, the water begins to rise up in the sky to be clouds. Continue your commentary, asking the water (the children) to come close together in a group so they have enough water to make rain. Then let them be rain, showering trees, flowers and rivers. Slow them down to be gentle rain as you near the end of your commentary until they are giving rain and peace to the Earth.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 7 Using Water with Care

Begin by singing a song about the heart or the poem the Tern sang.

Discuss

Simplicity Reflection Points:

- ◆ Caring for Our Earth and Her Oceans is important.
- ◆ We can all be Friends of the Earth by not wasting.

Ask:

- If you come inside after playing and getting really dirty, you would want to wash your hands. If there were no water, what would our life be like?
- Why do humans need water?
- What are some of the things we use water for? (Drinking, washing our food, washing clothes, putting out fires, etc.)
- What do animals need water for?
- What would happen if they did not have water?
- Why do plants need water?
- What would happen to nature and us humans if plants did not have water?

Say, "Yes, water is valuable. Humans and animals cannot live without water. If there were no water in the world, grasslands would turn to deserts, plants would wither, and animals could not survive. If there were no water in the world, we would be thirsty and



hungry, and could not live either. If there were no water, we could not do cleaning, and firemen could not put out fires. Water is important.”

Please read the following story submitted by Jiehua Kindergarten (author unknown) or another story about the importance of water.

Share a Story: The Tap that Cried

One day a mother in China cooked a delicious supper. When it was time to have supper, she called to her daughter, “Go and wash your hands!”

Xiaohong had already been ready for supper. She hurried to the tap, washed her hands in haste and ran to supper without truly turning off the tap. She was in such a hurry that she did not hear a thin sound crying, “Hey, little sister, you haven’t yet turned me off truly, how wasteful it is.”

In the evening, Xiaohong fell into a sound sleep, while the tap was still crying in a tiny voice. Xiaohong had a dream in which the tap came to her and said, “Little sister, you forgot to turn me off and made me cry for a whole night.”

Xiaohong woke up. She really heard the tap crying. Drip. Drip. Drip. Drip. She got up and ran to the tap and turned off the tap tightly.

From then on, the tap did not cry any longer, and Xiaohong always reminded other children to turn off taps tightly and to use water with respect and appreciation.

Discuss

Ask:

- Why did the tap cry?
- What did Xiaohong do at last?
- Where does tap water come from?

Inform the children about underground water pipes and reservoirs etc.

– Contributed by Jiehua Kindergarten

End with a Quietly Being Exercise, Sending Love and Peace to the Earth.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH

AND HER OCEANS LESSON 8

Mother Earth

Begin with a song.

Discuss the following Simplicity Point:



- ◆ Simplicity is learning from the earth.

Ask:

- What can we learn from Mother Earth?

Share a Story

Read a story. There are many wonderful stories about Mother Earth and the lessons she teaches. Enjoy one of those with the children, or pick one of the following stories which The Joy of Reading Project kindly gave their permission to post on the international LVE site, www.livingvalues.net. You will find it under For Schools /Children Ages 3-7/Download Free Stories/Simplicity.

“Mortimer’s First Garden” by Karma Wilson is suitable for children three through five or six. Mortimer, a little mouse, is quite excited about planting a seed. It is a wonderful story for children who are planting flower or vegetable seeds.

“A Caterpillar Grows Up”, adapted from The Family Finds Out by Edith Hunter, is a story about a little girl and her parents who watch a cabbage caterpillar grow into a butterfly. Perhaps you would like to allow the children the opportunity to watch that in your classroom.

“Anju and the Stream” by R. P. Subramanian, with illustrations by Tamal Basu, is suitable for six- or seven-year olds. It is tale of a stream being polluted by a factory and the owner and the villagers working together to stop the pollution.

Enjoy discussing the story you choose and perhaps creating an activity around it.

Close with the Quietly Being Exercise, Sending Love and Peace to the Earth.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH

AND HER OCEANS LESSON 9

Not Wasting – Conserving

Begin with a song.

Discuss/Share

- ◆ Simplicity is using what we already have.
- ◆ We can all be Friends of the Earth by not wasting.

Explain: One way we can be simple is by using what we already have and not wasting the earth’s material. Nature gives generously to us, and we must be careful so there will always be enough.



Talk about conservation. “Conservation means we don’t waste what nature gives us. We plant one or two trees when we use one, and we re-use the resources they give.

Ask:

- How can we conserve the things that come from trees in the classroom? (Paper, boxes, sticks)
- What kinds of things do people waste sometimes?
- What are other ways you can conserve?
- With your guidance, help the children pick one or two things you can do in the classroom to conserve.

Creative Activity

Make up a song or poem about conservation. The following poem points out that one way of conserving is not needing to have one of everything!

It’s okay to be simple,
It’s okay to be kind.
I love the earth –
I don’t need
one of every kind!

If you are in a community where the children have an abundance of things, perhaps talk to the parents and children about “recycling” some things to those in need.

Close with Sending Love to the Birds and Animals, A Quietly Being Exercise.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH

AND HER OCEANS LESSON 10

Making Our Own Learning Material

Begin with a song.

Awareness: We can create our own learning material in a simple way.

Activity

Ask the children to create their own number or alphabet books.

Three and Four Activity: The teacher will need to trace the numbers 1 through 5 or 1 through 10, each number on a separate piece of paper. The children can then put the corresponding number of happy faces or flowers or stars on those sheets of paper.



Five through Seven Activity: Think about what the children need or want to learn and create the opportunity for them to make a little booklet or visual aid. Or, small groups of children can create a poster. Perhaps some would like to learn the name of trees. They could put leaves on a paper with the name of the tree or label different pine cones, etc.

Close with one of the Quietly Being Exercises.

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH
AND HER OCEANS LESSON 11
Making Our Playthings**

Begin with a song. Perhaps use objects found in nature to make music to go with your song.

Awareness: When we play with simple things, we can be creative and use our imagination. We are also recycling by using those things again.

Activity

Place before the children during playtime cardboard boxes collected from the grocery store or fruit stand or other types of containers that are available free of charge. Children at ages three and four will often start playing spontaneously with the boxes, sometimes two or three squeezing inside one box and using another box as a lid, saying "This is our house." Or, they can pretend it is a train and sing, "The wheels on the train go round and round." They can make a tower, etc.

Close with a Quietly Being Exercise of your choice.

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH
AND HER OCEANS LESSON 12
Planting Trees**

Preparation: Let the children prepare by collecting containers for water, small spades, pieces of paper, saplings and so on.

Sing a song about the beauty of trees or nature.

Discuss

Tell the children that we need to help the environment by planting trees.



Say, “Trees help human beings as when we breathe out, the trees take our old air and make oxygen so we can breathe new air. Trees also help the Earth in other ways. They help the land stay moist and healthy and help the air by taking in some of the pollution and giving healthy air. Trees protect our environment.”

Planning: Tree-planting needs cooperation from several children. Several can help dig a hole. One person can hold up the sapling/tree, one can cover up the roots of the tree with earth, one can tread on the soil, and the last one could fetch the water and water the tree.

Key elements in cooperation: through the practice of planting trees cultivate the children’s sense of protecting the environment and guide them to have a better understanding of division of work and cooperation among partners.

Activity

Step 1. At the planting place, let the children find their own partners and cooperate in planting trees.

Step 2. Invite the children to draw or write their wish for the Earth on a small piece of paper and hang the papers on the tree.

Step 2. After the tree-planting, let the children in different groups sing the song “Saplings” while moving around the trees. Through this they can experience the joy of the cooperation in planting trees and express their hope to grow up with the trees together.

Note to Educator: The tree-planting can take the form of cooperation between parents and children.

Song: Saplings

The lovely saplings wear
colorful clothes and green hats.
We sing and they dance with us.
We grow up together under the sun.
We sing and they dance with us.
We grow up together under the sun.

– Contributed by the Jiehua Kindergarten



SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 13 **Shining Hearts**

Begin by singing a song.

Check with them about the seeds they planted and the trees. Do they need watering?

Tell them that today you want them to use their imagination to think about their hearts and taking care of nature.

Taking Care of Nature Visualization Exercise

Play some relaxation music and say, "Let's imagine that peoples' hearts are like tiny lights that turn on and off. . . . For a few minutes, close your eyes and imagine that you are walking slowly in a beautiful place ... perhaps through a meadow ... or in a beautiful forest ... perhaps a park. . . . What does it feel like to be there? ... Perhaps there is a fresh breeze ... perhaps there is a pretty lake. . . . What is the sky like? . . . Are there clouds? . . . Perhaps there is a little group of boys and girls your age that are doing things to help nature. . . . What are they be doing? ... Maybe this is a place where everyone knows how to take care of the Earth. . . . The people of this place have shining faces ... because their hearts are lit with light. . . . As you sit and relax with your eyes closed and still imagine yourself in that meadow or forest or park, I am going to tell you a secret. . . . When we are happy and act with love with our family and friends . . . when we are taking care of our beautiful planet ... not littering and not wasting water ... our hearts are bright. . . . They light up and shine. . . . Sometimes when nature is sad, we get sad too. . . . We are ones with shining hearts . . . ones that care for the Earth and Her Oceans. . . ."

Discuss

Sit in a circle with the students. Ask:

- Did you enjoy imagining? What did you imagine?
- How did you feel when you imagined yourself in beautiful place with other children that love nature?
- Is the tiny light of your heart on or off at this moment?
- What can we do here in school to help our planet?
- Can anyone think of anything else you can do?
- Discuss the practical things that they are already doing and help them understand why they are doing that. Look at the plants they have planted in their organic garden.



Activity

Friend of the Earth Social Skill: We are all learning how to be friends of the Earth by helping our planet. Sometimes you may notice things people are doing to help or hurt nature. If you know the person really well, you might want to say to them:

- ❖ The light of my heart is happy to see you helping our planet. Or,
- ❖ It's better for our Earth when we don't litter.

- Ask the children to pair up with another child and tell them one thing they like about how they are a friend of the Earth.

Artistic Activity: Ask students to draw or paint their heart when the light is on and when it is off. Or, finger paint a happy Earth.

– Contributed by Aldenora Uchôa

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 14 A Play and Our Message

Discuss/Share

Ask:

- What did you enjoy learning in the Simplicity and Caring for Our Earth and Her Oceans lessons?
- What did you enjoy doing in the Simplicity and Caring for Our Earth and Her Oceans lessons?
- Is there a message you would like to give to the Earth if you could?
- Is there a message you would like to give to all children about taking care of the Earth?
- Is there a message you would like to give to the adults?

Activity

Provide the opportunity to put on a play. They could act it out in class, or do it as a sharing with other classes or with their parents. Perhaps you could take the third Rosa, David and the Tern story and allow them to act it out, making simple head pieces as costumes. All the children could sing The Tern's Song. All the children could also give their messages at the end.





CHAPTER TWO: Activities for Children Ages Eight to Fourteen

Simplicity and Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans Lessons

Each value is important, but the importance of simplicity and taking care of our Earth and her oceans at this point in time is paramount as human demands on the planet's resources increase and global climate change imperils human existence.

Simplicity as a value is addressed in a few ways: enjoying the simplicity and beauty of nature, valuing the simplicity and wisdom of indigenous cultures, simplicity as precursor of sustainable development and simplicity as a way to reduce our material demands on the planet.

In relation to caring for our Earth and her oceans, *Green Values Club* has been used in this unit. The nine short chapters in *Green Values Club* and subsequent lesson content contain specific scientific information about the harmful effects of human actions on the ocean, rivers, animals, air and ground – and on human beings themselves. I feel part of the process of helping students be more aware of the importance of taking care of the Earth is experiencing love and respect for nature and her creatures and learning about specific ways they can be a friend to the Earth.

Green Values Club weaves in the values of love and respect, camaraderie and helping others, and the understanding that each one of us can make a difference. Cognitive understanding of the effects of one action is amplified through an explanation of systems thinking and students charting effects with flow charts and mind maps. Educators can help empower students to take positive action and do service-learning projects through the activity ideas presented. Please add your own ideas and help them do what is most needed in the local community.

If you would like more activities on sustainable development, you may be interested in looking at Lesson 13 in Chapter Three for Young Adults, Choosing and Carrying Out an Ecological Project.



Enjoy doing the activities with the students. We will be happy to post news of your projects, poems and songs in our newsletter or on the international website. You may email them to website@livingvalues.net.

Thank you for helping take care of our Earth.

Simplicity and Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans Reflection Points

- ◆ Simplicity is natural. Simplicity is being natural.
- ◆ Simplicity is learning from the earth.
- ◆ Simplicity is beautiful.
- ◆ Simplicity is relaxing.
- ◆ Simplicity helps create sustainable development.
- ◆ Simplicity is staying in the present and not making things complicated.
- ◆ Simplicity is enjoying a plain mind and intellect.
- ◆ Simplicity teaches us economy – how to use our resources wisely, keeping future generations in mind.
- ◆ Simplicity is giving patience, friendship, and encouragement.
- ◆ Simplicity is appreciating the small things in life.
- ◆ Simplicity is freedom from material desires and emotional desires – permission to simply “be.”
- ◆ Simplicity avoids waste, teaches economy, avoids value clashes complicated by greed, fear, peer pressure, and a false sense of identity.
- ◆ From simplicity grows generosity and sharing.
- ◆ Simplicity is putting others first with kindness, openness, pure intentions – without expectations and conditions.

Simplicity and Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans Goals and Objectives

Goal: To increase knowledge about and enjoy simplicity.

Objectives:

- To participate in discussions about the Simplicity Reflection Points and be able to talk about two or more.
- To express simplicity artistically.
- To enjoy observing simple things in nature during a walk.
- To discuss and write about the simple things they enjoy.



- ❑ To write a class play about rediscovering the simple things in life/nature.
- ❑ To participate in class discussions about the message behind selected advertisements and be able to generate an alternate “simplicity is natural” message in response.

Goal: To learn about the simple wisdom of indigenous cultures.

Objectives:

- ❑ To learn several ways in which indigenous cultures used resources wisely.
- ❑ To discuss the values within the cultural practices being studied.

Goal: To learn about the benefits of a healthy ocean and earth and scientific information about harmful effects of human actions on the ocean, rivers, animals, air, ground and human beings in order to build awareness of the importance of using earth-friendly practices which support sustainable development.

Objectives:

- ❑ To hear about the harm driftnets can cause marine animals.
- ❑ To learn that 50 to 70 percent of the oxygen we breathe comes from the ocean.
- ❑ To hear about a few of the benefits of kelp forests in the ocean.
- ❑ To understand how fertilizer-run-off and nitrogen pollution and pesticides kill the kelp and create dead zones in the ocean; to understand the meaning of dead zones and a few of the consequences.
- ❑ To learn about the negative effect of plastic and floating debris on marine mammals; to learn about the five huge ocean gyres of “toxic plastic soup”.
- ❑ To think of solutions and consider positive earth-friendly actions they can do so as not to contribute to the “toxic plastic soup”.
- ❑ To draw a large footprint on a piece of paper and inside write all the things that contribute to their carbon footprint; to think about the things they can do to reduce their carbon footprint.

Goal: To learn about simplicity and caring for the Earth and her oceans.

Objectives:

- ❑ To learn about simplicity as the precursor to sustainable development.
- ❑ To think of ways to conserve in the classroom, and to carry out at least two of those actions.
- ❑ To do one environment friendly project at the school or in the community.
- ❑ To use information being studied to carry out an environmental project in the community (for older students).



SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 1

Simple Art

Begin with a song. Perhaps play some beautiful flute music or music on an indigenous instrument. Or, if you have access, the students may enjoy the YouTube video of “The Circle of Life” by Elton John. The following version features Elton John singing it in his younger years and clips from the *Lion King*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IwH9YvhPN7c>

Introduce the value of Simplicity and write the following Reflection Points on the board:

- ◆ Simplicity is natural. Simplicity is being natural.
- ◆ Simplicity is beautiful.

Activity

Explore works of art, historical pictures, or magazines for examples of simplicity versus something gaudily or excessively adorned. Make a collage or picture that reflects simplicity. While the students are working, play a beautiful piece of music with a simple melody or a recording of the sounds of nature.

Or, collect a few leaves and make a beautiful picture with those leaves. Paint them, draw them, or place them under a piece of paper and color on top of them.

Close with a relaxation/focusing exercise of your choice.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 2

Learning from Indigenous Cultures

Begin with music or a song.

Purpose: To learn about and appreciate the indigenous wisdom of your heritage and the heritage of others. In ancient traditions, natural simplicity, wisdom, and respect for the earth were inherent in almost every practice. The needs of the people and the methods to satisfy those needs were simple and without waste. Look at the natural simplicity in the lives of your country's indigenous peoples or other indigenous cultures.

Introductory Content: Many indigenous cultures in Africa, the Americas, Australia, Asia, and the Pacific islands showed respect for the earth and its resources in their



gathering and hunting practices. For example, Native American Indian tribes were simple, economical, and wise in their use of plants and natural resources. Indians in the deserts of what is now California used each part of the ocotillo plant – the roots, leaves, and stem. They never overused resources and thus guaranteed there would be plenty. The Gwich'in Indians in the far north considered caribou reindeer to be their brothers. From the caribou, they made food, clothing, snowshoes, cooking vessels, and their houses. The Indians considered themselves to be rich, as they were warm, well fed, and had plenty of time for their arts and prayers.

Activity

Discover ways in which indigenous peoples have used resources by reading a story, visiting a museum or a library with an exhibit, or viewing a film. Invite members of the community who can share artifacts or crafts from your heritage.

Eleven to Fourteen Activity: You may wish to ask older students which indigenous cultures they are interested in exploring. Perhaps divide them into working groups to explore different aspects of one culture or several cultures.

You may wish to spend a couple of time periods on traditional wisdom.

Discuss the Reflection Points:

- ◆ Simplicity is learning from the earth.
- ◆ Simplicity teaches us economy – how to use our resources wisely, keeping future generations in mind.

Point out, or ask the students to explore, how the people of indigenous cultures were wise in doing this. Ask them which values are inherent in different practices.

Ask:

- Which aspects of their wisdom do you think it would be beneficial to practice in today's world?

Ask students to draw and write about the results of their investigation. They could do an art project, duplicating something from their heritage or the heritage of others. Younger students could make a clay model and tell their parents about it when they bring it home. In preparation for the at-home presentation, ask students to tell you their points about the object and its history. Tell them to write their points on the board and to practice with a peer partner before they take the object home.



Older students working in small groups could make posters or displays of their findings.

If possible, play music from the indigenous culture students are studying and ask them to use images from that culture to create a relaxation/focusing exercise.

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 3
A Nature Walk**

Begin with a song.

A nature walk easily offers the experience of the following Simplicity Reflection

Points:

- ◆ Simplicity is natural.
- ◆ Simplicity is beautiful.
- ◆ Simplicity is relaxing.
- ◆ Simplicity is appreciating the small things in life.

Activity

Take a walk in a nearby park or forest or go on a field trip to a botanical garden or the seashore. For 15 minutes of your time there, walk in silence. Observe the simple things: the light on the leaf, a tree, a small flower, a bird, or whatever element of nature you notice. Lie under a tree and watch the leaves. For a few minutes, simply be an observer, free from desires.

When you return, write a poem as though it were from part of nature. For example, a poem from the tree to you, a poem from the bird to the class, or . . .?

Homework: Give the students Simplicity-Is-Relaxing and Simplicity-Is-Not-Making-Things-Complicated homework. Ask them to spend five minutes every day for one week relaxing. They may wish to focus on a tree, a flower, or a light or lay on their back and enjoy observing the sky. Focus on the beauty of what is natural. Know that the natural you is beautiful.

Close with a relaxation/focusing exercise or play relaxing music and invite those who wish to do so to each share one word, phrase or sentence about nature.



SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 4
Simple Things in Life that Mean so Much

Begin with a song.

Discuss/Share

Talk about the simple things in life that mean so much. Invite the children to share the simple things in their life which they enjoy.

A Tiny Drop of Water Creative Visualization

Inform the children that you will be asking them to imagine that they are a tiny drop of water taking an imaginary journey inside a plant. This is to appreciate one of the simple things in life that we often take for granted.

Guide the children gently through the visualization as suggested below:

“Close your eyes. . . . You are a tiny drop of water. . . . You rain on the plant. . . . You drop onto a colorful rose – what does it feel like, smell like? . . . You go inside the rose and down the stem – what does it look like, feel like? . . . Can you see the sunlight coming through? What do you see? . . . You reach the root. It’s dark! What do you feel and smell? . . . You go out of the root into the soil. It’s dark! What do you feel and smell? . . . A bird pecks the ground and lifts you into its beak. As it flies up, it drops you on top of the same rose. You go to the favorite part of the rose. Where is it? . . . Wriggle your toes and fingers. . . . Open your eyes. . . . You are now back in the classroom.”

Ask them to share about their journey. Their experiences will all be different. Accept all answers as correct.

Activity

Invite the children to create a storyboard with four to eight pictures, or a poem, or a creative story about the “Journey of a Drop of Water”. Invite them to share the stories.

Reflection: Let’s all appreciate the simple things in life that mean so much to us and we sometimes take for granted.

Other visualization stories could include:

A walk through the park.

What a bird sees through its eyes.



What a dolphin sees through its eyes.
The journey of water from liquid to ice to liquid to steam.

– *Contributed by Peter Williams*

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 5 **The Ocean**

Educator Preparation: If there is internet capacity at your setting, you may wish to show the students a video of a humpback whale being saved from a fisherman’s net. It is suggested that the video be shown after reading the following story.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eG0cWYsfvKo>

Begin with a song.

Share that simplicity is that value that helps us create sustainable development. Sustainable development means using the Earth’s resources wisely, with the needs of future generations in mind. Tell them that you’ll be doing some Living Green Values lessons together about the environment and taking care of our animal friends, ourselves and the Earth and her Oceans.

Please read the following story to the class. The Green Values Club has nine chapters.

Share a Story: Out in the Dinghy

Katie felt worried when she woke up, not at all like her usual cheerful self. The sky was gray through the window. She pulled on her robe and slipped down to the kitchen. She could smell the coffee her mother was brewing. She hugged her mother from behind and asked, “Is Papa home yet?”

Her mother’s tired face answered her as she turned around. “I’m sure he’s fine, Katie. They’ve been late getting in before.”

“Not this late.”

“I know.” Mama gave her a quick hug.

George ran into the kitchen, yelling, “Is Papa home yet?”

Their silence answered.

“Oh.” George slid into a chair, looking dejected.

“Come, let’s have breakfast,” said Mama, “and try not to worry. Your Dad is very smart and his partner is a good one.”



“But it’s not even stormy, it’s just overcast,” protested Katie. “So why is the boat so late?”

“Unusual things can happen at sea,” said Mama. “Let’s just trust that all is well, and keep praying.”

They said a prayer for Papa and Hector before eating breakfast.

“I got a special feeling just now,” said Katie, “that Papa is all right.”

“You know, I did too,” said Mama. Her smile was full of relief. “But, since we’re all a little worried, let’s stay together today. It’s early. Let’s do a few chores quickly and then I’ll go out in the dinghy with you.”

“You’ll go out with us, Mama?” said George, shocked.

“I’m not as old as you think, George. I bet I can still swim faster than you and I’m sure I’m still good with an oar,” laughed Mama.

“That I would like to see,” laughed Katie. “Are you still a faster swimmer than me?”

“I don’t know,” smiled Mama, “you’re growing up so fast, but I can still swim faster than a nine-year old,” she said as she tousled George’s hair.

It was fresh and bright by the time they got down to the dinghy. Katie and George were good rowers. Soon they were on their way out, enjoying the fresh air and the sparkle of the light on the blue of the water. The light shone like diamonds on the sea and an occasional splash from the oars shone through the air, landing on them to make them laugh.

Katie knew they were all watching for Papa’s boat. As they rowed past the little island all of the sudden she saw it, “Look, look, it’s Papa’s boat!”

They waved and called and waved and called. Finally, they were close enough for Papa to hear them. Papa came to the side of the boat and gave them a huge smile.

“Welcome! Am I glad to see you!” he called. “Be careful. Come up closely and avoid the flukes!”

The flukes? And then they noticed! Next to Papa’s boat was a whale! It was so low in the water they hadn’t noticed it.

“Am I glad you’re here,” Papa repeated. He gave them all a special hug as they climbed on board.

Papa and his partner looked really tired. Papa began to tell them the story. He had noticed a whale in the water as they were coming in at sunset the night before. “Hector and I almost didn’t notice it,” he said. “When we did see it, we thought it was dead as it was so still and just floating. Then it finally took a breath. It’s caught in a net. The net was so heavy that it was dragging the whale down. It’s even wrapped around the flukes.”



Katie and George looked in awe at the whale. It looked like a young one, an adolescent – it didn't have many barnacles on him. But it sure was big, maybe 12 meters long.

"So," Papa continued, "at sunset we rigged a line to lift some of the weight of the net off the whale and help him stay afloat, but we had to wait until daylight till it was safe to start cutting the net off."

Papa looked at Mama, "I'm so sorry, Lisa, not to have been able to tell you. I knew you would worry, but hoped you could tune in and know I was safe. I just couldn't let the whale die."

"And that's one of the reasons I love you," Mama smiled.

Papa and Hector had been taking turns since daylight getting in the water to cut the strings of the net. It was a commercial net with strong nylon. Papa was thankful that they were there with the dinghy. There was a lot of net to cut and they could use some help. It would be safer and faster to cut from the little boat.

So, Katie and George and Mama all got a chance to help. One of them would keep the dinghy steady from the rear with an oar and the other two would cut at the net, string by string. Papa jumped back in the water to cut near the tail. Papa wouldn't let them go near the flukes.

The whale seemed to understand what they were doing. Katie noticed that his eye was watching them. She reached over to pat him. "You've going to be okay," she said as she rubbed his skin.

"We've worked so hard the last three years to get fisherman to stop using driftnets since it's been banned in this area," said Papa. "It looks like someone out there doesn't care about whales, dolphins or our ecosystem."

They worked hard for a couple of hours. Mama called, "The net is ready to fall away from the head now."

"Great," called Papa. "The middle section is already cut. I think I can ease the net off the flukes. Katie, he seems to like you patting him and looking at him. Keep doing that. We need him to stay still."

"Hector, are you ready to pull the net off?" Hector was poised near the pulley on the large boat.

Katie, George and Mama stayed at the whale's head and patted him, as Papa carefully eased the cut net off one side of the flukes.

"Okay," called Papa, "back away slowly. Stay peaceful."

George backed the dinghy away from the whale as Papa swam to the side of the boat. Hector began to use the pulley to haul away the cut net from the whale.



The whale started to move his head and tail, and the line holding part of the net from the boat eased the cut net off the middle part of the whale and the rest of the tail. All of the sudden the whale seemed to realize it was free and took off!

“Hooray,” shouted George and Katie.

They all cheered as the whale swam away. When the whale was out about 200 meters it curved around toward them and began to rise in the air, right out of the water. It breached again and again as though it wanted to tell them something special.

George said softly, “I think he’s very happy and saying thank you.”

Katie, Mama, Papa and Hector laughed. “I think you’re right,” they chorused.

Discuss

- Have you ever heard a story before of a whale being caught in a net? (Say, “Yes, this is something that happens. Unfortunately, many dolphins and whales are caught in nets every year and die. Occasionally, people have found them in time and have been brave and caring enough to set them free. Driftnets are banned in some areas but not in others.”)
- What values did Papa and Hector demonstrate?
- What values did Katie, George and Mama show?
- Would you want to help a whale or a dolphin if one was stranded? If “yes”, why?
- What value do you have that makes you want to help?

➤ Show a video of a whale being freed, if possible.

Lesson Content – Information about the Ocean

Source: The following excerpts were taken from the website of One World One Ocean. <http://www.oneworldocean.org/pages/why-the-ocean>

The ocean is Earth's life support.

- ❖ 50 to 70 percent of the oxygen we breathe comes from the ocean. That's more
 - than every one of the world's rainforests combined.
- ❖ The ocean is the #1 source of protein for more than a billion people. Sea life provides one-fifth of the average person’s animal protein intake.
- ❖ The ocean regulates our climate, absorbs carbon dioxide, holds 97% of Earth's water, and supports the greatest abundance of life on our planet.



- ❖ More than 60% of the world's population lives on or near the coast. The ocean provides a livelihood, recreation, beauty, wonder, and untapped scientific discovery, leading to new medications, foods, and advanced technologies.
- ❖ Everyone, everywhere depends on a healthy sea.

Discuss/Explore

Reread the first section, “The ocean is Earth’s life support”, from the *One World One Ocean* information above. Then ask:

- Have all of you been to the ocean?
- What do you like about the ocean? (If they have not been to the ocean, ask what they think they would like about it.)
- Do you know how the ocean provides 50 to 70 percent of the earth’s oxygen?

Share the following information:

Source: <http://earthsky.org/water/how-much-do-oceans-add-to-worlds-oxygen>

Scientists agree that there’s oxygen from ocean plants in every breath we take. Most of this oxygen comes from tiny ocean plants – called phytoplankton – that live near the water’s surface and drift with the currents. Like all plants, they photosynthesize – that is, they use sunlight and carbon dioxide to make food. A byproduct of photosynthesis is oxygen.

Say, “There are beautiful kelp forests in the ocean. They are phytoplankton and are essential for the health of the ocean, humans and animals as they provide much of the oxygen we breathe. They also provide food and shelter to thousands of species. Kelp forests also help to purify the ocean’s water.

The health and well-being of human beings depends on the well-being of the ocean, the marine life and the earth. The kelp forests’ well-being depends on the actions of humans.”

Activity Options

Choose one of the activities below, in accordance with the age of your students and what is available.

Eight to Fourteen Activity: Watch one of the *One World One Ocean* films, if possible, by MacGillivray Freeman Films to help students experience the amazing beauty of the ocean and the importance of protecting our ocean. There is a 3D film about the ocean,



another on humpback whales. *To the Arctic* is amazing. Or, watch another film about the beauty of the ocean. (<http://www.macgillivrayfreemanfilms.com>)

Eight-year-old Activity: Invite the students to draw a picture from the story, or draw a picture of what they like about the ocean.

Nine to Eleven Activity: If you have access to the internet, google Kelp Forests and enjoy the beautiful pictures and the information that is provided on many sites.

Twelve to Fourteen Activity: Invite students to study kelp forests with the aim of experiencing their visual beauty and understanding what helps them to thrive.

Close with a relaxation/focusing exercise.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 6 **How Trash Effects Marine Animals**

Begin with a song.

Ask how they are and if they have been thinking about the last lesson. Allow them time to share their thoughts. Listen and acknowledge.

Please read Chapter Two of the *Green Values Club* below.

Share a Story: Circling the Seagull

It was amazing to watch the whale they had just saved jump into the air again and again. He continued to breach, the sun glistening on sheets of water that came up into the air with him and splashed even wider as he landed. The whale seemed to be performing for them – communicating his joy at being free and alive.

Papa and Hector used the pulley to haul the huge net into their 15-meter boat. “Wow, this is heavy,” said George as he helped.

“Many nets are more than a mile long,” said Papa. “So many animals get caught in them, and they kill many kinds of fish that the fishermen are not trying to catch. The use of driftnets must stop, it’s depleting the ocean, hurting the environment and actually ruining the fishermen’s trade in the long run.”

“I’m so glad you saw the whale in time,” said Katie.

Papa gave her a wide grin, “Me, too.”

When the net was on board so it couldn’t do further harm, Mama said, “Katie and George, do you want to take the dinghy in and enjoy a swim? Or shall we tie it to the boat and haul it in? I think your Papa’s going to want to rest when he gets home. Yes, Luke?”



“That would be great,” said Papa. He did look worn out.

“George, I want to row in and go for a swim. How about you?” asked Katie.

“Sounds terrific!” yelled George. “I’ll beat you to the dinghy! Bye, Papa,” he called as he gave him a quick hug and started over the side of the big boat. “Bye, Mama, bye Hector!”

Katie gave Papa and Mama a hug. “Is a couple of hours, okay, Mama?”

“Yes, enjoy,” said Mama.

“You two were a great help,” called Papa over the side of the boat as Katie and George began to row away in the dinghy.

Papa’s boat soon overtook them and in ten minutes they saw it dock.

“Shall we swim at Blue Cove?” asked George.

“Great,” said Katie. “And am I glad we packed a lunch!”

“Double hooray,” said George, “I’m famished.”

The beach wasn’t too crowded and soon George found a few friends to body surf with while Katie took a long swim.

“Gosh, there’s a lot of trash around today,” said George, kicking away a couple of cans and a pile of bottle tops and plastic bottles mixed with seaweed as they found a sandy spot under a tree.

“The beach looks ugly with all this trash. Maybe some of it came down the river with the rain a couple nights ago,” Katie said as she unpacked their lunch.

“As Mama would say, people just don’t realize how important it is to not trash our world,” said George. “Papa would be upset if he saw how it looks today.”

“Yeah, I’ve never seen it look so bad,” said Katie.

As they began to devour their apples and sandwiches, a few gulls flew in, interested in their food.

“Look at that gull,” said Katie, pointing. One was hopping awkwardly near the tree. His head would jerk down as he stepped on a tattered plastic bag wrapped around its head and a leg. One wing was lower than the other.

“Poor thing,” said George. “Wow, looks like that bag has been around him for a long time.”

“And look how skinny he looks,” said Katie, “think we can catch him and take it off so he’ll be free?”

“Hey,” said George, “think I can creep up on him?”

As fast as George was, the bird kept managing to get away, half walking, half flying.

“Let’s borrow a towel from someone,” suggested Katie.

“Maybe my friends can help,” said George.



Soon there were five of them. "Let's make a very big circle around him," suggested Katie, "and pretend not to notice him. They spread out and made a big circle around the gull.

"Stay peaceful," called George softly.

"Start to move in," called Katie softly. She was ready with the towel. As they circled in, Katie was soon close enough to throw the towel over the bird.

"Got it," yelled George, diving to secure one end of the towel as one of his friends secured the other end.

The boys watched as George and Tom held the protesting gull and Katie carefully took the tattered plastic bag off.

"Its wing is hurt," said Tom.

"Yes," said Katie, "looks like we'll have to take him home and see what Mama can do."

"You're lucky you got a Mom that knows how to do that," said Tom.

Katie gave him a smile. "She's great. Thanks for your help, guys."

It was tricky to row from Blue Cove to the dock with only one rower, but Katie and George took turns rowing and holding the gull.

"I think I'm as tired as Papa now," sighed George, "but what a day!" His smile was as wide as Katie's.

Discuss/Explore

- Have you ever helped a bird that was hurt? (Listen to and acknowledge their stories.)
- What values did Katie and George demonstrate?
- The seagull in the story was hurt by trash, in this case a plastic bag. What other kinds of things discarded by humans can hurt animals?
- What was the whale hurt by?

Say, "Some people don't understand the harmful effect that trash created by humans has on marine life, animals and our world. Let's look at some information about animals in and near the ocean."

Lesson Content

Please read the following information.

Source: Dolphin Research Center's website,

http://www.dolphins.org/marineed_threatstodolphins.php



The Pollution Problem

Marine debris is anything from a discarded sandwich bag to a lost fishing net. Every ocean in the world is littered with some form of debris, which resembles food for marine life. Many animals accidentally **eat** marine debris causing internal injury, intestinal blockage, and starvation.

Getting tangled up in floating debris is another serious and growing problem for marine mammals.

(Note to Educator: Please read the following two sentences only to students that are 12- to 14-years old.) Entanglement is an especially serious threat to young marine mammals that tend to be curious and careless. Once a young animal becomes entangled, it dies a slow and painful death as its growing body is restricted by debris.

At least 43% of all marine mammal species and 44% of all seabird species become entangled in or ingest marine debris each year. Some of these include the most endangered marine species in U.S. waters: Hawaiian monk seals, hawksbill and green sea turtles, West Indian manatees, and right whales.

Almost everything we use has the potential to become marine debris, from the bottle of milk in the refrigerator to the refrigerator itself. The largest source of marine debris is runoff from land-based sources, such as storm sewers and parking lots. That means that the garbage we create each day is most likely what will end up in the oceans affecting dolphins, whales, and other marine life.

Activity

Say, "There are a lot of problems on our Earth caused by people that don't pick up their trash. In the two stories you heard about nets and plastic bags causing problems. Nets cause death to many whales and dolphins every year. Let's fill in the columns for the story we just heard and then name some other 'trash'."

Draw four vertical lines on the whiteboard, making four columns with the following headings.

1. TRASH	2. PROBLEM(S)	3. SOLUTION(S)	4. VALUES TO NOT CREATE TRASH
Plastic bags			



Ask:

- What kinds of trash do people leave on the shores of the ocean?
- What kinds of problems does that cause?

The educator will need to repeat the above two questions several times in order to have them create a list of some of the major kinds of trash and the problems it causes. This is also true for the questions below.

Ask:

- What kinds of trash do people leave in rivers and lakes?
- What kinds of problems does that cause?
- What kinds of trash do people leave on the land?
- What kinds of problems does that cause?
- What kinds of trash do you see around here?
- What would it look like without that?
- What would you like to see instead?

Divide students into small groups and allow them to fill in columns three and four for the different kinds of trash.

Ask each group to share:

- What solutions did you think of?
- What value or values would help create that solution? (For example, respect for the ocean, respect for animals, etc.)
- What would you like to see instead?

Close with a song about the beauty of nature or a relaxation/focusing exercise.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 7 **Ocean Gyres**

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature. Ask how they are and if they have been thinking about the last lesson. Allow them time to share their thoughts and any related actions. Listen and acknowledge.

Vocabulary word: You may need to define a gyre before the story if the students are not aware of this word. Our oceans are dynamic systems, made up of complex networks of currents that circulate water around the world. Large systems of these currents,



coupled with wind and the earth's rotation, create "gyres", massive, slow rotating whirlpools. There are five major gyres in the oceans of the world in which plastic trash has accumulated. (Source: <http://5gyres.org>)

Please read Chapter Three of the *Green Values Club* below.

Share a Story: Toxic Plastic Soup

Katie and George took turns carrying the gull home after they tied the dinghy next to Papa's boat.

"He's heavier than he looks," panted George.

"I'll take him for a while," Katie replied, holding out her arms for the gull.

Papa and Mama were at the kitchen table when they got home. "Still hungry?" asked Papa. "You both did a lot this morning."

George and Katie told their story as they sat at the table while Papa poured some yummy smelling soup into two bowls.

Mama had taken the gull into her lap and was gently examining its wing. "He's had a rough time with that plastic bag, it looks like. Besides being underweight, it looks like he has a broken wing."

Mama soon had gauze tape wrapped around the gull to hold the broken wing still. "He should be almost as good as new in two or three weeks, unless he's been eating plastic," she said. "George, can you find a big box for him?"

"The beach was full of trash today," said Katie, "more than I've ever seen. Plastic caps and bottles, plastic cups, straws and bags, food wrappers, Styrofoam cups, soda cans — it was terrible."

Papa frowned. "People!" He said it like a swear word.

"Papa, you sound more upset than usual about the trash," said George, bringing in a big cardboard box.

"Yeah, I am," said Papa. "Here, let me give you a hand." He grabbed a knife and helped George cut the top of the cardboard box for the gull.

"I've known for years that sea birds, dolphins, whales, seals, sea turtles and many marine animals get caught in nets, fishing wire and human trash, but I just learned last week that *over 40 percent* of marine mammals and seabirds get entangled in human trash or eat marine debris. When they eat plastic trash it causes internal injury, intestinal blockage and starvation. I had no idea the percentage of animals being hurt was that high."

"And the gyres in the ocean are growing," said Mama softly. "There are now five huge gyres in different parts of the world where the plastic trash is accumulating. The



plastic breaks down into small pieces over time and the animals are mistaking it for food and eating it.”

Papa and George had finished cutting off the top of the box. The family went outside with the box, Katie cradling the gull. The gull seemed to know it was being cared for. It had stopped squawking when Mama immobilized his broken wing. It was bright and beautiful outside, with a soft breeze. The trees gave some needed shade to the patio.

“You’re going to be just fine,” said Katie as she and George petted the gull. Katie brought some food for the gull and George brought some water. They were happy to see the gull eating. They arranged the box so the gull was safe, putting a heavy grill over the box and anchoring it with four stones so a cat couldn’t get him.

“What can we do about it?” Katie asked.

“About what?” said Mama.

“About the animals getting all entangled and the gyres.”

Papa and Mama looked at her and then at each other.

“You know, Katie, you and George are terrific about not trashing our world, and your Papa and I shop carefully, but I think it’s time to think more and do more and spread the word. Our Earth, our ocean, is in trouble.”

“I want to help,” said George.

“Great,” Mama smiled. “I think not being a litterbug is important and our family never uses Styrofoam which is full of toxins, but it’s time to do much more than that. We need to not buy things that harm the Earth. What’s creating the gyres in the ocean is plastic. Some of them are thousands of miles by thousands of miles – it’s like toxic plastic soup! The North Pacific Gyre is twice the size of the United States.”

“How about we don’t buy plastic?” asked George.

“Well, not buying any plastic is not practical,” said Mama slowly. “A lot of things are made of hard plastic, like computer keyboards, games and certain car parts. We can recycle those things when they get old – and buy fewer things. It’s mostly the one-use disposal plastic that is the problem. So not buying that is a great idea. If we really try we could probably cut buying one-use disposable plastic things by at least 90%.”

“Do you mean like plastic cups, plastic straws, plastic bags and water in plastic bottles?” asked Katie.

“Exactly,” said Mama.

“That’s going to be a little hard,” said George. “Does that mean no sodas in plastic bottles?”

“Yes. Can you do that?” asked Papa with a questioning look.

George winched. “Maybe for the gulls and the seals and the dolphins I could.”



“And we could bring our own cloth shopping bags to the store,” said Katie. “We could use a glass bottle or metal bottle when we want to bring water somewhere and we could use it over and over again.”

“Terrific idea,” said Mama. “And I could shop locally at Farmers Markets and try to not buy food wrapped in plastic. And we can wash our sandwich bags and reuse them, or use waxed paper or banana leaves.”

“Your mother and I have been talking about this a lot the last few days,” said Papa. We’re going to see if the city council will ban plastic bags and plastic straws. Would you like to come to the city council meeting with us?”

“Maybe some of our friends could come too,” said Katie.

“Wow,” said George, his face lighting up, “what if everyone did this? Maybe we could stop the gyres growing. Toxic plastic soup does not sound good for animals or the ocean. What do you think Mr. Gull?” he asked, looking at the seagull.

Did the seagull just nod in approval?

Discuss

- Why do you think the father was so upset in the story?
- What are some of his values?
- What ideas did the family come up with to help not create more toxic “plastic soup” in the gyres?
- How could you help to not create more “toxic plastic soup” in the gyres?

Lesson Content

Please share some or all of the following content with students, adapting it to their age and level of understanding.

Source: <http://5gyres.org>

Just two generation ago, we packaged our products in reusable or recyclable materials – glass, metals, and paper, and designed products that would last. Today, our landfills and beaches are awash in plastic packaging, and expendable products that have no value at the end of their short lifecycle.

The short-term convenience of using and throwing away plastic products carries a very inconvenient long-term truth. These plastic water bottles, cups, utensils, electronics, toys, and gadgets we dispose of daily are rarely recycled in a closed loop. We currently recover only 5% of the plastics we produce. What happens to the rest of it? Roughly 50% is buried in landfills, some is remade into durable goods, and much



of it remains “unaccounted for”, lost in the environment where it ultimately washes out to sea.

In the ocean, some of . . . plastics . . . and foamed plastics float on the oceans’ surface. Sunlight and wave action cause these floating plastics to fragment, breaking into increasingly smaller particles, but never completely disappearing – at least on any documented time scale. This plastic pollution is becoming a hazard for marine wildlife, and ultimately for us.

The North Pacific Gyre, the most heavily researched for plastic pollution, spans an area roughly twice the size of the United States – though it is a fluid system, shifting seasonally in size and shape. Designed to last, plastic trash in the gyre will remain for decades or longer, being pushed gently in a slow, clockwise spiral towards the center. Most of the research on plastic trash circulating in oceanic gyres has focused on the North Pacific, but there are 5 major oceanic gyres worldwide, with several smaller gyres in Alaska and Antarctica.

We must demand zero tolerance for plastic pollution. Reducing our consumption and production of plastic waste, and choosing cost-effective alternatives will go a long way towards protecting our seas – and ultimately ourselves.

Activities

Eight to Eleven Activity: Show the students pictures of the gyres. There are many websites on this subject. Ask the students what messages the marine mammals and birds might wish to give to human beings. Divide them into small groups and have them create a poster with their message. They may wish to role play being the animal and giving the message.

Twelve to Fourteen Activity: Show the students pictures of the gyres. There are many websites on this subject. If there is time, allow the students to divide into small groups to further research this topic, such as the effects of Styrofoam and how plastic particles in the ocean “act as sponges for waterborne contaminants such as PCBs, DDT and other pesticides, PAHs and many hydrocarbons washed through our watersheds.” (Same source as cited above.) Then allow the students to create posters with their message.

Sending Peace to the Earth Relaxation/Focusing Exercise

Say, “Please sit comfortably and let yourself be still inside. . . . Relax the body and breathe in the light of peace. . . . Let the light of peace surround you Breathe out any tension . . . and breathe in the light of peace. . . . Breathe out any tension . . . and



breathe in the light of peace. . . . This peace is quiet and safe . . . it reminds me that I am peaceful inside. . . . Let yourself be very still and think . . . I am me . . . I am naturally full of peace and love. . . . Let your body relax even more . . . and now focus on feeling peaceful. . . . As you feel peaceful that peace will naturally go outward to nature . . . to the dolphins and the whales . . . to the birds . . . to the animals large and small. . . . I let myself be full of peace . . . and that peace naturally goes outward to the Earth . . . to the rivers and ocean . . . to the trees and the meadows . . . to the mountains and the sky. . . . I am full of peace. . . . I am one who is acting to help our Earth be healthy again. . . . This will happen in time. . . . Our planet will be well. . . . I picture the light of peace all around the Earth . . . and our beautiful oceans being healthy again . . . our beautiful Earth being healthy again. . . . Feeling relaxed and peaceful . . . now begin to be aware of where you are sitting and bring your attention back to this room.”

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 8**

The Ocean’s Dead Zones

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature.

Please read Chapter Four of the *Green Values Club* below.

Share a Story: We Can Make a Difference

Katie talked to some of her friends at school on Monday. They were amazed to hear about the whale, felt sorry for the little gull, and totally didn’t know about the gyres.

“Why don’t you talk to the teacher?” asked Carol. “Let’s see if she’ll let you tell the class about the gyres and the poor animals that die because they eat plastic. Maybe we can all get involved in helping.”

“You really think everyone will want to?” asked Katie.

“Well maybe not everyone,” said Kinesha, “but kids our age have really good hearts. We care about our planet – and our animal friends.”

The girls talked to their science teacher at break and she was delighted. “Great,” Ms. Bennett said, “we’re starting our unit on the environment today. Katie, it would be great to have you share your story, and then let’s see what ideas everyone comes up with. Learning about things is good, but doing something for our Earth is proof that we care.”

Katie shared her story about the whale, the seagull and learning about the gyres with the whole class. She was a little nervous, and kept clearing her throat. She shared the ideas she and her family had come up with about reducing their use of one-use disposal



plastic by 90 percent. Katie was amazed at the interest and the willingness of most of the students to commit to using less plastic.

“No more plastic bottles for me,” offered Dana.

“My aunt brings her own cup when she travels on planes,” offered Ta.

“No more plastic cups or straws when I’m out,” said Maria, “I can ask for a real cup or bring my own.”

“Great ideas,” said Todd. “If it’s going to help, I’m willing to not buy plastic bottles of stuff. But, what if it’s really, really hot and I really want a soda? What if I buy it in a can?”

“Well, using an aluminum can is taking something you don’t need from the Earth,” said Ms. Bennett, “but IF you recycle it’s not so bad. It’s much better than using plastic.”

“Well, I don’t know,” said a girl named Pam in a doubting voice, “why should we even try? If just a few of us do this, it’s not going to help. We can’t affect thousands of square miles of toxic plastic soup.”

“Think of the one whale and the one seagull,” said Katie, all of the sudden feeling confident. “It was a small group of people that made a difference for them. Small groups of people can make a difference – and imagine what would happen if kids all over the world did this. Some adults are really into this already. What if all the kids got all their parents to help?”

Katie shared her parents’ idea about going to city council to ask for a ban on using plastic bags and plastic straws in the city. “I asked if I could invite some friends to go with us. Would anyone like to help?”

“Me,” “me,” “me” was heard all around the room. Katie, Carol and Kinesha beamed at everyone and Ms. Bennett looked pleased.

Ms. Bennett divided them into three action groups on Friday. One group was going to make posters to support the ban on plastic bags and straws and another group was going to make up banners with slogans on respect for the ocean and the Earth by reducing the use of disposable plastic. The third group was going to create a petition to the superintendent to ban all Styrofoam and reduce the use of plastic.

Katie told Ms. Bennett that the city council meeting was going to be on Tuesday night and they were on the agenda. And Ms. Bennett told the whole class. “Everyone, if you want to go, you’ll need to have an adult with you as it is not a school event.”

“I’d love to go with you, Katie, to the city council meeting,” said one of the girls shyly. Tanya rarely spoke to anyone and usually looked a little sad, “but I have to go home right after school and then I can’t leave. My Mom is ... sick.”



Katie looked at Tanya carefully. Interesting, she had never noticed before but Tanya's eyes were the same as George's friend Tom and her hair was the same color and texture, a soft, thin brown. "Tanya, are you Tom's big sister?" she asked.

"Yes, I am," Tanya softly. "Do you know Tom? I hope he behaved himself around you," she said, looking worried.

"He's a good lad," said Katie. "He was one of the boys who helped George and me with the gull."

"I'm glad," said Tanya with a little smile. "He could use a good experience."

Katie had a feeling that Tanya could use a good experience, too.

George didn't talk to his teacher, but he did talk to Tom, Hank and Kevin, his friends that had helped capture the seagull. They were amazed about the huge areas of toxic plastic soup in the ocean and appalled that so many animals were getting hurt.

"I want to help," Tom said.

"Me, too," said Hank and Kevin.

"Terrific," said George. "I have an idea."

George and Katie talked on the way home. Katie told all him all about Ms. Bennett's science class on the environment.

"She told us," said Katie, "that there are dead zones in the ocean where there is little or no oxygen due to fertilizer-run-off and nitrogen pollution. She said that there are 405 reported dead zones and that they are doubling every ten years!"

"That's terrible," said George. "So, what happens in these dead zones?" asked George. "There isn't enough oxygen for most fish to live?"

"Good thinking," said Katie. "Unfortunately, the fertilizer-run-off and nitrogen pollution and pesticides kill the kelp. She showed us some pictures of these really cool kelp forests. They are so beautiful. The kelp forests provide food and shelter to thousands of species – and 50 percent of the world's oxygen! Ms. Bennett said it's just as important to keep the kelp forests healthy as it is to keep the rain forests healthy!"

"So how do we stop the fertilizer-run-off and nitrogen pollution?" asked George.

"George, that's a really great question, and we didn't ask it," said Katie. "Let's ask Mama and Papa when we get home."

Katie's mind flashed back. What had Ms. Bennett said?

"The chemical fertilizers and pesticides pollute the rivers and ocean," Ms. Bennett had said. "Unfortunately, this can also impact the ground water and negatively affect the quality of the soil. Food grown with pesticides has been shown to have harmful effects on humans, contributing to many different kinds of disease."

Ms. Bennett had assigned different groups to research specific components of fertilizers and pesticides. Tanya was part of the group Katie was in. "Wow," Tanya had



whispered to Katie, “no wonder we have dead zones in the ocean! Gyres and dead zones. We humans are not taking good care of our world.”

Ms. Bennett had overheard, “You’re right, Tanya,” she smiled. “It’s important to take care of our world.” Tanya blushed at the positive attention.

Ms. Bennett continued, “I want each of you to really think over the weekend – and the next couple of months – about what one thing you can do that would have the most beneficial effect on the Earth and Ocean. What would happen if everyone on the planet did the same thing?”

Discuss

- Would anyone like to share their reaction to the story?
- What actions did the three groups take in the story?
- What do you think you can do to help solve this problem of plastic pollution that contributes to the gyres?
- Do you know any place that uses Styrofoam?
- Would you like to help encourage them to stop using it?
- How can you do that?

Lesson Content

Source: The following excerpts were taken from the website of One World One Ocean. <http://www.oneworldoneocean.org/pages/why-the-ocean>



The ocean is in trouble

90% of the big fish are gone. Tuna, swordfish, halibut, cod, and flounder populations have been devastated by overfishing. Many of the fish caught today never even have the chance to reproduce.

Discarded plastic bags and other trash have formed a **toxic "plastic soup"** that is gathering in five massive ocean gyres around the world. As the plastic breaks down, it is eaten by sea animals, birds, and fish, causing illness and death. It eventually enters our diets, too.

There are a reported 405 ocean "**dead zones**" – areas where there is little to no oxygen due to fertilizer run-off and nitrogen pollution. Dead zones are doubling every ten years.



Our oceans account for 71% of the planet, but **less than 2%** of our oceans are protected. We have protections in place for nearly 12% of all land (through areas like national parks).

The ocean is at a tipping point. Oceanographer Sylvia Earle says human actions over the next 10 years will determine the state of the ocean for the next 10,000 years.

Activities

As a whole group, ask the students to decide on two, three or four actions that they could implement locally that would help the environment. Help them decide on actions that are practical, sensible and appropriate to their age and skill level – so that they are likely to succeed in fulfilling those actions. A few of the actions could be implemented in the classroom. For example, ask them to think of ideas or ways to conserve in the classroom such as setting up a recycling bin, using paper on both sides, and saving magazines and little sticks to be used for art projects. At the school level, they could generate ideas about how to be careful about not wasting water, pick up litter or plant trees and bushes. They could research environmental concerns to do with the school. They could question whether we are polluting or wasting our water. For instance, if the grass is being watered in the afternoon, they could ask the school principal to change the watering schedule from the afternoon to the morning to conserve water.

Thirteen to Fourteen Activity: In addition to the above activity, you may wish them to further research their action. For example, if they decide to ask the school/school district or city to ban the use of Styrofoam, they may wish to know more about the negative effects on the environment and human health.

Close with a relaxation/focusing exercise.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 9 **One Thing Effects Many Things – Systems Thinking**

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature. Ask how they are and if they have been thinking about the last lesson. Allow them time to share their thoughts and any related actions. How is it going with your class conservation efforts? Listen and acknowledge.

Please read Chapter Five of the *Green Values Club* below.



Share a Story: To the City Council!

School was fun, but it was nice to get home. At dinner time, Katie shared what Ms. Bennett said about the dead zones in the ocean as they sat around the kitchen table. The sunlight was still softly lighting the trees and flowers outside. Birds were chirping their last calls of the day and flying through the skies as they did every night at dusk. Katie took another bite of corn bread.

Papa nodded. "Yes, Katie, all of this is connected. What we do as human beings ripples out with all kinds of consequences for the world. One thing affects something else and sometimes many things, and each one of those things affects other things and those things affect something else. The artificial fertilizers and pesticides affect the soil, the plants that grow and add pollutants to the water. Those are like small amounts of poison."

"If we just take the effect on the water, then we could look at the effect on health of humans, the need for water purification systems and the effect of the run-off that your teacher described when it goes down rivers and into the ocean. In some rivers the fish are dying off and mutating as a result of the pesticides. When rivers with a lot of artificial fertilizers and pesticides go into the ocean, it kills kelp, coral and fish. When the kelp dies off in those areas there is not enough food and oxygen for many fish to live. Added to that, the kelp is affected by overfishing as the kelp needs the waste products of fish to live. One thing affects another thing."

"As human beings in this age," said Mama, "we are just beginning to learn that we have to look and see the effects of something before we act. It is called systems thinking now. But native cultures understood it well hundreds of years ago. They would say, think ahead for seven generations."

"George thought of a question I wish I'd asked Ms. Bennett," said Katie. "George?"

"So how do we stop the fertilizer-run-off and nitrogen pollution?"

Mama smiled, "Stop using artificial fertilizers and pesticides."

"Go organic?" asked Katie.

"Yes," said Mama. "It takes work because the soil needs to be made healthy again, and crops need to be rotated, but it would sure help our Earth and its oceans immensely, and all of us humans and animals!"

"Wow," laughed Katie. "Maybe you just gave me my homework answer!" She told them about Ms. Bennett's homework assignment.

Papa laughed. "That's a great homework assignment. "Shall we all think about that one?"



“It’s good we’re having this discussion,” said Mama. “I buy organic vegetables when it isn’t so expensive because I know it’s better for us, but I never thought about how it is much better for the earth and the ocean.”

“Mama, Papa, could we have a little organic garden?” asked Katie.

Papa looked at Katie with a little frown. “It’s a great idea, Katie, but it would take some work. You know your Mama and I both spend a lot of time working and your Mama already has enough to do.”

“I could help,” said George.

Katie flashed him a smile.

“Are you sure?” asked Papa with a little frown.

George nodded seriously.

“Consistently?”

Both George and Katie nodded.

“Okay,” laughed Papa. “I’ll help too. I’ll help with the first deep dig.”

“Yea!” chorused George and Katie.

“I had an idea,” said George. “You know how our family and our friends at school are promising to cut our disposable plastic use by 90 percent? Well, that helps stop the gyres from growing, but what about all the plastic trash now? Shouldn’t we be picking that up and recycling it so it doesn’t go into the ocean?”

Katie gave George a tap on his shoulder. “You’re totally cool for a nine-year old.”

“Smart, I’d say,” smiled Papa.

Papa said he wouldn’t have time to dig for a couple of weeks. The gull was doing quite well in his new home and getting stronger. Mama said he would be ready for a test flight in a week. He was getting fatter and healthier looking, much to Katie’s and George’s relief. They had named him Captain.

On Tuesday night, the family went to the city council meeting. Katie and George were really pleased to see so many of their friends and classmates. Even Ms. Bennett came. They all gathered outside with their posters, greeting each other and introducing their parents.

There weren’t enough seats for them all in the city council chamber, so some stood at the back, holding their posters so the council members could see them. When their turn to speak came, Mama stood at the microphone and asked the city council members to approve a ban on plastic bags being offered to customers at stores in their city and plastic straws in restaurants. She suggested paper bags be offered instead or that people bring their own bags to carry away their purchases. She suggested uncooked pasta noodles as a substitute for plastic straws if restaurants wanted to provide them. She spoke about gyres



and how it was important for the health of marine animals, our ocean and humans to stop the toxic plastic waste.

When Mama finished, all the students and their parents applauded. The city council president looked around the room and said, “It looks like this suggestion has a lot of support – and it would certainly be good for our Earth. Would any of you young people like to speak?”

Carol and Kinesha looked at Katie, and Katie shook her head no. All of the sudden, Katie saw Tanya out of the corner of her eye with a woman who looked too old and frail to be her mother, and then there was Tom stepping up to the microphone.

“I think George’s and Katie’s mother is right,” said Tom hesitantly. Then in one long breathe he said a bit louder, “There was a seagull the other day down at the beach that had an old plastic bag around it that must have been there for a long, long time and he was really hurt and we have to think about the ocean and the gyres or whatever they are called and the animals that get hurt and the Earth and stop being so selfish.”

Everyone applauded. They clapped again when all the members of the city council voted for the ban on plastic bags and plastic straws.

Tanya gave a radiant smile to Katie before quietly slipping out with her mother and Tom.

Discuss/Explore

- What good ideas did the people in the story have?
- What do you learn from the story?
- What values do you think Tom used in the story?
- What other values did you see?
- What effect did those values have in the story?
- What effect would they have for us in our current environment?

Activity

Ask the students to make a flow chart of the effects described in one of the paragraphs of the story. (The paragraph from the story is below.) If needed, model how to do that, placing the word “water” at the highest point on the whiteboard, drawing three downward arrows, and then continuing to show how one thing affects other things.

“If we just take the effect on the water, then we could look at the effect on health of humans, the need for water purification systems and the effect of the run-off that your teacher described when it goes down rivers and into the ocean. In some rivers the fish are dying off and mutating as a result of the pesticides. When rivers with a lot of artificial



fertilizers and pesticides go into the ocean, it kills kelp, coral and fish. When the kelp dies off in those areas there is not enough food and oxygen for many fish to live. Added to that, the kelp is affected by overfishing as the kelp needs the waste products of fish to live. One thing affects another thing.”

Ask the students, and help them as necessary, to add other factors to the flow chart. For example, some fish dying off results in less fish for consumers and less recreational fishing; it may also result in poorer health for those who eat sick fish. Where does “dead zones” go in the flow chart?

Now do two more flow charts, one for “Using Pesticides” and another for “Organic Farming”.

Eight to Eleven Activity: Ask the students to write a poem or a song about any one of the topics in the story. Invite those who wish to do so to share their poem or song with the class. Perhaps choose one to recite or sing together.

Twelve to Fourteen: Invite students to form small groups and investigate the effects of using pesticides versus organic farming and list all the factors that are affected. Then ask them to create a large mind map, with pesticides on one side and organic on the other of the central circle. (If you are unfamiliar with Mind Mapping, please see Item 1 in the Appendix and create a large mind map with the entire group.) Use the same topic branches on each side and detail out all the effects, using the flow chart effect on the branches and sub-branches to show how one change affects many things. Invite them to illustrate the mind map or create a song or poem contrasting the approaches.

Close with the Sending Peace to the Earth Relaxation/Focusing Exercise.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 10 **The Exchange Between Trees and Humans**

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature.

Please read Chapter Six of the *Green Values Club* below.

Share a Story: Trees, Oxygen and Hope

Katie felt wonderful the next morning when she awoke. It was gray and overcast with a bit of wetness in the air. She slipped outside to feed the gull. “Did you hear, Captain?” she said softly, “The city banned plastic bags and straws and we’re all going to work together to try and make our oceans and beaches safe again so you and your friends can be healthy and free. We’re going to have our first beach clean-up on Saturday.”



The gull seemed to like her pats now. “And, you get to fly again on Saturday — in only four days! Mama said your wing is almost healed.”

In science class they were now studying about the rain forest, deforestation, the interchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide between plants and humans.

“So, what can we do to help?” asked Todd.

“Well, if humans need the oxygen to breathe, and trees and plants produce that and process the carbon dioxide we exhale, what do you think would help compensate for the deforestation?” asked Ms. Bennett.

“Plant plants?” said Todd.

“Good thinking. And what are durable, long-lasting plants?” asked Ms. Bennett.

“Trees!” said Todd, with a few echoes from around the room.

“Great,” smiled Ms. Bennett. “Actually, the United Nations Environmental Protection agency has a project asking people to plant one tree per person to help offset our carbon footprint. There was a one billion tree project in China and they achieved their goal of planting one billion trees. Green helps!”

“Speaking of green,” she said, “Katie asked me if she could make an announcement just before the end of class.”

Katie stood up in front of the class with Carol and Kinesha. “I’ve been talking with my family and Carol and Kinesha. My little brother wants to have a beach clean-up on Saturday. We could do it in the morning and play volleyball afterwards. Anyone interested?”

“Sounds great,” “Sounds good.” “Count me in,” sprang from all corners of the room. Katie, Carol and Kinesha beamed. “Terrific!”

“Ms. Bennett said maybe we could even do it as a school project,” said Carol. “What do you think about calling it Seagulls?”

“What about the river that comes down into the cove?” asked Pierce. “Don’t we want to clean that up too?”

“Yeah, maybe we need a name that would mean more to more people,” said Megan. “Clean water?”

“How about Green Values Club?” suggested a small voice from the back of the room. Katie was surprised to hear Tanya speak up in class. Everyone else must have been surprised too because they all turned to look. Tanya blushed.

“Great idea,” said Todd, looking at Tanya.

“Yeah, terrific idea,” said Dana.

Katie smiled, and Carol and Kinesha looked pleased. “Everyone in agreement?” asked Katie.

Even Pam nodded yes.



The day of the Green Values Club beach and river clean-up was sunny and bright. A few parents and whole families joined them. Half of the helpers picked up plastic and other things they could recycle, and the other half picked up trash that could not be recycled. The bags got a little heavy, but Papa and a few other parents would meet them, take the full bags and give them empty ones. Papa had arranged with the city to pick up all the trash bags later.

Some of the kids met at the beach and others who lived closer to the river walked down the river while picking up trash and met them for volleyball at 11:00. The older kids played volleyball and George and his friends went body surfing.

Katie was feeling hot and sweaty after an hour of picking up trash when she heard her name being called. She was surprised to see Tanya running toward her.

“Hi, Katie, hi Carol and Kinesha, I got to come! I haven’t been to the beach in years!”

As Carol and Kinesha went ahead, Katie waited for Tanya to catch up.

“Why haven’t you been to the beach in so long?” asked Katie.

“Well,” said Tanya, reaching down to pick up some trash, and turning a little away from Katie as she spoke in one long sentence, “the short story is my Dad got into drugs about four years ago, and got really mean, and then got killed in a fight two years ago, and my Mom got really depressed and started taking drugs too and so I had to be at home all the time with her because she won’t let me go anywhere and was crying all the time, only Tom could go anywhere cause she couldn’t handle him and he would just leave, and now with what we are doing with green values it’s like she has hope and I told her about your organic garden you want to make and she used to live on a farm when she was little and loved to garden and when she went to college she was a botanist and she said that if we kids could do something for the world then she had better start getting her own act together and so she stopped the drugs and is in rehab and said I could come this morning and said if you want her to help she would be honored to help you with your garden because she was going to be okay again.”

Tanya was still looking down.

Katie reached out and squeezed Tanya’s hand. “I’m so glad you told me. . . . I would like your Mom to help me with the organic garden. Would you and Tom like to help too?”

Tanya looked up. “Love to,” was all she could say.

Tom, Hank and Kevin came home with George after the beach and river clean-up to watch Captain being released.

“Do you think he’s ready, Mama?” asked George.

“Let’s see,” smiled Mama.



“We’ll leave the box out with food and water for a couple days just in case he’s not strong enough to go far,” said Papa.

The boys lifted the stones and grill off the box. Katie lifted him out and put him on the railing of the patio and Mama carefully took off the gauze tape holding the one wing. “Okay, Captain,” she said, “you’re free.”

Captain looked at her, flapped his wings a few times and took off.

Shouts of “Look at him go!” and “Go, Captain!” filled the air as the gull flew into the blue sky.

Discuss

- What feelings did you notice in the story?
- What values did you notice in the different people in the story?
- It sounded like Tanya’s mother was very sad and had lost hope. Knowing that the young people were working to help do something positive for the environment gave her hope in the story. What is the feeling of hope? Do you think it increases our feelings of courage?
- Most of us have felt discouraged? What helps us feel encouraged again?
- Who remembers what we humans exhale?
- What do the trees and plants do with that carbon dioxide?
- Would you like our environment around here to be “greener”? (If the answer is “yes”, ask, “How do you think we could make that happen?”)

Activity

Explain more about the interchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide between plants and humans, how human beings breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide and how plants take in the carbon dioxide and create oxygen. (For older students, allow them to research this if there is time and they do not yet have this knowledge.)

Then say, “The relationship between human beings and nature is very important. Our life depends on the creation of oxygen from nature and we also benefit so much from the beauty of nature.”

Do something with nature today, perhaps planting a tree or planning to plant one, or taking a walk in a park and writing a poem to a tree or having a tree write you a poem. What would the trees of the world say? Allow those who wish to share a poem from a tree to do so.

Or, ask them to generate ideas for the home or the community. If litter or waste is affecting the clean water supply, address that issue. Perhaps plan to help clean up a local



river. Some students may want to research local usage of pesticides and natural (and less expensive) alternatives which do not pollute the earth or its inhabitants. They could write to their local Mayor sharing their ideas. They could make up respect-for-the-earth slogans and post them at school and at sports-game locales in the community. Allow them time to plan and/or write the necessary letters/proposals.

End with a relaxation/focusing exercise of their choice or a song or two about the beauty of the Earth or ocean.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING

FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 11

Growing Organic and Being Vegetarian Effects the Earth and Ocean

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature.

Please read Chapter Seven of the *Green Values Club* below.

Share a Story: An Organic Garden

"A perfect day to dig," joked Papa the next weekend as they sat and ate breakfast at the kitchen table. "You kids sure do have us working!"

"Papa, I wanted to ask if we could do a beach cleanup every week," said George.

"And never relax another weekend in my life?" Papa joked. He looked at George's disappointed face.

"George, the clean-up is a great idea and I know you're enthusiastic," Papa said more seriously, "but I would suggest once a month. You and everyone else can always pick up trash whenever you see it – but there are other things to do in life so you might get more people if you do it once a month. That way you can keep the enthusiasm high."

George nodded.

"What do you think, Lisa?" Papa asked.

"Well said! It's nice to relax and rest occasionally, you two!" Mama smiled at both George and Katie. "But I was thinking it would be nice to have a picnic on the beach the next time we do a cleanup."

George gave her a wide grin, "Could we?"

A few days earlier, Katie had asked if Tom, Tanya and Tanya's mother could come and help in the garden. The three of them came over after breakfast. They arrived a little shyly, quietly knocking on the front door and saying very little. Tom hung back, unlike his usual boisterous self. Katie noticed how pale their mother looked. But she had a pretty smile and was soon digging with Papa and Katie, George, Tanya and Tom.



It was a beautiful morning outside. The sun was slanting down, creating pools of light on the greens, blues, yellows and pinks. The earth smelled good as they dug.

“I’ve been missing the earth,” Tanya’s mom said when she finally spoke. “We live in a little apartment so it’s really nice to be here and feel the soil. This looks really healthy – and you have great worms.”

She had brought some seeds and small vegetable plants with her and soon they were all chatting and planting the seeds and plants in the fresh new rows of earth. Tanya’s mom told them in which direction to make the rows so the plants would get maximum sun, and showed them how deep to plant the seeds and plants.

It took a long time to dig and make the rows, so Mama invited them for lunch. The little family of three looked happy as they left.

When they were leaving, Tanya hung back to whisper to Katie, “Thank you, thank you, thank you.”

Katie had told Mama and Papa what Tanya had told her about her mom.

“How sad,” Mama said. Papa had nodded.

“Why would she take drugs when she didn’t like her husband taking drugs?” asked Katie.

“Well, it sounds like things were really rough,” said Mama. “Sometimes people take drugs because they have emotions they can’t deal with, like hurt or fear. When so many bad things happen, life can feel overwhelming. I’m glad you welcomed them to come and help in the garden,” said Mama. “People need to have hope and something valuable to do.”

“Aristotle used to say that happiness is a result of virtue. Doing something good will help her be happy again,” said Papa.

Later in the weekend, Katie announced at dinner, “I’ve decided on my answer to Ms. Bennett’s homework question about one thing we can do that will most benefit the planet.”

“What’s that?” asked Mama.

“Be a vegetarian that eats organic food,” said Katie.

“How would that help?” asked George looking puzzled.

“Well,” said Katie enthusiastically, “if everyone was a vegetarian then people wouldn’t fish and we wouldn’t be overfishing and killing millions of fish, and if we all ate organic food then we wouldn’t be poisoning the ocean and creating dead zones and the oceans would have healthy kelp forests and enough oxygen for a healthy ocean and enough fish again for the whales and the whales and dolphins wouldn’t be getting trapped in nets because no one would be using nets!”

“You’ve really been thinking about this,” said Papa, looking a little surprised.



“And,” said Katie with a big smile, “that’s not all. If everyone was a vegetarian, then we wouldn’t be deforesting the Amazon because of the production of cattle and the demand for meat and the output of greenhouse gasses would be less so the whole planet would be healthier.”

“Good reasoning,” said Mama.

“But you’re not really going to do it are you?” asked George.

“Do what?” asked Katie.

“Be a vegetarian.”

“Well,” said Katie, with a pause and a pleading look at her parents, “I was thinking that maybe I can’t be a vegetarian that eats *only* organic food, but I could be a vegetarian that eats as much organic food as we can get.” She took a deep breath as she looked at Mama and Papa. “I would really like to try it. Can I please? I really do think it would help our planet.”

Mama looked at Katie, and then at Papa. “Luke?”

Papa looked at Mama. “It’s okay with me. She has some great reasons. Is it okay with you?”

“Oh Katie,” Mama said with a tiny worried look. “You would have to promise me that you would eat healthy.”

“The World Health Organization says it’s the healthiest diet for human beings,” said Katie.

“If you eat healthy,” said Mama firmly. “Promise?”

“Yes.”

“Okay. Then it is okay with me,” Mama said.

Katie sprang up and gave Mama and then Papa a big hug.

“I am proud that you’ve really thought about it and want to help our planet,” said Mama.

“Is it okay if I’m a vegetarian with her for two months and see if it works for me?”

Papa asked Mama with a quizzical look.

Mama just laughed as she looked at her husband. Then she looked at her son with a questioning look. “George?”

“Not me,” cringed George. “It wasn’t my homework!”

“Okay,” laughed Mama. “Two veggies and two non-veggies. But if you two don’t eat healthy, I’m changing my mind!”

Discuss

- What values did the people in the story show?



- Aristotle, a famous philosopher from the time of the ancient Greeks, said that happiness is a result of virtue. What does that mean?
- I want you all to remember a time when you were especially kind. How did you feel afterwards?
- If you had a little garden, what would you plant?

Activity

Eight to Twelve Activity: Work on the environmental project that the class has undertaken.

Thirteen to Fourteen Activity: Invite students to divide into three groups and study the following. Group One, the deforesting of the Amazon; Group Two, the impact of the production of cattle, chickens and other animals in response to the demand for meat and the relationship of this to the output of greenhouse gasses; and Group Three, the effect of greenhouse gases on the climate and global change. Allow each group to share their findings and understand the relationship of each to the information of the other two groups.

Close with the Sending Peace to the Earth Relaxation/Focusing exercise.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 12 **Reducing Our Carbon Footprint**

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature.

Vocabulary word: Please share with students the meaning of carbon footprint. To reduce your carbon footprint means that you are reducing your negative effect on the Earth.

Your carbon footprint is the sum of all emissions of CO₂ (carbon dioxide), which were induced by your activities in a given time frame. Usually, a carbon footprint is calculated for the time period of a year.

(Source: <http://timeforchange.org/what-is-a-carbon-footprint-definition>)

Say, "To reduce your carbon footprint means that you are reducing your negative effect on the Earth."

Please read Chapter Eight of the *Green Values Club* below.



Share a Story: Carbon Footprints

"It's sort of like anything," laughed Papa, "it's easy *after* you figure it out!" It was early Monday morning and he and Katie and Mama were laughing as they ate breakfast and talked about what to pack for their Papa's and Katie's vegetarian lunch. They usually had fruit and oatmeal for breakfast, so breakfast was easy.

Katie and George went out after breakfast to water their organic vegetable garden before school.

"Look, these little plants over here must have grown a whole inch since Saturday!" said George. They were delighted with their garden.

But it was a bit of a rough day for Katie at school. She didn't have the usual lunch at school because it had meat in it and a couple of kids gave her a hard time when she told them she was going vegetarian.

"Oh, leave her alone," said Kinesha after one of the students said, "What are you going to eat when we have a barbeque, a carrot?"

"They act like there's nothing to eat if you're a vegetarian," said Katie, swallowing a lump in her throat.

"Just stay in self-respect," said Carol. "Some people get upset with others sometimes when someone does something they feel they should do but don't have the strength to do."

"It's not like I'm saying I'm better than them," said Katie forlornly. "I respect their choices. I don't make fun of them."

"And that's one of the reasons you're so wonderful, Katie," said Carol. "You really do respect everyone."

It was a relief to be in science class as all the students were part of the Green Values Club and supported whatever anyone was doing to help the environment, even Pam. When she heard from a friend that Katie was going to be a vegetarian, she smiled at Katie and said, "You have more determination than I do. Good for you."

Katie was surprised. "Thanks, Pam."

Ms. Bennett taught a class on greenhouse gases and the effect on global change. She explained more about the gases released by using cars, planes and buses as well as the raising and slaughtering of pigs, cows, sheep, turkeys and chickens.

"I saw a commercial when I went to Denmark," offered Megan. "It showed a man who was a vegetarian driving a large car and another man on a bicycle who was not a vegetarian and asked which one had a bigger carbon footprint. The surprise answer was the vegetarian driving the big car had less of a carbon footprint! I had no idea being vegetarian could help so much."



Kinesha and Carol looked at Katie and smiled.

At the end of class, they spent time talking about how to reduce their use of electricity and gas. There were the usual things like turning down the heat and wearing a sweater when it's cool, turning up the thermostat and taking off the sweater when it's hot, and bicycling and walking more when possible. Ms. Bennett also introduced them to alternative green technology.

"Solar power is really advancing," she said, "and becoming more affordable. Some schools are converting to solar power for their electricity, and some of the electricity-recharging stations for the electric-powered cars are being powered by solar power – so there are no emissions at all."

The students had a great time researching the subject and were delighted to find a new technology that could convert disposable plastic back into petroleum. "The challenge of course," said Ms. Bennett, "is making that sort of thing widely available. It'll be wonderful to see all the things that are invented in the next decade to help."

One day they discussed reducing their consumption of "things" and the importance of considering what you are taking from the Earth when purchasing. "Not something most teenagers want to hear," smiled Ms. Bennett.

The next couple of months were great. Tanya, Tom and their mother, Nancy, were coming over once a week to help with the vegetable garden. Their mother was looking less pale and much stronger. She was teaching Katie and George about composting. And they had beach and river clean-ups every month, with volleyball and swimming afterwards – and picnics every other time. George was so pleased. More kids and their families were getting involved and picking up trash whenever they saw it and the beaches and rivers were much cleaner.

"Class," said Ms. Bennett one day, "three months ago I asked you to think about what one thing you could do that would have the most beneficial effect on the Earth and ocean – and what would happen if everyone on the planet did it? Your project will be due next week. On Wednesday, one-third of you will be able to present your proposal, with another one-third of you on Thursday and the last third on Friday. You can mind-map your ideas or present your ideas on poster board. Those of you who wish to give a PowerPoint presentation for your three to five-minute talk may do so, but you will also need to create a poster. The following week I will ask those with similar ideas to get together in groups and create songs, poems or skits/dramas. We will end the semester with those. So, ladies and gentlemen, begin creating!"



Discuss

- How do you think Katie felt when someone made fun of her being a vegetarian?
- How do you feel when others make fun of you or a friend of yours?
- What anti-value are they using?
- What value could they use instead?
- Does anyone have any questions about the story?
- Have you thought about the homework that Ms. Bennett gave to Katie's class?
What is one thing you can do that will help our Earth and the ocean – and what would the effects be if everyone in the world did that? (Accept as many answers as they wish to give and list them on a piece of flipchart paper and save the list for the next Living Green Values lesson.)

Lesson Content

Please share the following as it explains more about what a carbon footprint means and what kinds of human activities cause the release of carbon dioxide – in addition to breathing! Please simplify the language for young students.

Source: <http://timeforchange.org/what-is-a-carbon-footprint-definition>

The total amount of greenhouse gases produced to directly and indirectly support human activities, usually expressed in equivalent tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂).

In other words: When you drive a car, the engine burns fuel which creates a certain amount of CO₂, depending on its fuel consumption and the driving distance. (CO₂ is the chemical symbol for carbon dioxide.) When you heat your house with oil, gas or coal, then you also generate CO₂. Even if you heat your house with electricity, the generation of the electrical power may also have emitted a certain amount of CO₂. When you buy food and goods, the production of the food and goods also emitted some quantities of CO₂.

Human-Related source of Carbon Dioxide

Source: http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/emissions/co2_human.html

A variety of human activities lead to the emission and removal of carbon dioxide (CO₂):

- The largest source of CO₂ emissions globally is the combustion of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas in power plants, automobiles, industrial facilities and other sources.



- A number of specialized industrial production processes and product uses such as mineral production, metal production and the use of petroleum-based products can also lead to CO₂ emissions.
- Carbon sequestration is the process by which growing trees and plants absorb or remove CO₂ from the atmosphere and turn it into biomass (e.g., wood, leaves, etc.). Deforestation, conversely, can lead to significant levels of CO₂ emissions in some countries.

On the One World One Ocean website they suggested that people do four things to help the Earth and ocean.

- Use less electricity
- Use less gas
- Offset your carbon footprint
- Lower your food miles

Discuss

Say, “Please tell me what reducing your carbon footprint means.” (Help them understand if they are still not clear about the concept.)

Ask:

- How can you use less electricity?
- What if the electricity is solar powered – would that be better for the planet than using electricity made from coal or oil? Why?
- How can we use less gasoline?
- Would walking and bicycling more help reduce your carbon footprint?
- What if you had a car powered by electricity? Why would that be better for the planet?
- What if the electricity in the car was recharged by a station that used solar power? Would that reduce the negative effect on the planet even more?

Offsetting your carbon footprint means doing something “green” to help the planet to negate the effect of the carbon dioxide emissions. So, planting trees would help if you drove a lot and used a lot of gas.

Ask:

- We can all plant trees, and that would “offset” your carbon footprint, but we need to work both ways, doing something beneficial for the Earth and reducing our carbon footprint. So, how can you reduce your carbon footprint?



- How can you lower your food miles? What do you think that means? (Buy locally-grown food.)
- What else do you think you can do?
- Do you think we can do anything differently in this class that would help?

Activity

Ask the students to draw a large footprint on a piece of paper. Inside the footprint they are to write all the things that contribute to their carbon footprint. Ask them what things they think they can do to reduce their carbon footprint. For example, they can walk or bicycle more or not buy so many material things. They can repair or recycle their toys and other material things. They can also reduce their footprint by planting a tree or ____? Ask them to make another picture with another footprint that is smaller, writing all the things they can do to make that happen.

Close with the Sending Peace to the Earth Relaxation/Focusing exercise.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 13 What's one thing I can do to help the Earth?

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature.

Please read Chapter Nine of the *Green Values Club* below.

Share a Story: Living Green Values

You could feel the excitement of the students in science class on Wednesday. Ms. Bennett had posted a sign-up sheet for the presentations on Monday. Some of the kids wanted to be first and some wanted to be last, so those spots were taken first. Empty spaces were awaiting their posters on the wall.

"I just want to get it over with," Carol had muttered.

Todd had already signed up for the first spot. He gave a very good presentation on the beneficial effects of solar and wind power on the climate. He thought switching from carbon-based energy production to renewable sources would stop the rising temperature of the planet and consequent slow melting of the ice caps and rising sea levels. He showed the system changes it would make, including cleaner air, the savings of not moving entire island-based communities, and the many health benefits, such as less children being affected by lead poisoning near freeways. He ended to applause from the class — and gave his classmates a smile of relief. "Glad it's over!" he said.



Carol was second. She was also a little nervous. “I will start with a song,” she said to everyone’s surprise. Her clear voice was pretty as she sang . . . and comical as she slowed down dramatically on the last line of each stanza.

Be friends with each other,
Be respectful and kind,
To children and adults and all of humankind,
Don’t forgot the animals on the earth and in the sea,
Be friends to them all, like you are to me.
Friends ... pick up ... their ... trash

Don’t pollute the water,
Don’t waste things please,
Don’t poison the ground,
the water, sky or trees.
Pick ... up ... your trash!

If we can do this,
Imagine what will occur,
Kelp forests will blossom,
And land mines disappear!
Pick ... up ... your trash!

Humans are smart,
But learn to be kind,
Then we’ll all live safely,
And have a wonderful time.
Pick ... up ... your trash!

Everyone laughed and sang the last line with her. Picking up trash was the center circle of Carol’s mind map poster. She had cleverly defined trash as anything that was harmful to humans or animals, so land mines were included. Each branch radiating from the middle was filled with factual details showing the many effects of picking up trash. Under clearing land mines was the increase in agricultural land and food production, reduced deaths and amputees, lower medical costs, greater well-being of families and increased production for society.

Each and every presentation was filled with good reasoning and enthusiasm. Some students were more nervous than others, but their work and determination showed



through. Some were creative, some funny and some artistic. A lot of good ideas came out.

Katie was a little nervous about presenting her mind map. She'd worked hard on the facts and had taken pictures of the organic garden. She had many branches coming from the center circle that noted the benefits, included a reduction in greenhouse gasses, pollution of rivers and dead zones in the ocean, and an increase in the nutritional value of food and healthy kelp forests. Katie gave the class a big smile when the clapping finished.

The presentations continued Thursday and Friday. The last name on the sign-up list was Tanya's. Tanya came up slowly to the front of the class with a big roll of paper. It was much bigger than the other posters that had been presented.

Tanya stood up and smiled at everyone. Katie noticed that Tanya was less pale and looked more confident than she'd ever seen her look before. "Would someone please help me by holding this?" she asked.

Todd and Pam were there before Katie was halfway out of her seat. When the very large poster was unrolled all the students gasped and Ms. Bennett started to laugh. The poster was gorgeous. The circle in the middle was a picture of the Earth from space and there was a green circle around that with white letters. There were an amazing number of branches and sub-branches on the mind map and each and every inch of the poster was covered with fine writing and hand-drawn pictures. Around the picture of the Earth the words written were, *Living Green Values, Respect and Care for Earth, and its Humans and Animals.*

Everyone started clapping. They clapped so long Katie could see Tanya's eyes swimming in happy tears.

"I thought that if we really respected the Earth and all humans and animals, we would do all the things we've been talking about," said Tanya. "So, I just wrote them down."

The next week was fun. Ms. Bennett had them get together in small groups to create skits/dramas on the environment and songs and poems. Pam asked if they could do a show for the other students at their school and at the primary school. Pam sure was smiling a lot more now. "Hmm," thought Katie, "I think she has more hope."

Ms. Bennett accepted Papa's offer to take the whole class out on his work boat for a picnic on the little island near the place where Papa had found the whale. George and his friends, Mama, and Tanya's mom, were coming too.

"But," said Katie to the class with a somewhat worried look, "everything's going to be organic and vegetarian. Is that okay?"

Shouts of "Yes!", "Hooray!" and "Let's hear it for veggie burgers!" filled the air.



Discuss

- In addition to learning about the environment, what else do you think Katie's class learned?
- What do you think helped Tanya and her mother?
- What are other values besides respect and care that you think benefit the Earth?

Bring out the list that the students created during the last lesson to Ms. Bennett's homework question.

Ask:

- Is there anything else that you would like to add to this list?
- Is there anything that you would like to take away?

Activity

Help them in forming groups to mind map their ideas, showing how that one thing, if everyone did it, would affect many other things in the world.

If there is time, allow each group to share their results, they may need more time to make their mind map complete. Older groups may wish to research some of the results so they can do a thorough job

Close with the relaxation/focusing exercise, Sending Peace to the Earth.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 14 **Advertisements Try to Get You to Believe . . .**

Begin with a song.

Share the following concept with students: Appreciating the beauty of nature and the earth sometimes allows us to appreciate the natural beauty of the self more. The more we appreciate natural beauty, the less we are fooled into thinking we have to own certain things or look a certain way to feel good about ourselves or be accepted by others.

In order to sell things, businesses hire advertising firms to create impressive advertisements so people buy their products. Often, they imply that you will be more attractive if you use their product or feel better about yourself if you own what they are selling.

These advertisements can fool people into thinking they need these things to be okay and for other people to consider them okay. When people hear many messages like this,



they often forget about the importance of inner beauty. These messages do not encourage people to respect the earth or the inner self. The self knows there is natural beauty inside. When we have that awareness in our own mind, we can be content about our own value, enjoy others for who they are, and give happiness. Simplicity is being natural. Simplicity is beautiful.

Activity

Ask:

- What ads are aimed at young people your age?

List the ads they mention on the board. Take one ad at a time and ask them to discuss them. You may wish to ask the questions below about several different ads.

- What message is this ad giving?
 - Tell us about specific advertisements. What is their message? What is the implication or the hidden message?
 - What do they want you to do? Why?
 - Is their message beneficial for you?
 - Is their message beneficial for our planet? Why or why not?
- Then make another list, and ask them to create thoughts they think are closer to nature and natural beauty. Take another example and repeat. Keep a list of their examples.

Reflection Point for Ages 12 to 14: Discuss the following point.

- ◆ Simplicity asks whether we are being induced to purchase unnecessary products. Psychological enticements create artificial needs. Desires stimulated by wanting unnecessary things result in value clashes complicated by greed, fear, peer pressure, and a false sense of identity. Once fulfillment of basic necessities allows for a comfortable lifestyles, extremes and excesses invite overindulgence and waste.

Homework for all ages: For one week, ask everyone to experiment with simplicity by wearing simple clothes to school or when out with friends. Say you would like them to remember to keep in mind the following simplicity points: *Simplicity is being natural. Simplicity is beautiful.*



End the lesson, by playing a simple game or cultural activity that does not require purchasing anything. This could be a circle game with physical movement and song, a native cultural dance or song, a camp game or line dancing with a chant. Enjoy simplicity!

Follow-up Activity: At the end of the week, ask for their feelings and reactions about the homework. Ask them to write a short essay on their experience.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH LESSON AND HER OCEANS 15
Freedom from Desires

Begin with a song.

Ask students how they are feeling about their experiment of wearing simple clothes.

Activity

List the Reflection Points below on the board. Ask the students to form small groups and discuss the points.

The following points were offered by students at West Kidlington School:

- ◆ Simplicity is freedom from material desires and emotional desires – permission to simply “be.”
- ◆ Simplicity avoids waste, teaches economy, avoids value clashes complicated by greed, fear, peer pressure, and a false sense of identity.
- ◆ From simplicity grows generosity and sharing.
- ◆ Simplicity is putting others first with kindness, openness, pure intentions – without expectations and conditions.

Include the following Reflection Point in your discussion:

- ◆ Simplicity is giving patience, friendship, and encouragement.

Ask them to make up a slogan on simplicity that they would like to communicate to others. Allow them different options to decorate it.

Close with a creative visualization or a relaxation/focusing exercise.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 16
Enjoying Simple Things



Begin with a song.

Discuss/Share

Say, “Think for a moment of a time when you enjoyed something that you could not buy in a shop.”

Ask:

- What are the simple things you enjoy?
- How often have you said you were bored?
- Was it you that were bored or the things around you that were boring?
- How did our grandparents entertain themselves before TV?

Activities

Sentence Completion: Verbally or in written form, as you think most beneficial for your particular group, ask them to complete the following sentences.

I find life too complicated when . . .

I can calm myself down by . . .

Small group sharing: Form groups of four to five to discuss a simple pleasure you both enjoy, and what you think about in quiet moments. Report to the class.

– *Contributed by Linda Heppenstall*

Dance: Put on some music and ask the students to dance simplicity.

Close with a relaxation/focusing exercise.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 17

A Play

Begin with a song.

Activity

Write a class play about rediscovering the simple things in life/nature. Perhaps perform it for an assembly.

– *Contributed by Linda Heppenstall*

Additional Simplicity and Caring for our Earth and Her Oceans Lessons and Activities



The Precious Present

Begin with a song.

A story that ties in well with the theme of simplicity is “The Precious Present” by Spencer Johnson. It is a simple story about someone who knows when we stay in the present moment, we are free to enjoy it and be nourished by it. We are free from guilt from the past and worry for the future. The story relates well to the following Simplicity Reflection Points:

- ◆ Simplicity is staying in the present and not making things complicated.
- ◆ Simplicity is enjoying a plain mind and intellect.

Activity

After the students read it, ask them to write about what they learned and to draw a picture about their story (for younger students) or create a poem. For students ages eight to ten, attach the stories to the pictures and form a big book of lessons learned.

Close with the Drop of Water Creative Visualization.

Simplicity Challenge – Declutter

Natasha Panzer, an 8th grade teacher at Mizzentop School, likes to offer the following Simplicity Challenge to her students.

She shares: “During this month, your simplicity challenge is to declutter your bedroom and your work space in your home. There is no specific time frame for this assignment. You will need to pick a time that works for you. Clutter is one of the biggest causes of stress in our lives. When we clutter our lives physically and mentally, it drains our energy. When we declutter our homes, we create more space for peaceful living.”

Discuss with the students the above idea and the Reflection Points:

- ◆ My mind settles more quickly and I feel clearer when my living space is not cluttered.
- ◆ I do not need so many things in my life to live richly.

She gives students the following information in written form:

Your goal is to only have objects out in your bedroom and your work space that are useful and/or bring you joy. Try to minimize the decorative items for the sake of this challenge and see how having only a few of your most prized possessions out changes the



way your living space feels. After you declutter, try to keep your bedroom and your work space uncluttered for as long as possible. Happy decluttering!

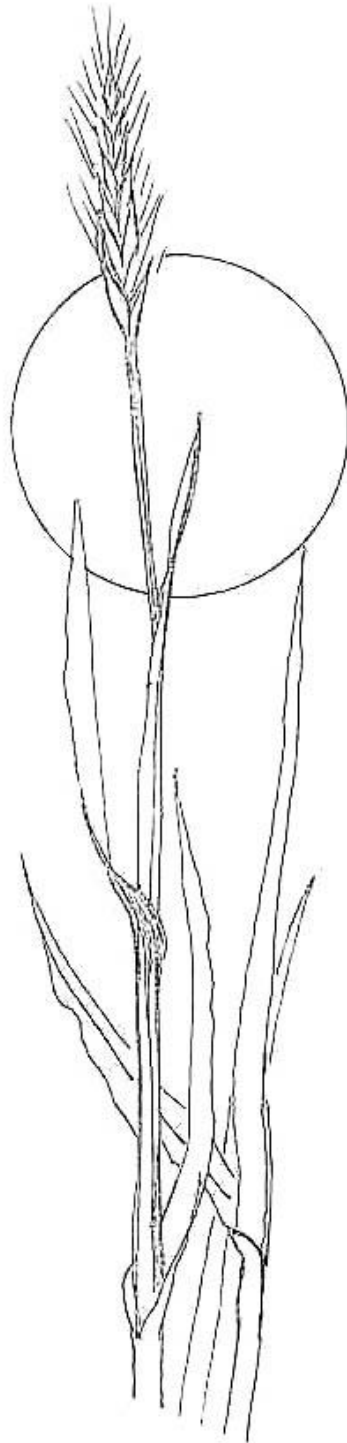
P.S. Playing your favorite music while you declutter will help the process along.

After you go through this process, please answer the following questions and return to me.

1. What possessions did you choose to leave out in plain view?

2. Did you find belongings to donate?

3. Was the process of decluttering difficult, liberating, fun, or torturous? Explain how you felt during the process and how you feel now that your space is uncluttered.





CHAPTER THREE:

Activities for Young Adults

Simplicity and Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans Lessons

Each value is important, but the importance of simplicity and taking care of our Earth and her oceans at this point in time is paramount as human demands on the planet's resources increase and global climate change imperils human existence.

Simplicity as a value is addressed in a few ways: enjoying the simplicity and beauty of nature, valuing the simplicity and wisdom of indigenous cultures, simplicity as a value that helps us create sustainable development and simplicity as a way to reduce our material demands on the planet.

The Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans lessons begin with an article by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, responding to the concerns of youth on climate change. The key provision of the Paris Climate Change Agreement, to try to keep the global temperature to rising only to 1.5 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial age, and definitely below 2 degrees Celsius, is used to branch into the variables creating the increase in temperature. Young adults are presented with specific scientific information about greenhouse gases, what is causing them, and the harmful effects of human actions on the ocean, rivers, animals, air and ground – and on human beings themselves. Students are encouraged to explore daily options to reduce their carbon footprint, reduce their use of plastics, to research an area of interest and do a service-learning project to benefit the environment. Please add your own ideas and help them do what is most needed in the local community. Please allow them to go with their interests, motivation and project ideas – allow them time to research, do projects and be constructively creative.

Paulo Barros contributed several activities to this unit for young adults. He has highlighted the importance of exploring the effects of not only man on the environment but how social prejudice, anti-values and injustice impact us all, and our Earth, a concept reinforced by the UN Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystems.



Enjoy doing the activities with the students. We will be happy to post news of your projects, poems and songs in our newsletter or on the international website.

Thank you for helping take care of our Earth and her oceans.

Simplicity and Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans Reflection Points

- ◆ Simplicity is natural.
- ◆ Simplicity is learning from the earth.
- ◆ Simplicity is beautiful.
- ◆ Simplicity is relaxing.
- ◆ Simplicity is being natural.
- ◆ Simplicity is staying in the present and not making things complicated.
- ◆ Simplicity is learning from the wisdom of indigenous cultures.
- ◆ Simplicity is giving patience, friendship, and encouragement.
- ◆ Simplicity is appreciating the small things in life.
- ◆ Simplicity is freedom from material desires and emotional desires – permission to simply “be.” – *Contributed by students at West Kidlington School*
- ◆ Simplicity is putting others first with kindness, openness, pure intentions – without expectations and conditions. – *Contributed by students at West Kidlington School*
- ◆ Simplicity avoids waste, teaches economy, avoids value clashes complicated by greed, fear, peer pressure, and a false sense of identity.
- ◆ Simplicity is appreciating inner beauty and recognizing the value of all actors, even the poorest and worst off.
- ◆ Simplicity helps create sustainable development.
- ◆ Simplicity teaches us economy – how to use our resources keeping future generations in mind.
- ◆ Simplicity calls upon people to rethink their values.
- ◆ Simplicity asks whether we are being induced to purchase unnecessary products. Psychological enticements create artificial needs. Desires stimulated by wanting unnecessary things result in value clashes complicated by greed, fear, peer pressure, and a false sense of identity. Once fulfillment of basic necessities allows for a comfortable lifestyle, extremes and excesses invite overindulgence and waste.
- ◆ Simplicity helps decrease the gap between “the haves” and “the have nots” by demonstrating the logic of true economics: to earn, save, invest, and share the sacrifices and the prosperity so that there can be a better quality of life for all people regardless of where they were born.



SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 1

Simple Things

Begin with a song about the beauty of nature or a melody from a native musical instrument.

Write the following Reflection Points on the board.

- ◆ Simplicity is natural.
- ◆ Simplicity is learning from the earth.
- ◆ Simplicity is beautiful.
- ◆ Simplicity is relaxing.
- ◆ Simplicity is being natural.
- ◆ Simplicity is staying in the present and not making things complicated.

Explore general concepts of simplicity through questions and discussion:

- What is simplicity?
- What simple things do you enjoy?
- What things do you enjoy that cost very little or no money?
- What can we learn from the Earth?
- When can life be too complicated?
- In what ways can life be simplified?

Activity

Do a simple activity. If possible, take a walk at a nearby park or go to a place of natural beauty. While there, ask them to walk slowly in silence for 15 minutes and observe the simple things in nature, such as the light on a leaf, buds or tiny flowers, clouds, birds, the bark on trees, etc. If it is not possible to for a walk, perhaps invite them to paint something simple or write a poem to themselves from a bird or another animal – advising them about the simple beauties of life.

Invite the students to share if they would like to do so.

Close with a relaxation/focusing exercise of your choice.

Homework: Give the students the following Simplicity-Is-Relaxing and Simplicity-Is-Not-Making-Things-Complicated homework. Ask them to spend ten minutes every day for one week relaxing, without electronics. They may wish to focus on a tree, a flower, or a light as they relax. Or go for a walk and observe simple things. Perhaps lie under a tree



and watch the leaves or lie on the ground and watch the sky. For a few minutes, simply be an observer, free from desires. Focus on the beauty of what is natural. Think about what it would feel like to know that the natural you is beautiful.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 2 **Simply Being**

Begin with a song and a Relaxation/Focusing Exercise.

Discuss/Share

Ask about their experiences doing the Simplicity-Is-Relaxing and Simplicity-Is-Not-Making-Things-Complicated homework. Listen with interest and respect and acknowledge their experiences.

List the Reflection Points on the board. Ask the students to form small groups and discuss the points.

- ◆ Simplicity is staying in the present and not making things complicated.
- ◆ Simplicity is freedom from material desires and emotional desires – permission to simply “be.”
- ◆ Simplicity is putting others first with kindness, openness, pure intentions – without expectations and conditions.

Ask:

- Many people overthink and worry about things. When that happens, what are simple things we can do to help ourselves relax? (Such as take a deep breath, take a walk, tell yourself that everything will be okay, talk to a close friend, etc.)
- Sometimes people say that we walk around like “human doings” rather than “human beings”. Do you feel like that sometimes? If so, what simple things help you relax and “be”, easing the stress of doing?

Activity

Each small group can choose to write one of their own Relaxation/Focusing Exercises or make up a slogan on simplicity. Allow them different options to decorate the slogan. They might wish to use things from nature.

Close with one of the relaxation/focusing exercises they created.



SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 3 **Learning from Indigenous Cultures**

Note to Educator: Do one or more lessons about indigenous cultures. Educators who teach anthropology or social studies will be great resources. Or, have the educators in those departments simply focus on simplicity and honoring the wisdom of indigenous cultures when doing the regular curriculum. The United Nations Global Assessment Report on biodiversity and ecosystems acknowledges the positive contributions of Indigenous Peoples to sustainability and suggests learning from Indigenous Peoples.

Purpose: To get in touch with the wisdom of indigenous cultures in your own country or in other countries. In ancient traditions, natural simplicity, wisdom, and respect for the earth were inherent in almost every practice. The needs of the people and the methods to satisfy those needs were simple and without waste.

To explore this, look at the natural simplicity in the lives of your country's Indigenous Peoples. Discover ways in which Indigenous Peoples have used resources by reading a story, visiting a museum or a library with an exhibit, or viewing films or videos. Invite members of the community who can share artifacts or crafts from your heritage. Perhaps invite someone from the community who can share about an indigenous culture and the relationship of their people to the environment. It seems each indigenous culture has a way to honor the Earth.

Begin with a song about the beauty of nature, or a melody from a native musical instrument.

Discuss the Reflection Points:

- ◆ Simplicity is learning from the Earth.
- ◆ Simplicity teaches us economy — how to use our resources wisely, keeping future generations in mind.
- ◆ Simplicity is learning from the wisdom of indigenous cultures.



Activity

Step 1. Invite the students to form small group and study one indigenous culture. All the groups could study one culture or different cultures around the globe.

Ask each group to explore:

- ❖ The practices of the indigenous culture being studied.
- ❖ How the people of indigenous cultures were wise in their use of resources.
- ❖ How they honored the Earth or her ocean.
- ❖ Which values were inherent in their different practices?
- ❖ Which aspects of their wisdom they think would be beneficial to practice in today's world.

Step 2. Invite each group to share their findings. They may wish to showcase one or more elements of the culture, such as sharing music, art, shelter, attitudes toward nature, etc.

Close by sharing some music from an indigenous culture and a few reflective statements about the values within that culture or one of the relaxation/focusing exercises created by students during the last lesson.

Advanced Study Option: Explore some of the following questions.

- What factors contributed to the destruction and/or decline of native cultures?
- Have these same factors negatively affected other elements of our current society or the environment?
- What values were behind their beliefs and practices? How did those become affected by the imposition of the current culture?
- What practices would have been beneficial to the perseverance of that culture?
- Which of those practices would serve to help other segments of society or the environment now?

SIMPLICITY AND CARING

FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 4

Climate Change: Let's listen to the world's young people

Begin with a song about nature, indigenous music, recordings of whales or another choice related to nature and/or simplicity.

Lesson Content

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, in an op-ed article in *The Guardian* (15 March 2019), featured as "The climate strikers should inspire us all to act at



the next UN summit,” said leaders need to listen to the concerns of youth on climate change and presented plans for the Climate Action Summit in September (2019) for concrete and ambitious solutions. He wrote:

“Tens of thousands of young people took to the streets on Friday with a clear message to world leaders: act now to save our planet and our future from the climate emergency.

These schoolchildren have grasped something that seems to elude many of their elders: we are in a race for our lives, and we are losing. The window of opportunity is closing – we no longer have the luxury of time, and climate delay is almost as dangerous as climate denial.

FacebookTwitter
Pinterest
Photograph: Neil
Hall/EPA



My
generation
has failed to

respond properly to the dramatic challenge of climate change. This is deeply felt by young people. No wonder they are angry.

Despite years of talk, global emissions are reaching record levels and show no sign of peaking. The concentration of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere is the highest it has been in 3m years. The last four years were the four hottest on record, and winter temperatures in the Arctic have risen by 3-4°C in the last 50 years. Sea levels are rising, coral reefs are dying and we are starting to see the life-threatening impact of climate change on health, through air pollution, heatwaves and risks to food security.

Thankfully, we have the Paris agreement – a visionary, viable, forward-looking policy framework that sets out exactly what needs to be done to stop climate disruption and reverse its impact. But the agreement itself is meaningless without ambitious action. That is why I am bringing world leaders together at a climate action summit later this year. I am calling on all leaders to come to New York in September with concrete, realistic plans to enhance their nationally determined contributions by 2020, in line



with reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 45% over the next decade, and to net zero by 2050.

The summit will bring together governments, the private sector, civil society, local authorities and other international organisations to develop ambitious solutions in six areas: renewable energy; emission reductions; sustainable infrastructure; sustainable agriculture and management of forests and oceans; withstanding climate impacts; and investing in the green economy.

The latest analysis shows that if we act now, we can reduce carbon emissions within 12 years and limit global warming to 1.5C. But if we continue along our current path, the consequences are impossible to predict.

While climate action is essential to combat an existential threat, it also comes with costs. So action plans must not create winners and losers or add to economic inequality: they must be fair and create new opportunities for those negatively impacted, in the context of a just transition.

Business is on our side. Accelerated climate solutions can strengthen our economies and create jobs, while bringing cleaner air, preserving natural habitats and biodiversity, and protecting our environment.

New technologies and engineering solutions are already delivering energy at a lower cost than the fossil-fuel driven economy. Solar and onshore wind are now the cheapest sources of new bulk power in virtually all major economies. But we must set radical change in motion.

This means ending subsidies for fossil fuels and high-emitting agriculture and shifting towards renewable energy, electric vehicles and climate-smart practices. It means carbon pricing that reflects the true cost of emissions, from climate risk to the health hazards of air pollution. And it means accelerating the closure of coal plants and replacing jobs with healthier alternatives so that the transformation is just, inclusive and profitable.

Momentum is building, people are listening and there is a new determination to unleash the promise of the Paris agreement. The climate summit must be the starting point to build the future we need.

I will close with a message for those who marched on Friday. I know young people can and do change the world.



Many of you are anxious and fearful for the future, and I understand your concerns and your anger. But I know humankind is capable of enormous achievements. Your voices give me hope.

The more I see your commitment and activism, the more confident I am that we will win. Together, with your help and thanks to your efforts, we can and must beat this threat and create a cleaner, safer, greener world for everyone."

UN Secretary-General Remarks three years later:

On 4 April 2022, three years after his above letter to young people of the world, the UN Secretary-General António Guterres reacted to the latest findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. He said "unless governments everywhere reassess their energy policies, the world will be uninhabitable.

Source: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/04/1115452>

His comments reflected the IPCC's insistence that all countries must reduce their fossil fuel use substantially, extend access to electricity, improve energy efficiency and increase the use of alternative fuels, such as hydrogen. Unless action is taken soon, some major cities will be under water, Mr. Guterres said in a video message, which also forecast "unprecedented heatwaves, terrifying storms, widespread water shortages and the extinction of a million species of plants and animals".

The UN chief added: "This is not fiction or exaggeration. It is what science tells us will result from our current energy policies. We are **on a pathway to global warming of more than double the 1.5-degree (Celsius, or 2.7-degrees Fahrenheit) limit**" that was agreed in Paris in 2015.

Providing the scientific proof to back up that damning assessment, the IPCC report – written by hundreds of leading scientists and agreed by 195 countries – noted that greenhouse gas emissions generated by human activity, have increased since 2010 "across all major sectors globally".

In an op-ed article penned for the Washington Post, Mr. Guterres described the latest IPCC report as "a **litany of broken climate promises**", which revealed a "yawning gap between climate pledges, and reality."

He wrote that high-emitting governments and corporations, were not just turning a blind eye, "they are adding fuel to the flames by continuing to invest in climate-choking industries. Scientists warn that we are already perilously close to tipping points that could lead to cascading and irreversible climate effects."



Encouraging climate action

“We are at a crossroads. The decisions we make now can secure a livable future,” said IPCC Chair Hoesung Lee. **“I am encouraged by climate action being taken in many countries.** There are policies, regulations and market instruments that are proving effective. If these are scaled up and applied more widely and equitably, they can support deep emissions reductions and stimulate innovation.”

To limit global warming to around 1.5C (2.7°F), the IPCC report insisted that global greenhouse gas emissions would have to peak “before 2025 at the latest, and be reduced by 43 per cent by 2030”.

“It’s now or never, if we want to limit global warming to 1.5°C (2.7°F); without immediate and deep emissions reductions across all sectors, it will be impossible,” said Jim Skea, Co-Chair of IPCC Working Group III, which released the latest report. Global temperatures will stabilise when carbon dioxide emissions reach net zero. For 1.5C (2.7F), this means achieving net zero carbon dioxide emissions globally in the early 2050s; for 2C (3.6°F), it is in the early 2070s, the IPCC report states.

“This assessment shows that limiting warming to around 2C (3.6F) still requires global greenhouse gas emissions to peak before 2025 at the latest, and be reduced by a quarter by 2030.”

Policy base

A great deal of importance is attached to IPCC assessments because they provide governments with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies. They also play a key role in international negotiations to tackle climate change. Among the sustainable and emissions-busting solutions that are available to governments, the IPCC report emphasised that rethinking how cities and other urban areas function in future could help significantly in mitigating the worst effects of climate change.

“These (reductions) can be achieved through lower energy consumption (such as by creating compact, walkable cities), electrification of transport in combination with low-emission energy sources, and enhanced carbon uptake and storage using nature,” the report suggested. “There are options for established, rapidly growing and new cities,” it said.

Echoing that message, IPCC Working Group III Co-Chair, Priyadarshi Shukla, insisted that “the right policies, infrastructure and technology...to enable **changes to our lifestyles and behaviour, can result in a 40 to 70 per cent reduction** in greenhouse



gas emissions by 2050. “The evidence also shows that these lifestyle changes can improve our health and wellbeing.”

Discuss/Share

Inform: Protests by millions of school children and young people around the world are bringing attention to the urgency of dealing with climate change.

Ask:

- How did you feel about UN Secretary-General António Guterres’ comments?
- Are there any other thoughts you’d like to share about his article to young people or his subsequent remarks three years later in reaction to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report of 2022?
- Have you been part of the protests?
- What are the main concerns of those protesting?
- What are your concerns about climate change?
- What would you like to tell leaders of governments about this?
- There is a saying: Think globally, act locally. How does this relate to climate change?

Please remark in your own words: “We are studying this unit on Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans because we can make a difference. If we understand how humans are destroying the Earth, we can stop the destruction and allow the Earth to heal.”

Please add, “As a recent IPCC report stated, The Report also tells us that it is not too late to make a difference, but only if we start now at every level from local to global,” he said. “Through ‘transformative change’, nature can still be conserved, restored and used sustainably – this is also key to meeting most other global goals. By transformative change, we mean a fundamental, system-wide reorganization across technological, economic and social factors, including paradigms, goals and values.”

Activity

Ask the students if they would like to research information about climate change and prepare a presentation to the class and/or create a message, poster or song about caring for the earth. Divide them into three or four groups.

Group One: Invite them to study the effects of climate change. There are some interesting videos available on UN sites and other internet sites.

Group Two: Invite them to study the Paris Climate Change Agreement, and subsequent UN Climate Action Summits.



Group Three: Invite them to create a message, poster or song about caring for the earth.

Group Four: Invite them to study the Global Assessment Report produced by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. A three-year study released in May 2019 includes information that one million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction within decades unless there is transformative change. The June 2022 report provides further information and is available at <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/>

- Allow a little time for each group to study and then present their findings or create something artistically and share. They may need more time to study in order to present their findings to the entire class.

Close both classes with the Sending Peace to the Earth relaxation/focusing exercises or one of the other relaxation/focusing exercises in Item 3 of the Appendix.

Resources/Information

Science related to climate change:

- ❖ Look up the recent **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**, the United Nations' body for assessing the science related to climate change.

Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability

The Working Group II contribution to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report assesses the impacts of climate change, looking at ecosystems, biodiversity, and human communities at global and regional levels. It also reviews vulnerabilities and the capacities and limits of the natural world and human societies to adapt to climate change.

- ❖ **UN Climate Action Summit:**

Source: <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/>

COP27: Seeking solidarity and action for people and planet

“On every climate front, the only solution is decisive action in solidarity,” says the Secretary-General, ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference, COP27, which will take place from 6 to 18 November 2022 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, to deliver action on issues critical to addressing the climate emergency – from reducing greenhouse gas emissions, helping communities build resilience and adapt to the inevitable impacts of climate change, to financing climate action and addressing loss and damage in developing countries.



Sending Peace to the Earth Relaxation/Focusing Exercise

“Sit comfortably and let yourself be still inside. . . . Be aware of how your body is feeling. . . . Relax the body and breathe in the light of peace. . . . Let the light of peace surround you Breathe out any tension . . . and breathe in the light of peace. . . . Breathe out any tension . . . and breathe in the light of peace. . . . Invite the peace to relax your muscles more. . . . This peace is quiet and safe . . . it reminds me that I value peace. . . . Let yourself be very still and think . . . I am me . . . I am naturally full of peace and love. . . . Let your body relax even more . . . and focus on surrounding yourself with the light of peace. . . . The more you concentrate on peace, the more that peace will naturally go outward to nature . . . to the mountains and streams . . . to the clouds and the ocean . . . to the dolphins and the whales . . . to the birds . . . to the animals large and small. . . . Concentrate on peace and see that peace flowing outward to our planet . . . to the rivers and ocean . . . to the trees and the meadows . . . to the mountains and the sky. . . . I am full of peace. . . . I am one who is acting to help our Earth be healthy again. . . . This will happen in time. . . . Our planet will be well. . . . I picture the light of peace all around the Earth . . . and our beautiful oceans being healthy again . . . our beautiful Earth being healthy again. . . . Feeling relaxed and peaceful . . . begin to be aware of where you are sitting and bring your attention back to this room.”

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 5

What is causing climate change?

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature.

Ask how they are and if they have been thinking about the last lesson. Allow them time to share their thoughts. Listen and acknowledge.

Lesson Content

Inform: In our last lesson we looked at the effects of climate change, the Paris Agreement and subsequent UN Climate Action Summits. The Paris Climate Change Agreement set the goal of “holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C (3.6°F) above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C (2.7°F). . . . Human activities have already warmed the planet about 1°C



(1.8°F) since the pre-industrial era”¹, that is the latter half of the 19th century. “At the current rate of warming, Earth would reach the 1.5°C threshold between 2030 and 2052.”

“Limiting warming to 1.5°C is not easy and requires drastic changes to our energy, transportation, food, and building systems. Net CO₂ (carbon dioxide) emissions need to drop 45 percent from their 2010 levels by 2030, and reach net-zero by 2050 (meaning that any remaining CO₂ emissions would need to be offset by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere). Meeting this goal involves a large jump in renewables for the global energy supply, providing 70-85 percent of electricity use by 2050 because CO₂ remains in the atmosphere for centuries, we have already committed to future warming with our historical emissions.” ... It is also important to remove some CO₂ from the atmosphere.”

In that agreement, world leaders asked the IPCC, the preeminent climate science body, “to provide a Special Report in 2018 on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways.”

As a result, even with drastic emissions cuts, meeting this 1.5°C goal likely means a brief exceedance, or overshoot, of the 1.5°C threshold before returning to that level for the longer term and requires some removal of CO₂ from the atmosphere – either via reforestation, soil carbon sequestration, or technological advancements enabling direct capture of carbon from the atmosphere.

Even limiting warming to 1.5°C comes with higher risks from extreme heat, drought, and heavy precipitation. This harms agriculture, food and water supplies, human health, and the oceans. Optimum agricultural belts will shift, water supplies will be at additional risk, and disease-carrying insects will move into new areas. Additionally, an extra half-degree Celsius (about 1°F) from 1.5°C to 2°C would magnify impacts:

- Doubling the number of people affected by water scarcity
- Doubling the losses of corn yields in the tropics
- Increasing by 10 times the frequency of ice-free summers in the Arctic Ocean
- Losing 30 percent more coral reefs (meaning a total of 99 percent of coral reefs will disappear)
- Losing an additional 50 percent of global fisheries
- Adding 10 million people to those affected by sea level rise

With current technologies in place, drastic changes still make the goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C possible, but the window is rapidly closing to meet that goal.

¹ Climate Central, April 2019



Source: <https://www.climatecentral.org/gallery/graphics/the-globe-is-already-above-1c>

Say, “So let’s look at how we humans contribute to the warming of the planet. The warming of the planet is called the greenhouse effect.”

- Ask one of the students to read the following aloud to the group as you list the things that are causing global warming.

How do humans contribute to the Greenhouse Effect?

Source: West, Larry. *What is the Greenhouse Effect?* May 11, 2018. ThoughtCo. <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-the-greenhouse-effect-1203853>

“While the greenhouse effect is an essential environmental prerequisite for life on Earth, there really can be too much of a good thing.

- The problems begin when human activities distort and accelerate the natural process by creating *more* greenhouse gases in the atmosphere than are necessary to warm the planet to an ideal temperature.
 - Burning natural gas, coal and oil – including gasoline for automobile engines – raises the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.
 - Some farming practices and land-use changes increase the levels of methane and nitrous oxide.
 - Many factories produce long-lasting industrial gases that do not occur naturally, yet contribute significantly to the enhanced greenhouse effect and “global warming” that is currently under way.
 - Deforestation also contributes to global warming. Trees use carbon dioxide and give off oxygen in its place, which helps to create the optimal balance of gases in the atmosphere. As more forests are logged for timber or cut down to make way for farming, however, there are fewer trees to perform this critical function.”
- Ask another student to read the following aloud to the group as you continue to list the things that are causing global warming. Perhaps ask another student to help you mind map in order to keep up with the material being read.

What are the main man-made greenhouse gases?

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2011/feb/04/man-made-greenhouse-gases>



“The strength of the Earth's greenhouse effect is determined by the concentration in the atmosphere of a handful of greenhouse gases. The one that causes the most warming overall is water vapour – though human activity affects its level in the atmosphere indirectly rather than directly.

The greenhouse gases that humans do emit directly in significant quantities are:

- **Carbon dioxide** (CO₂). Accounts for around three-quarters of the warming impact of current human greenhouse-gas emissions. The key source of CO₂ is the burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas, though deforestation is also a very significant contributor.

- **Methane** (CH₄). Accounts for around 14% of the impact of current human greenhouse-gas emissions. Key sources include agriculture (especially livestock and rice fields), fossil fuel extraction and the decay of organic waste in landfill sites. Methane doesn't persist in the atmosphere as long as CO₂, though its warming effect is much more potent for each gram of gas released.

- **Nitrous oxide** (N₂O). Accounts for around 8% of the warming impact of current human greenhouse-gas emissions. Key sources include agriculture (especially nitrogen-fertilised soils and livestock waste) and industrial processes. Nitrous oxide is even more potent per gram than methane.

- **Fluorinated gases** ("F gases"). Account for around 1% of the warming impact of current human greenhouse-gas emissions. Key sources are industrial processes. F-gases are even more potent per gram than nitrous oxide.

Human activity also changes the planet's temperature in other ways. For example, vapour trails from planes, soot from fires and tropospheric ozone created indirectly by local pollution all tend to increase warming. On the other hand, aerosol particles produced by some vehicles and industrial processes tend to bounce sunlight away from the earth, temporarily counteracting some of the warming caused by man-made greenhouse gases.

Discuss/Share

Share: “This list on the board is the things that are causing the warming of our Earth’s atmosphere. It is the beginning of a list of the things that we can impact. Each one of us has an impact on the environment; we can make a difference. We will be adding to this list in the next couple of weeks.”

Ask:

- Discussion? Does anyone have a question about any of this?



- Is there anything you would like to add?
- Say, “Let’s pick areas to explore in terms of the greenhouse gases that humans emit directly in significant quantities. Let’s start with carbon dioxide (CO₂). This accounts for about ‘three-quarters of the warming impact of current human greenhouse-gas emissions. The key source of CO₂ is the burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas.’ Deforestation is also a very significant contributor.”

Activity – Decreasing CO₂ Emissions

Step 1. Inform the students that you will be asking them to work as small groups to discuss ways to reduce CO₂ emissions. One way to decrease the use of coal, oil and gas is to use renewable energy sources.

Share the following news: As of April 2019, a third of global power capacity was based on renewable energy, a huge increase over ten years before.

Source: UN Climate Change News, 3 April 2019. <https://unfccc.int/news/renewable-energy-accounts-for-third-of-global-power-capacity-irena>

“The decade-long trend of strong growth in renewable energy capacity continued in 2018 with global additions of 171 gigawatts (GW), according to new data released by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). The annual increase of 7.9 per cent was bolstered by new additions from solar and wind energy, which accounted for 84 per cent of the growth. A third of global power capacity is now based on renewable energy.

Say, “We still have a long way to go, but we are moving in the right direction.”

Step 2. Divide students into small working groups. Ask them to discuss/research:

- current renewable energy industry methods being used to decrease the use of coal, oil and gas
- things people can do in their daily lives to decrease use of coal, oil and gas. Perhaps research the decrease in emissions if using a bicycle versus a car fueled by gasoline; how can we organize our lives to use less energy
- things people can do to decrease deforestation
- planting trees as something people and communities can do to combat climate change

Step 3. Ask each group to prepare a presentation to the class. These can be given during the next lesson.

Close with the Sending Peace to the Earth relaxation/focusing exercise.



SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 6
Decreasing Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature.

Ask how they are and if they have been thinking about the last lesson. Allow them time to share their thoughts. Listen and acknowledge.

Activity

Step 1. Allow the small groups to prepare for their presentations.

Step 2. Invite each small group to present. As they present, create a list titled What We Can Do Daily on a large piece of paper or on the board of things people can do to decrease carbon dioxide emissions. After the first group, only list new actions. Keep that list in a prominent place. Lead the applause after each presentation.

Step 3. Ask them to think about increasing awareness of this challenge. Is everyone aware of the causes of climate change, the importance of decreasing emissions and what practical things they can do to help in this important task?

Step 4. Invite the small groups to create a song, poster, slogan or campaign to raise awareness.

Step 5. Invite them to share their creation with the entire group.

If there is time, close with a relaxation/focusing exercise of their choice.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 7
Deforestation and the Exchange Between Trees and Humans

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature.

Ask how they are and if they have been thinking about the last lesson. Allow them time to share their thoughts. Listen and acknowledge.

Ask:

- Are there any other practical things you have thought of that each of us could do to decrease carbon emissions? If so, add it to the viewable What We Can Do Daily list created during the previous lesson. (A sample What We Can Do Daily List is in the Appendix, Item 5.)
- How about turning off the television or putting on sleep a computer or tablet when not using it? Each one can do that.



Lesson Content

Source: National Geographic. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/global-warming/deforestation/>

Climate 101: Deforestation

By Christina Nunez, published 7 February 2019

“As the world seeks to slow the pace of climate change, preserve wildlife, and support billions of people, trees inevitably hold a major part of the answer. Yet the mass destruction of trees – deforestation – continues, sacrificing the long-term benefits of standing trees for short-term gain.

Forests still cover about 30 percent of the world’s land area, but they are disappearing at an alarming rate. Between 1990 and 2016, the world lost 502,000 square miles (1.3 million square kilometers) of forest, according to the World Bank – an area larger than South Africa. Since humans started cutting down forests, 46 percent of trees have been felled, according to a 2015 study in the journal *Nature*. About 17 percent of the Amazonian rainforest has been destroyed over the past 50 years, and losses recently have been on the rise.

We need trees for a variety of reasons, not least of which is that they absorb not only the carbon dioxide that we exhale, but also the heat-trapping greenhouse gases that human activities emit. As those gases enter the atmosphere, global warming increases, a trend scientists now prefer to call climate change. Tropical tree cover alone can provide 23 percent of the climate mitigation needed over the next decade to meet goals set in the Paris Agreement in 2015, according to one estimate.

Causes of deforestation

Farming, grazing of livestock, mining, and drilling combined account for more than half of all deforestation. Forestry practices, wildfires and, in small part, urbanization account for the rest. In Malaysia and Indonesia, forests are cut down to make way for producing palm oil, which can be found in everything from shampoo to saltines. In the Amazon, cattle ranching and farms – particularly soy plantations – are key culprits.

Logging operations, which provide the world’s wood and paper products, also fell countless trees each year. Loggers, some of them acting illegally, also build roads to access more and more remote forests – which leads to further deforestation. Forests are also cut as a result of growing urban sprawl as land is developed for homes.



Not all deforestation is intentional. Some is caused by a combination of human and natural factors like wildfires and overgrazing, which may prevent the growth of young trees.

Why it matters and what can be done

Deforestation affects the people and animals where trees are cut, as well as the wider world. Some 250 million people living in forest and savannah areas depend on them for subsistence and income – many of them among the world’s rural poor. Eighty percent of Earth’s land animals and plants live in forests, and deforestation threatens species including the orangutan, Sumatran tiger, and many species of birds.

Removing trees deprives the forest of portions of its canopy, which blocks the sun’s rays during the day and retains heat at night. That disruption leads to more extreme temperature swings that can be harmful to plants and animals.

Yet the effects of deforestation reach much farther. The South American rainforest, for example, influences regional and perhaps even global water cycles, and it’s key to the water supply in Brazilian cities and neighboring countries. The Amazon actually helps furnish water to some of the soy farmers and beef ranchers who are clearing the forest. The loss of clean water and biodiversity from all forests could have many other effects we can’t foresee, touching even your morning cup of coffee.

In terms of climate change, cutting trees both adds carbon dioxide to the air and removes the ability to absorb existing carbon dioxide. If tropical deforestation were a country, according to the World Resources Institute, it would rank third in carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions, behind China and the U.S.

The numbers are grim, but many conservationists see reasons for hope. A movement is under way to preserve existing forest ecosystems and restore lost tree cover.

Organizations and activists are working to fight illegal mining and logging – National Geographic Explorer Topher White, for example, has come up with a way to use recycled cell phones to monitor for chainsaws. In Tanzania, the residents of Kokota have planted more than 2 million trees on their small island over a decade, aiming to repair previous damage. And in Brazil, conservationists are rallying in the face of ominous signals that the government may roll back forest protections.

For consumers, it makes sense to examine the products and meats you buy, looking for sustainably produced sources when you can.”



Discuss/Share

Ask:

- Would anyone like to share their response to the article?
- Any other responses or questions?
- Trees benefit us by taking in the carbon dioxide we exhale and producing oxygen. How else do trees benefit us?
- Do you have a favorite tree? Why do you love that tree?

★ The United Nations Environmental Protection Agency has a project asking people to plant one tree per person to help offset our carbon footprint. There was a one billion tree project in China and they achieved their goal of planting one billion trees.

- Would you like to plant some trees as a class project?

➤ If the response is yes, discuss the practicalities for your situation and make a plan.

Consider:

Would you like to do something schoolwide/university-wide or in cooperation with your town/city?

Or, would you like to plant more trees at your home or in a deforested area?

What trees would most benefit your area and the people in it?

Activity

Ask each student to write a message to the world from a tree or an animal in a forest. It can be a simple message or it can take the form of a poem or a song. Allow those who wish to share their message, poem or song to do so. If some have created songs, sing them as a group. If there is time, allow the students to write a response back to the tree – and share those.

Close with playing music with the sounds of nature and invite the young adults to share a line from their poem or song.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 8 **Plastic, Toxic Gyres and the Effect on Marine Life**

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature.



Ask how they are and if they have been thinking about the last lesson. Allow them time to share their thoughts and comment about the tree planting plan, if it's on. Listen and acknowledge.

Lesson Content

Inform: Eight to ten percent of the total oil supply goes to making plastic, adding significantly to the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. However, plastic is also causing other problems.

- If students have the ability to do internet research in the classroom, allow them to do so, and then invite them to share in small groups. Or, share with them the following information.

The processing of 17 million barrels of oil for one country to make bottles of water produced more than 2.5 million tons of carbon dioxide. It took three liters of water to produce one liter of bottled water.²

“The manufacture of one pound of PET (polyethylene terephthalate) plastic can produce up to three pounds of carbon dioxide. . . . The manufacture of plastic resins accounts for the highest percentage of a plastic bottle's carbon footprint. During processing, hydrocarbons in petroleum and natural gas are heated to extremely high temperatures to break down large hydrocarbon molecules into smaller ones.”

Processing plastic resins and transporting plastic bottles contribute to a bottle's carbon footprint in a major way. Estimates show that one 500-milliliter (0.53 quarts) plastic bottle of water has a total carbon footprint equal to 82.8 grams (about 3 ounces) of carbon dioxide.³

Plastic Bags in Our Oceans⁴

“Plastic bags in our oceans are a source of dioxin and other pollutants that are changing marine habitats and polluting our food chain. . . .

Thousands of marine animals choke and die from ingesting this plastic, and many more are being slowly poisoned by the dioxin and other pollutants introduced by this mass of plastic. Dioxin is an endocrine disrupter, a so-called gender-bender pollutant

² <https://pacinst.org/publication/bottled-water-and-energy-a-fact-sheet/>

³ <https://sciencing.com/carbon-footprint-plastic-bottle-12307187.html>

⁴ <https://1bagatime.com/learn/plastic-bags-oceans/>



because it causes gender mutations in fish and land animals that eat fish, like sea bass, seals, and even polar bears.

The plastic in our oceans affects us all. It enters our food chain. It contributes to extinction. It pollutes the very water that replenishes our planet.”

Ocean Gyres

Source: <http://5gyres.org>

“Our oceans are dynamic systems, made up of complex networks of currents that circulate water around the world. Large systems of these currents, coupled with wind and the earth’s rotation, create “gyres”, massive, slow rotating whirlpools. There are five major gyres in the oceans of the world in which plastic trash has accumulated.”

Plastic Pollution Affects Sea Life Throughout the Ocean

Source: <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2018/09/24/plastic-pollution-affects-sea-life-throughout-the-ocean>

“According to the United Nations, at least 800 species worldwide are affected by marine debris, and as much as 80 percent of that litter is plastic. It is estimated that up to 13 million metric tons of plastic ends up in the ocean each year – the equivalent of a rubbish or garbage truck load’s worth every minute. Fish, seabirds, sea turtles, and marine mammals can become entangled in or ingest plastic debris, causing suffocation, starvation, and drowning. Humans are not immune to this threat: While plastics are estimated to take up to hundreds of years to fully decompose, some of them break down much quicker into tiny particles, which in turn end up in the seafood we eat.”

- Please share the following story, taken from LVE’s *Green Values Club* book, Chapter Three. In Chapter Two, Katie and George have found and caught an injured seagull at the beach in the previous chapter. Katie is George’s older sister.

Share a Story: Toxic Plastic Soup

Katie and George took turns carrying the gull home after they tied the dinghy next to Papa’s boat.

“He’s heavier than he looks,” panted George.

“I’ll take him for a while,” Katie replied, holding out her arms for the gull.

Papa and Mama were at the kitchen table when they got home. “Still hungry?” asked Papa. “You both did a lot this morning.”



George and Katie told their story as they sat at the table while Papa poured some yummy smelling soup into two bowls.

Mama had taken the gull into her lap and was gently examining its wing. “He’s had a rough time with that plastic bag, it looks like. Besides being underweight, it looks like he has a broken wing.”

Mama soon had gauze tape wrapped around the gull to hold the broken wing still. “He should be almost as good as new in two or three weeks, unless he’s been eating plastic,” she said. “George, can you find a big box for him?”

“The beach was full of trash today,” said Katie, “more than I’ve ever seen. Plastic caps and bottles, plastic cups and bags, food wrappers, Styrofoam cups, soda cans – it was terrible.”

Papa frowned. “People!” He said it like a swear word.

“Papa, you sound more upset than usual about the trash,” said George, bringing in a big cardboard box.

“Yeah, I am,” said Papa. “Here, let me give you a hand.” He grabbed a knife and helped George cut the top of the cardboard box for the gull.

“I’ve known for years that sea birds, dolphins, whales, seals, sea turtles and many marine animals get caught in nets, fishing wire and human trash, but I just learned last week that *over 60 percent* of marine mammals and seabirds get entangled in human trash or eat marine debris. When they eat plastic trash it causes internal injury, intestinal blockage and starvation. I had no idea the percentage of animals being hurt was that high.”

“And the gyres in the ocean are growing,” said Mama softly. “There are now five huge gyres in different parts of the world where the plastic trash is accumulating. The plastic breaks down into small pieces over time and the animals are mistaking it for food and eating it.”

Papa and George had finished cutting off the top of the box. The family went outside with the box, Katie cradling the gull. The gull seemed to know it was being cared for. It had stopped squawking when Mama immobilized his broken wing. It was bright and beautiful outside, with a soft breeze. The trees gave some needed shade to the patio.

“You’re going to be just fine,” said Katie as she and George petted the gull. Katie brought some food for the gull and George brought some water. They were happy to see the gull eating. They arranged the box so the gull was safe, putting a heavy grill over the box and anchoring it with four stones so a cat couldn’t get him.

“What can we do about it?” Katie asked.

“About what?” said Mama.

“About the animals getting all entangled and the gyres.”



Papa and Mama looked at her and then at each other.

"You know, Katie, you and George are terrific about not trashing our world, and your Papa and I shop carefully, but I think it's time to think more and do more and spread the word. Our Earth, our ocean, is in trouble."

"I want to help," said George.

"Great," Mama smiled. "I think not being a litterbug is important and our family never uses Styrofoam which is full of toxins, but it's time to do much more than that. We need to not buy things that harm the Earth. What's creating the gyres in the ocean is plastic. Some of them are thousands of miles by thousands of miles – it's like toxic plastic soup! The North Pacific Gyre is twice the size of the United States."

"How about we don't buy plastic?" asked George.

"Well, not buying any plastic is not practical," said Mama slowly. "A lot of things are made of hard plastic, like computer keyboards, games and certain car parts. We can recycle those things when they get old – and buy fewer things. It's mostly the one-use disposal plastic that is the problem. So not buying that is a great idea. If we really try, we could probably cut buying one-use disposable plastic things by at least 90%."

"Do you mean like plastic cups, plastic bags and water in plastic bottles?" asked Katie.

"Exactly," said Mama.

"That's going to be a little hard," said George. "Does that mean no sodas in plastic bottles?"

"Yes. Can you do that?" asked Papa with a questioning look.

George winced. "Maybe for the gulls and the seals and the dolphins I could."

"And we could bring our own cloth shopping bags to the store," said Katie. "We could use a glass bottle or metal bottle when we want to bring water somewhere and we could use it over and over again."

"Terrific idea," said Mama. "And I could shop locally at Farmers Markets and try to not buy food wrapped in plastic. And we can wash our sandwich bags and reuse them, or use waxed paper or banana leaves."

"Your mother and I have been talking about this a lot the last few days," said Papa. "We're going to see if the city council will ban plastic bags. Would you like to come to the city council meeting with us?"

"Maybe some of our friends could come too," said Katie.

"Wow," said George, his face lighting up, "what if everyone did this? Maybe we could stop the gyres growing. Toxic plastic soup does not sound good for animals or the ocean. What do you think Mr. Gull?" he asked, looking at the seagull.

Did the seagull just nod in approval?



Ask:

- What values did you perceive in the story?
- Which of the ideas in the story about not contributing to plastic waste would work in your life?
- Do you have other ideas about not contributing to plastic waste?

Lesson Content

Please share the following content with students.

Source: <http://5gyres.org>

“Just a generation ago, we packaged our products in reusable or recyclable materials – glass, metals, and paper, and designed products that would last. Today, our landfills and beaches are awash in plastic packaging, and expendable products that have no value at the end of their short lifecycle.

The short-term convenience of using and throwing away plastic products carries a very inconvenient long-term truth. These plastic water bottles, cups, utensils, electronics, toys, and gadgets we dispose of daily are rarely recycled in a closed loop. We currently recover only 5% of the plastics we produce. What happens to the rest of it? Roughly 50% is buried in landfills, some is remade into durable goods, and much of it remains “unaccounted for”, lost in the environment where it ultimately washes out to sea.

In the ocean, some of ... plastics ... and foamed plastics float on the oceans’ surface. Sunlight and wave action cause these floating plastics to fragment, breaking into increasingly smaller particles, but never completely disappearing – at least on any documented time scale. This plastic pollution is becoming a hazard for marine wildlife, and ultimately for us.

The North Pacific Gyre, the most heavily researched for plastic pollution, spans an area roughly twice the size of the United States – though it is a fluid system, shifting seasonally in size and shape. Designed to last, plastic trash in the gyre will remain for decades or longer, being pushed gently in a slow, clockwise spiral towards the center. Most of the research on plastic trash circulating in oceanic gyres has focused on the North Pacific, but there are 5 major oceanic gyres worldwide, with several smaller gyres in Alaska and Antarctica.

We must demand zero tolerance for plastic pollution. Reducing our consumption and production of plastic waste, and choosing cost-effective alternatives will go a long way towards protecting our seas – and ultimately ourselves.”



Ask:

- Does anyone want to share their response to this information?
- Can you think of other ideas to prevent plastic becoming trash in fields and rivers?
- Can you think of other ideas to help not contribute to plastic waste?
- It's hard to do some of these things sometimes. What thought would encourage you to commit to not using single-use plastic items?

Activity

Step 1. Show the students pictures of the gyres. There are many websites on this subject.

Step 2. If there is time, allow the young adults to divide into small groups to further research this topic, such as the effects of Styrofoam and how plastic particles in the ocean “act as sponges for waterborne contaminants such as PCBs, DDT and other pesticides, PAHs and many hydrocarbons washed through our watersheds.” (Same as source cited above.)

Step 3. Invite each small group to create a poster with their message.

Step 4. Invite each group to display their poster. They may wish to display their posters around the class and school, and post pictures of their posters and messages on social media sites.

Close with the Sending Peace to the Earth relaxation/focusing exercise. Perhaps add a line or two more about the ocean and marine animals and seabirds.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 9 Nitrous Oxide Emissions and the Ocean's Dead Zones

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature.

Ask how they are and if they have been thinking about the last lesson. Allow them time to share their thoughts. Listen and acknowledge.

Lesson Content

Share: “We learned in prior lessons that . . .

Nitrous oxide (N₂O). Accounts for around 8% of the warming impact of current human greenhouse-gas emissions. Key sources include agriculture (especially nitrogen-fertilized soils and livestock waste) and industrial processes. Nitrous oxide is even more potent per gram than methane.”



Please read the abbreviated version of Chapter Four of the *Green Values Club* below.

Share a Story: We Can Make a Difference

Katie talked to some of her friends at school on Monday. They were amazed to hear about how she and George helped their father cut the netting off the trapped whale, rescued the seagull with the broken wing, and totally didn't know about the gyres.

"Why don't you talk to the teacher?" asked Carol. "Let's see if she'll let you tell the class about the gyres and the animals that die because they eat plastic. Maybe we can all get involved in helping."

"You really think everyone will want to?" asked Katie.

"Well maybe not everyone," said Kinesha, "but kids our age have really good hearts. We care about our planet – and our animal friends."

The girls talked to their science teacher at break and she was delighted. "Yes," Ms. Bennett said. "Katie, it would be great to have you share your story, and then let's see what ideas everyone comes up with. Learning about things is good, but doing something for our Earth is proof that we care."

Katie shared her story about the whale, the seagull and learning about the gyres with the whole class. She was a little nervous, and kept clearing her throat. She shared the ideas she and her family had come up with about reducing their use of one-use disposal plastic by 90 percent. Katie was amazed at the interest and the willingness of most of the students to commit to using less plastic.

"No more plastic bottles for me," offered Dana.

"My aunt brings her own cup when she travels on planes," offered Ta.

"No more plastic cups or straws when I'm out," said Maria, "I can ask for a real cup or bring my own."

"Great ideas," said Todd. "If it's going to help, I'm willing to not buy plastic bottles of stuff. But, what if it's really, really hot and I really want a soda? What if I buy it in a can?"

"Well, using an aluminum can is taking something you don't need from the Earth," said Ms. Bennett, "but IF you recycle it's not so bad. It's much better than using plastic."

"Well, I don't know," said a girl named Pam in a doubting voice, "why should we even try? If just a few of us do this, it's not going to help. We can't affect thousands of square miles of toxic plastic soup."

"Think of the one whale and the one seagull," said Katie, all of the sudden feeling confident. "It was a few people that made a difference for them. Small groups of people can make a difference – and imagine what would happen if kids all over the world did



this. Some adults are really into this already. What if all the kids got all their parents to help?"

Katie shared her parents' idea about going to city council to ask for a ban on using plastic bags and plastic straws in the city. "I asked if I could invite some friends to go with us. Would anyone like to help?"

"Me," "me," "me" was heard all around the room.

Ms. Bennett divided them into three action groups on Friday. One group was going to make posters to support the ban on plastic bags and straws and another group was going to make up banners with slogans on respect for the ocean and the Earth by reducing the use of disposable plastic. The third group was going to create a petition to the school superintendent to ban all Styrofoam and reduce the use of plastic.

George and Katie talked on the way home. Katie told all him all about Ms. Bennett's science class on the environment.

"She told us," said Katie, "that there are dead zones in the ocean where there is little or no oxygen due to fertilizer-run-off and nitrogen pollution. She said that there are 405 reported dead zones and that they are doubling every ten years!"

"That's terrible," said George. "So, what happens in these dead zones?" asked George. "There isn't enough oxygen for most fish to live?"

"Good thinking," said Katie. "Unfortunately, the fertilizer-run-off and nitrogen pollution and pesticides kill the kelp. She showed us some pictures of these really cool kelp forests. They are so beautiful. The kelp forests provide food and shelter to thousands of species – and 50 percent of the world's oxygen! Ms. Bennett said it's just as important to keep the kelp forests healthy as it is to keep the rain forests healthy!"

"So how do we stop the fertilizer-run-off and nitrogen pollution?" asked George.

"George, that's a really great question. We didn't think to ask it," said Katie. "Let's ask Mama and Papa when we get home."

Katie's mind flashed back. What had Ms. Bennett said?

"The chemical fertilizers and pesticides pollute the rivers and ocean," Ms. Bennett had said. "Unfortunately, this can also impact the ground water and negatively affect the quality of the soil. Food grown with pesticides has been shown to have harmful effects on humans, contributing to many different kinds of disease."

Ms. Bennett had assigned different groups to research specific components of fertilizers and pesticides. Tanya was part of the group Katie was in. "Wow," Tanya had whispered to Katie, "no wonder we have dead zones in the ocean! Gyres and dead zones. We humans are not taking good care of our world."

Ms. Bennett overheard, "You're right, Tanya," she smiled. "It's important to take care of our world."



Lesson Content

Source: The following excerpts were taken from the website of One World One Ocean.



The ocean is in trouble.

90% of the big fish are gone. Tuna, swordfish, halibut, cod, and flounder populations have been devastated by overfishing. Many of the fish caught today never even have the chance to reproduce.

“There are a reported 405 ocean ‘dead zones’ – areas where there is little to no oxygen due to fertilizer run-off and nitrogen pollution. Dead zones are doubling every ten years.

Our oceans account for 71% of the planet, but less than 2% of our oceans are protected. We have protections in place for nearly 12% of all land (through areas like national parks).

The ocean is at a tipping point. Oceanographer Sylvia Earle says human actions over the next 10 years will determine the state of the ocean for the next 10,000 years.”

Lesson Content

Please read, or have one of the students read, the following information.

Source: Dolphin Research Center.

“Toxins enter the marine environment through land-based runoff and air pollution as well as ocean dumping. Things we use every day, like automobiles, air conditioners, and household products, create many toxins. Researchers routinely find high levels of toxins in the blubber of stranded marine mammals.

For years we dumped heavy metals and organic pollutants into our oceans thinking it was a resource so vast it could absorb any and all materials. It now seems that the oceans are finally becoming saturated. The evidence is in the marine life itself. Fish, turtles, and, most recently, dolphins are now growing cancerous tumors. There is also evidence that pollution in our oceans is weakening the immune systems of marine mammals.

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which are linked to immune system suppression and reproductive failure, exist in extremely high levels in the blubber of



dead dolphins and whales in many parts of the world. PCBs are a form of industrial waste.

Sewage and runoff from excess fertilizer feeds the growth of algae, which not only produce toxins, but also rob the water of huge amounts of oxygen needed by other forms of aquatic life to survive. Anything that upsets the delicate balance of the natural food web can ultimately destroy those species at the top: dolphins, whales, and humans.

Certain chemicals such as DDT and PCBs disrupt biological processes and cause widespread sterility, cancers and genetic abnormalities in populations of land animals.”

Discuss/Share

Invite the students to share their reactions to the given information, acknowledging their concerns and answering any questions.

Ask:

- Have you ever seen green algae growing on rocks near the ocean’s coast? (That is actually algae growing as a result of fertilizer contamination and is an indicator that the ocean in that area is polluted.)

Activity

Step 1. Ask the young adults form small groups and think about possible solutions. They may wish to do some further research.

Step 2. Ask each group to share their discussion and thoughts about possible solutions. Begin a Possible Actions list as they report. Is there anything they can do now?

End with the relaxation/focusing exercise, Sending Peace to the Earth.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 10

Methane Emissions and Diet

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature.

Ask how they are and if they have been thinking about the last lesson. Allow them time to share their thoughts. Listen and acknowledge.

Share: “We learned a couple of lessons back that:

Methane (CH₄). Accounts for around 14% of the impact of current human greenhouse-gas emissions. Key sources include agriculture (especially livestock and



rice fields), fossil fuel extraction and the decay of organic waste in landfill sites. Methane doesn't persist in the atmosphere as long as CO₂, though its warming effect is much more potent for each gram of gas released."

Inform the class that you are going to share an excerpt from another chapter of the *Green Values Club*.

Share a Story: An Organic Garden

Katie announced at dinner one night, "I've decided on my answer to Ms. Bennett's homework question about one thing we can do that will most benefit the planet."

"What's that?" asked Mama.

"Be a vegetarian that eats organic food," said Katie.

"How would that help?" asked George looking puzzled.

"Well," said Katie enthusiastically, "if everyone was a vegetarian then people wouldn't fish and we wouldn't be overfishing and killing millions of fish, and if we all ate organic food then we wouldn't be poisoning the ocean and creating dead zones and the oceans would have healthy kelp forests and enough oxygen for a healthy ocean and enough fish again for the whales, and then the whales and dolphins wouldn't be getting trapped in nets because no one would be using nets!"

"You've really been thinking about this," said Papa, looking a little surprised.

"And," said Katie with a big smile, "that's not all. If everyone was a vegetarian, then we wouldn't be deforesting the Amazon because of the production of cattle and the demand for meat and the output of greenhouse gasses would be less so the whole planet would be healthier."

"Good reasoning," said Mama.

"But you're not really going to do it are you?" asked George.

"Do what?" asked Katie.

"Be a vegetarian."

"Well," said Katie, with a pause and a pleading look at her parents, "I was thinking that maybe I can't be a vegetarian that eats *only* organic food, but I could be a vegetarian that eats as much organic food as we can get." She took a deep breath as she looked at Mama and Papa. "I would really like to try it. Can I please? I really do think it would help our planet."

Mama looked at Katie, and then at Papa. "Luke?"

Papa looked at Mama. "It's okay with me. She has some great reasons. Is it okay with you?"



“Oh Katie,” Mama said a tiny worried look. “You would have to promise me that you would eat healthy.”

“The World Health Organization says it’s the healthiest diet for human beings,” said Katie.

“If you eat healthy,” said Mama firmly. “Promise?”

“Yes.”

“Okay. Then it is okay with me,” Mama said.

Katie sprang up and gave Mama and then Papa a big hug.

“I am proud that you’ve really thought about it and want to help our planet,” said Mama.

“Is it okay if I’m a vegetarian with her for two months and see if it works for me?”

Papa asked Mama with a quizzical look.

Mama just laughed as she looked at her husband. Then she looked at her son with a questioning look. “George?”

“Not me,” cringed George. “It wasn’t my homework!”

“Okay,” laughed Mama. “Two veggies and two non-veggies. But if you two don’t eat healthy, I’m changing my mind!”

Discuss

- What do you think the best human diet would be to help our Earth and the ocean?

Activity

Divide the young adults into two or four groups, as you wish, and study the following.

Group One: The impact of the production of cattle, chickens and other animals in response to the demand for meat and the relationship of this to climate change. Include the output of greenhouse gasses and deforestation as a result of cattle production.

Group Two: Study the effect of different diets on your carbon footprint: meat-based diet, vegetarian diet, vegan diet.

Group Three: Study the effect of nitrogen-based fertilizers versus organic fertilizers on the Earth and her rivers and oceans. They may wish to create a mind map or a flow chart of the effects. They could include the benefits or harmful effects of non-organic versus organic food on the human body.

Invite each group to share their findings.

Close with a relaxation/focusing exercise of your or their choice.



SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 11

Reducing Your Carbon Footprint

Play a song with lyrics about nature.

Lesson Content

To reduce your **carbon footprint** means you are reducing your negative effect on the Earth. While technically a carbon footprint means the sum of all emissions of carbon dioxide that humans create in the use of products, the real intent is to reduce the sum of all emissions of greenhouse gases. In caring for the Earth and her oceans, we can not only decrease our use of products that create greenhouse gas emissions but we can offset our carbon footprint by doing something “green” to negate the effect of the emissions.

Discuss/Share

Ask:

- What would happen if everyone on Earth reduced their carbon footprint to zero by both reducing their use of products that create greenhouse gas emissions and doing something green?
- What are the things you can do to reduce your carbon footprint?

Activity Options

Option One: Ask the students to draw a large footprint on a piece of paper. Inside the footprint they are to write all the things that contribute to their carbon footprint. Ask them what things they think they can do to reduce their carbon footprint. For example, they can walk or bicycle more or not buy so many material things. They can repair or recycle their toys and other material things. They can also reduce their footprint by planting a tree or _____? Ask them to make another picture with another footprint that is smaller, writing all the things they can do to make that happen.

Option Two: Each individual could calculate his or her carbon footprint using one of the internet carbon footprint calculators. Do this for one year ago, and what it will be in one month.

Option Three: Divide the class into groups to calculate the percentage of reductions different changes would make. Make a graph or a poster with a footprint showing the different reductions. What offsetting changes will change your footprint from black into green? Invite them to present their poster to the entire group.



Close with the Sending Peace to the Earth Relaxation/Focusing exercise.

Thinking Homework: I would like all of you to think of one thing you could do that would make a positive difference for the Earth and her oceans – and the amazing things that would happen if everyone on Earth did that one thing. Tell them you know they will do many things to reduce their carbon footprint, but that you want them to think about some of the most important things humans can do.

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 12
Systems Thinking – One amazingly helpful thing to do . . .**

Play a song with lyrics about nature.

Share

- Please tell me about your thinking homework. What one thing you could do that would make a positive difference for the Earth and her oceans – and what amazing things would happen if everyone on Earth did that one thing?
- I'm going to ask you to put your idea in a circle in the middle of a piece of paper and mind map all the effects if everyone in the world were to do that thing.

Examples:

- ❖ What would be the many benefits of solar and wind power? What changes would be made in terms of cleaner air, the savings of not moving entire island-based communities, and health benefits with less lead poisoning near freeways?
- ❖ If you chose picking up trash, do you want to define trash as anything harmful to humans or animals, such as land mines? What else would be affected by that?
- ❖ Or, do you think organic farming might make an amazing impact on the land and the ocean?
- ❖ If you were to choose being vegetarian, what would the effects be? What would be the impact on biodiversity? How would it positively impact the migration of different species?
- ❖ Or, how would the practice of one value effect our Earth and her oceans and all humans and animals?



Activity Options

Option One: Ask the students to mind map their idea individually.

Option Two: Invite the class to select different ideas that they feel would be amazingly helpful and form small interest groups to mind map that action and its effects. Invite each group to share their mind maps.

Close with the relaxation/focusing exercise, Sending Peace to the Earth.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 13 Choosing and Carrying Out an Ecological Project

Play a song with lyrics about nature.

Choosing an Ecological Project

Step 1. Ask the students if they would like to do an ecological project to benefit the school, organization or community – and if so, what they would like to do.

Step 2. Present some of the ideas below that you think might be pertinent to the students' areas of interest or important for the community. Or, they may have other ideas.

- ❖ *Agriculture:* Is there a space to have an organic garden in your location? Are there others interested in the school? Could some of the fresh produce be served for lunch? What organic fertilizers are available which could replace chemical fertilizers and pesticides? What changes occur in the soil when organic fertilizers are used? What challenges are there? Why do organic vegetables have greater nutritional value?
- ❖ *Energy:* Learn more about solar power, wind power or other renewal sources of energy. Is it possible for the school to actually save money by converting to solar? Perhaps making solar cookers would be of benefit in your community. Are there homes that do not have ovens? They might wish to study the new technology that converts plastic back into petroleum.
- ❖ *Forestry:* What about organizing planting of trees in the community with the help of businesses? What trees would be most beneficial in your area? They might wish to study what types of trees can grow well when there is pollution if they are to plant in an area with heavy air pollution. What density of trees would compensate most for the poor air quality? Maybe the city would allow them to



create a natural garden in a vacant lot. Perhaps they can inspire businesses to donate trees so the city can become more beautiful – and healthy. Or, perhaps it would be beneficial to plant fruit trees.

- ❖ ***Increasing Environmental Awareness:*** Spread the word about the importance of reducing our carbon footprint and sensible, constructive ways to achieve such. Perhaps share your mind maps of “one amazingly helpful thing to do” for our Earth and her oceans on social media or video your presentations. Begin planning skits/dramas and artistic presentation about conservation (lesson 16) to the wider community. Students may also wish to take and ask others to take a test to see how green they are. Perhaps include this in your skits/drama. Post your skits on line and let us know at www.livingvalues.net! Make up respect-for-the-Earth slogans and post them at school and at other appropriate locales in the community as well as on social media. Or . . . ? Your generation is tops at spreading the word – thank you for your help in caring for our Earth and her oceans, and its humans and animals.

- ❖ ***Recycling/Consumption:*** What about a project to recycle in order to reduce the need for buying new things? Perhaps some students would like to organize a drive to clean and repair older things rather than buying new things, such as bicycles. The students could do this for themselves and their families or donate needed things and toys to homeless shelters.

- ❖ ***Preventing Trash and Toxic Plastic Soup Build-up:*** What about keeping the shore of the ocean or a lake or a local river or waterway clean of trash? Perhaps combine beach or river clean-ups with an awareness campaign about the gyres of toxic plastic soup. Has your city banned plastic bags yet? Has the city asked local organizations and restaurants to stop using Styrofoam?

- ❖ ***Helping Whales and Dolphins:*** Research solutions to stop harming whales and dolphins. For example, “backing down” nets so dolphins can swim over the top, using advanced technology “pingers” so dolphins and whales are warned away from the nets, and providing human monitors on each boat to make sure that no dolphins are hauled up in the nets. Are these reasonable solutions being used in your area?



- ❖ **Water:** What is the quality of water in the river or ocean? How is it tested? Do all people in your area have clean drinking water? What are simple methods to purify water? Is there an ocean dead zone in your area? What can be done to help the ocean be healthy again in that zone? Are there marine protection zones in your area?

- ❖ **Environmental Needs in the Community:** What are the Earth's needs in your community? If rubbish or waste are affecting the clean water supply, address those issues. Some students may want to research local usage of pesticides and natural and less expensive alternatives that do not pollute the Earth or its inhabitants. Get involved in creating organic gardens or change an empty space with rubbish into a garden or park. If a nearby river is being polluted, students can investigate alternative methods for the polluters to dispose of their waste safely and effectively. Thoroughly research the topic, plan a formal presentation, and then as a team discuss how you can present it to the polluting farm or company with your best "people skills."

Step 3. Allow the students to create a number of project ideas and then select several that create the greatest interest. Do they wish to all do the same project as a class, or would they like to form groups and take on different projects?

Step 4. Students could choose to do a project for a week or two, or do a semester long service-learning project. Each group may wish to study further before creating a plan/proposal. Please allow them time to study and develop their plan. They may need a week or more. Please help them during this lesson and the next to make their plans practical, so it is possible for them to achieve their goal.

End each lesson with the relaxation/focusing exercise, Sending Peace to the Earth. The students may wish to add a few more lines. Or, they may wish to create their own relaxation exercise.

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 14
Messages from the Media**

Begin with a song.

Ask the students about their environmental project.



Lesson Content

Please share the following points, discussing them with students as appropriate.

- Appreciating the beauty of nature and the Earth sometimes allows us to appreciate the natural beauty of the self more.
- The more we appreciate natural beauty, the less we are fooled into thinking we have to own certain things or look a certain way to feel good about ourselves or be accepted by others.
- In order to sell things, businesses hire advertising firms to create impressive advertisements so people buy their products. Sometimes they imply you will be more attractive or “cool” if you use their product or own what they are selling.
- These advertisements fool people into thinking they need these things to be okay and for other people to consider them okay.
- When people hear many messages like that, they often forget about the importance of inner beauty. These messages do not encourage people to respect the Earth or the inner self.
- The self knows there is natural beauty inside. When we keep that awareness in mind, we can be content about our own value, enjoy others for who they are, and give happiness. Simplicity is being natural. Simplicity is beautiful.

Activity

Invite the students to do the following.

- ❖ Brainstorm messages from the mass media and advertisements. List those on the board.
- ❖ Choose one of the messages and discuss.
 - Ask: Is this message true?
- ❖ Make another list of thoughts they think are closer to nature and natural beauty.

Select another message or two and do the same. Ask them to bring in examples of ads for the next lesson.

Discuss/Share

Invite the students to divide into groups of four to six to discuss one or two of the reflection points in regard to the messages from advertisers and peer pressure.

- ◆ Simplicity asks whether we are being induced to purchase unnecessary products. Psychological enticements create artificial needs. Desires stimulated by wanting unnecessary things result in value clashes complicated by greed, fear, peer



pressure, and a false sense of identity. Once fulfillment of basic necessities allows for a comfortable lifestyle, extremes and excesses invite overindulgence and waste.

- ◆ Simplicity avoids waste, teaches economy, avoids value clashes complicated by greed, fear, peer pressure, and a false sense of identity.
- ◆ Simplicity helps create sustainable development.
- ◆ Simplicity is the precursor to sustainable development. Simplicity teaches us economy – how to use our resources with the needs of future generations in mind.
- ◆ Simplicity calls upon people to rethink their values.

Invite each group to share.

End with a song, dance simplicity or enjoy a relaxation/focusing exercise of their choice.

Homework: For one week, ask everyone to experiment with simplicity by wearing simple clothes to school or when out with friends. Suggest that rather than being so conscious of how they look, that they keep in mind that simplicity is beautiful and that is being natural.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 15 More Ads

Begin with a song.

If they took up the last lesson's homework, ask for their feelings and reactions.

Ask the students about their environmental project.

Activity

Ask the students to share ads and other messages they have brought in.

For each ad, ask them what the message is, and if the message is true.

Also question:

- What is the advertiser valuing?
- Are there some ads that have beneficial messages? Which do and which don't?

Share: "Sometimes there are high prices to the Earth if we buy the things manufacturers want us to buy. A short video from the World Economic Forum states:



Here are 7 astonishing facts on how our culture of fast fashion harms the environment.

1. The fashion industry causes 10% of all greenhouse gas emissions. Producing more emissions than all international flights and shipping combined.
2. Every second, one garage truck of textiles is burned or sent to landfills. And three in five items bought are thrown away in a year.
3. Washing one synthetic garment releases about 2,000 plastic microfibers which enter the ocean and the food chain.
4. It takes 2,700 liters of water to make a cotton shirt. That's what one person drinks in 2.5 years.
5. Making and washing one pair of jeans emits the same CO₂ as driving 69 miles.
6. 120 million trees are cut down every year to make clothes. And 30% of the rayon and viscose used in fashion comes from endangered and ancient forests.
7. Up to 16% of the world's pesticides are used in cotton farming every year. The chemicals degrade soil and pollute water as well as poisoning cotton pickers.

You can help reduce the impact of fashion by buying fewer clothes, choosing natural fibers, and recycling what you discard.

- Will you change your wardrobe to help the environment?"
- Invite their reaction. (Is there a possibility of not only buying less but recycling and reusing within the school or neighborhood?)
- Ask them to generate messages they believe in.

Discuss/Share

Divide the class into small groups and ask them to discuss one or more of the following reflection points.

Ask each group to summarize their discussion by creating a new reflection point or creating a slogan to display.

- ◆ Simplicity teaches us economy – how to use our resources keeping future generations in mind.
- ◆ Simplicity is appreciating inner beauty and recognizing the value of all actors, even the poorest and worst off.
- ◆ Simplicity helps decrease the gap between “the haves” and “the have nots” by demonstrating the logic of true economics: to earn, save, invest, and share the sacrifices and the prosperity so that there can be a better quality of life for all people regardless of where they were born.



Close with a relaxation/focusing exercise of their choice.

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 16**

Which Sustainable Development Goals are we making progress on?

Play a song with lyrics about nature, a better world or healing the world.

Lesson Content



Activity

Step 1. Look at the list of 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Go down the list, asking the class which goals they feel they are making progress on. They can evaluate this in terms of their own personal efforts and/or their effort as a class.

Mark the goals with a plus mark if they affirm progress

Step 2. Make Simplicity and Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans “Leaves” in an aqua for each one of the SDGs upon which their group is focused, writing specific ways that value is affecting the SDGs. Ask them to be specific about the ways they are making progress on each goal either as individuals or as a class. For example, the relaxation/focusing exercises may be contributing to their wellbeing. Many of the actions they may have taken during this unit could be listed under Climate Action.

Step 3. Invite them to attach their Simplicity and Caring for the Earth Leaves on the class artistic presentation of the SDGs.

- Goal 1: No Poverty
- Goal 2: Zero Hunger
- Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being
- Goal 4: Quality Education
- Goal 5: Gender Equality
- Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
- Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
- Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- Goal 10: Reduced Inequality
- Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- Goal 13: Climate Action
- Goal 14: Life Below Water
- Goal 15: Life on Land
- Goal 16: Peace and Justice Strong Institutions
- Goal 17: Partnerships to achieve the Goal



Step 4. Ask the students to look at each SDG on the class artistic representation and reflect on the possibility of making further progress on any one of these. Discuss specific options. Don't feel like you need to do them all, but begin with verbalizing possibilities.

Examples:

- ❖ Is the quality of water good at your school? Research simple ways to make it better if it is not. A temporary method of putting water in glass bottles in the sunlight is one method to purify water and would help physical health. However, if the water quality is not good, research what is causing it to be of poor quality locally. What can be done about that? Is there a group of students in your class or school that would like to investigate or act to promote positive action?
- ❖ Are you helping Life Below Water with reduced use of plastic and chemical fertilizer run-off by using only organic foods?
- ❖ Can your physical facility use clean energy or reduce energy use of fossil fuels?
- ❖ Is there a school pantry or access to food for those who do not have sufficient or healthy food?
- ❖ Would you like to create an organic garden and use that food to help students or families who are hungry?

Step 5. Ask the class if they would like to put into action any of the possibilities they discussed. See what is practical, sensible and possible. Perhaps they would like to form several action groups.

Step 6. Invite the action groups to meet and form a plan.

Step 7. Invite each group to present their ideas.

Step 8. Congratulate them all for the progress they are making for a better world for all and put on some music to dance, inviting them to make movements they would feel if they were the Earth and knew the people of the Earth cared and were working to make her healthy again.

End with breathing with the Earth for two minutes in silence.

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 17
An Artistic Creation and Presentation for Our Earth and Her Oceans**

Play a song with lyrics about nature.



Reflect

Invite the young adults to reflect for a moment on the most important things they learned during this simplicity and caring for the Earth and her oceans unit. Ask them to write down two of these.

Creative Expression

Step 1. Invite the students to form groups and create songs, poems, dramas/skits about the Earth and her ocean, highlighting some of the things they think are most important.

Step 2. Give them time to perform. Enjoy.

Step 3. Think about sharing their creations at another time, perhaps with another class, at a special assembly, at another school with younger students, or at a community gathering. Perhaps post some of the creations on social media.

Additional Lessons for Further Understanding

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 18 **The Simplicity of Nature**

Begin with a song with lyrics about nature.

Lesson Content

Read the following poem by Adelia Prado.

Anímico

A new tree was born in my garden,
Which gives a yellow flower,
Every morning I go there to hear the sounds,
Of the insect tapping and its party.
There are all kinds of sounds,
The indelicate, the refined, the learner's and the master's,
Sounds like feet, wings, mouths, beaks and of pollen dust,
In front of the heat of the sun.
It seems that the little tree is having a chat.



Discuss/Share

Ask:

- How does the author describe the simplicity of nature?
- What helps you tune into the beauty of nature?
- What values can we learn from nature?

Activity

Step 1. If there is a garden or a small forest near the school, organize a short visit. Give the students the opportunity to practice silent observation. Allow them some time to sit silently and write some of their observations or begin to write a poem.

If this is not possible, do the Imagining a Peaceful World visualization from Lesson 3 of the Peace I values unit in this book. Please adapt it, including more nature images.

Step 2. Afterwards, divide the class into several groups.

Step 3. Ask them to read the same poem again and then create a collective poem about different experiences with nature. Allow them to write individual poems also, if they wish to do so.

Step 4. Finish the activity by asking the students to share their experiences and poems. The poems can be displayed in the classroom or in another area of the school.

– *Contributed by Paulo Barros, Brazil*

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 19 Stories and Interviews

Begin with a song.

Read a story about the theme of simplicity.

Discuss the Reflection Points:

- ◆ Simplicity is being natural.
- ◆ Simplicity is staying in the present and not making things complicated.
- ◆ Simplicity is giving patience, friendship, and encouragement.
- ◆ Simplicity is appreciating the small things in life.

Activity Options

Write a short personal essay or poem on one of the above Reflection Points.



Divide the students into small groups and ask them to make up a song. Allow them to share their song to the class.

Homework: Interview important people in your life about the simple things in their life that are most important.

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 20
Simplicity Skits**

Begin with a song.

Discuss/Share

Ask the young adults to share about the interviews they did as homework from the prior lesson. When several have shared, ask them which values are inherent in the simple things people felt were important.

Activity

Form small groups and invite them to make up a skit on making life simple. (Do they want to include the complexity of worry in their skit?)

Allow each group to present their skit to the class.

Close with a song or a relaxation/focusing exercise.

**SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 21
Environmental History**

Begin the activity with a song or music related to nature.

Lesson Content

Knowing and appreciating the history of individuals and organizations that have developed activities in favor of the environment leads us to develop a deeper social and environmental commitment and practice our love and respect for nature with greater intensity. Environmental issues directly affect the quality of life of society and contain facts and problems that can be analyzed through their history.

Discuss

Invite the students to comment on the following quotes.



- ◆ The use, on a wide and growing scale, of natural resources by industrial society has caused social and environmental imbalances that have made up the international political agenda in recent decades. – *Paulo Henrique Martinez*
- ◆ We're consuming 20% more than the earth can sustain. And more than that: if the entire population of the world consumed like North Americans and Europeans, who have the highest rates of consumption, today, we would need four planet Earths. – *Hélio Mattar*
- ◆ High levels of obesity and personal debt, less free time and a more damaged environment are all signs that excessive consumption is diminishing the quality of life for many people. – *State of the World 2004, Worldwatch Institute.*

Activity

Ask students to research the history of the commitment to the environment of people, communities, governmental and non-governmental organizations in their community, country and in the world. Some examples of wonderful projects are:

- ❖ Chico Mendes in favor of forest peoples in the state of Acre, Brazil;
- ❖ Wangari Muta Maathai, a Kenyan environmentalist awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 for recognition of her work in support of sustainable development, democracy and respect for human rights and peace in both Kenya and throughout Africa;
- ❖ Organizations such as Greenpeace and WWF and others known in their own country; and
- ❖ United Nations conferences on the environment.

Their research can be presented in the form of panels, exhibitions, videos, skits and sketches, etc. at a fair in the school or in a nearby square or public space.

– *Contributed by Paulo Barros, Brazil*

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 22

Sustainable Consumption

Play a song with lyrics about nature.

Talk about organizations that work with sustainable development in your country and overseas, regarding organic agriculture, vegetable gardens, animal rights, alternative energy sources and so on.



Lesson Content

Kelma de Matos and Miguel Angel Bordas wrote the following in one of their books about the environment and sustainability.

“Media stimulates a consuming society and does not consider the consequences for future generations, and the planet as a whole. The fact that products do not last long makes them obsolete much faster, and creates the need for a consuming way of life that disregards the preservation of our planet. We live in a disposable society and we must follow the trends, otherwise we are out.

On the one hand, consuming is necessary for living but could be done in a sustainable and conscious way. On the other hand, aggressiveness is present and contributes with showing off, social injustice and conflicts. These external factors have an effect on our bodies and in our lives as a whole and can affect us negatively because we are part of the environment. ”

Discuss/Explore

Ask:

- The media entices people to want certain things. Can you give me some examples from the advertisements you see?
- What do you think the consequences for future generations and the planet as a whole would be if people continue to disregard conservation and engage in excess consuming?
- What pressures do some young people experience from their peers when they do not follow the fashion promoted by the media?
- What could a person do to resist this type of pressure?
- What values or qualities would help you resist this type of peer pressure?

Say, “Let’s make a list of what the media promotes and another list of what you need.”

Invite students to create two lists on the board or flipchart. Then ask:

- What kind of respect would you need inside to live with only the list of needs?
- What values would you need to be able to live only with this list of needs?
- How could teens help promote a culture of conservation?

Invite students to make comments about the following quotes.

- ◆ The environment is inside our bodies and the health of the environment affects our physical, emotional and mental health. – *Maurício Andrés Ribeiro*



- ◆ There is enough in the world for human needs, but there is not enough for human greed. – *Mahatma Gandhi*
- ◆ How can we use our love for the environment and the world to help us assess our wants versus our needs? – *Living Values Activities for Young Adults*
- ◆ There is a sustainable bond among youngsters and the environment. – *Mateus Fernandes*

Activity

Ask the students to form groups of four or five to think about Kelma de Matos and Miguel Angel Bordas's thoughts: "Young people, regardless of social groups, are driven to unstoppable consumption by the media so they can fit in a mold and be recognized as successful citizens, and even experience the feeling of not being excluded from a society that excludes the overwhelming majority most of the time."

After the discussion, ask each group to think about creating a project for sustainable consumption at school, taking into consideration books, food, water and so forth.

Finish the task by having each group present their ideas. The class as a whole can then select two or three ideas that they feel they can all carry out. If they would like the entire school to be involved, or need to obtain cooperation from the administration, they can create an essay and present their proposal to the school.

– *Contributed by Paulo Barros, Brazil*

SIMPLICITY AND CARING FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 23 **Ethics and the Environment**

Play a song with lyrics about nature. Ask how they are and if they have been thinking about the last lesson. Allow them time to share their thoughts and any related actions. Listen and acknowledge.

Lesson Content

Many feel that environmental education only concerns ecology. Is that true? Are there also social, economic, cultural and ethical aspects to consider? It can be said that the exploitation of the Earth is related to humanity's social problems, that is, the exploitation of some by others. The exploitation of the planet's natural resources has been driven by man's greed. This has had disastrous consequences for the environment as well as poorly



treated laborers. These attitudes are the cause of different forms of exclusion and conflicts which affect our whole world.

Marcos Reigota, in his book *What is environmental education?* (original in Portuguese: *O que é educação ambiental*), argues that “ethics has a fundamentally important role in environmental education” for it is “imbued with the ideal of radically changing the relationships that we know today, whether between mankind itself or between mankind and nature.”

In the book *Eco-pedagogy and Planetary Citizenship* (original in Portuguese: *Ecopedagogia e Cidadania Planetária*), Francisco Gutiérrez and Cruz Prado propose exploring the relationship between valuing our planet and each other.

Activity

Ask students to discuss these questions in small groups and then present their findings to the larger group.

- ◆ Environmental education proposes a just, equitable and peaceful world.
- It is impossible to create a sustainable society while there is social injustice, religious intolerance and racism?
- Do you believe ecology is promoting new values? If so, list some of them.
- What would society be like if solidarity, gender equality, kindness, and positive and harmonious life skills were valued?
- What values support both the health of the Earth and Society?
- In your involvement in caring for the Earth, are there signs of change in your everyday family, institutional and social life?

– Contributed by Paulo Barros

Close with the relaxation/focusing exercise, Sending Peace to the Earth.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING

FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 24

Greed versus Simplicity as We Use the Earth’s Resources

Begin with a song.

Discuss/Share

Read aloud and then discuss the following paragraph, taken from *Living Values: A Guidebook*.



“The ethic of simplicity is the precursor to sustainable development. Simplicity teaches economy. It teaches investment by example to those clear and honest about their needs and who live accordingly. Simplicity is the conscience which calls upon people to rethink their values. Simplicity asks whether we are being induced to purchase unnecessary products. Psychological enticements create artificial needs. Desires stimulated by wanting unnecessary things result in value clashes complicated by greed, fear, peer pressure, and a false sense of identity. Once fulfillment of basic necessities allows for a comfortable lifestyle, extremes and excesses invite overindulgence and waste. While that approach can be defended as a means to build certain economies, it should not be used at the expense of pushing other economies into dire poverty. It should not be that imposed sacrifice of some brings great affluence to others. That is not a principle but an injustice.”

Ask:

- What is the role of greed with overindulgence and waste?
- How does the value of simplicity help us avoid waste?
- What are the consequences for the environment when overindulgence and waste continue over time?
- What happens when we care for the Earth and her oceans?
- How can we use our love for the environment and the world to help us assess our wants versus our needs?

Activity

Step 1. Ask the young adults to reflect on their personal situation. Ask them to pretend that they have a wonderful position in the government or a company in twenty years. “You also have a terrific salary and an opportunity for more money on the side. What advice can you give yourself for the future? What suggestions would you like to make to improve the environment?”

Step 2. Invite them to write a letter to themselves for the future, and confirm their individual commitment for the health of the environment now.

Step 3. Invite the students to read one sentence from his or her letter to the self.

Close with a relaxation/focusing exercise of their choice.



SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 25
One Amazingly Helpful Thing I Can Do – and its Contrast

Play a song with lyrics about nature.

Discuss/Share

Share with the young adults: “This is now your second year (put in the appropriate number of years) working with Caring for the Earth and Her Oceans. In the first year, there was a lesson in which you were asked to think about one thing you could do that would make a positive difference for the Earth and her oceans – and what amazing things would happen if everyone on Earth did that one thing. I would like you to think about that again.

Ask:

- A year after that lesson, what do you think now is the most amazingly helpful thing one could do to help the planet – and what would happen if everyone on Earth did that?
- If you could get everyone to do three things to help our planet and all its inhabitants, both humans and animals, what would you suggest?
- Has everyone shared their suggestions? Please do.

Activity

Step 1. Invite the students to form interest groups, based on the suggestions they have made.

Step 2. Provide them with large pieces of paper and ask them to mind map their ideas, placing their positive suggestions on the one side of the circle in the middle and its opposite on the other side of the circle in the middle. They may choose only one suggestion and its opposite or up to three. They are to create a mind map of all the consequences and ramifications of doing the positive action and its opposite negative action if everyone on the planet did that. This is likely to take the rest of your time together.

Close with the Sending Peace to the Earth relaxation/focusing exercise.

SIMPLICITY AND CARING
FOR THE EARTH AND HER OCEANS LESSON 26
Continuing Lesson 25 . . .



Begin with a song and ask them how they are doing.

Discuss/Share

Ask the following questions, or other questions appropriate to the discussion.

- In regard to the last lesson's mind map that you created, are you doing what you suggested that others do? (If yes: Great!)
- If no, ask: What makes it hard to do?
- What thought would help you counteract that?
- Has anyone else felt that way?
- What do you think about that helps you do it?
- Are there other practical things that would help you do it?
- If we want others to do what we suggest, we have to be examples. I want you to think about what helps you be committed to carrying out these actions and create a campaign to get others thinking about doing this too.

Activity

Step 1. Instruct the young adults to form the same groups as in the previous lesson, look at the mind map they created together, and think about a way to convey their message to others.

Step 2. Invite them to work out a plan to convey their message. Ask them: What medium would they use? Would this involve creating a video, doing rallies, creating skits or songs, writing letters or visiting legislators or local officials? Would it involve teaching younger students something or creating a model program to invite others to? Would it involve teaching organic gardening to the community? Would it involve helping people become vegan to help free land so that biodiversity of plants and animals can flourish?

Step 3. Ask each group to present their mind map and action plan to the entire class.

Step 4. Ask the class if they would like to choose just one action plan to work on together, or if they would like to carry out some of their ideas as a smaller group. Discuss it as needed.

Close with a relaxation/focusing exercise of their choice.

Follow up: In subsequent lessons serve as a resource to help them make their plan a reality.



Additional Activities in Subject Areas

Language/Literature

Write one Reflection Point on the board every day. Ask students to think about it briefly, then discuss it for a few minutes. Create your own Reflection Points.

Read stories or works on simplicity and ask students to write an essay, linking the story's message with one or more Reflection Points.

Read books by famous naturalists. Go for nature walks and experiment seeing the natural world through their eyes.

Read poetry about nature.

Observe the simple things: the light on the leaf, a tree, a small flower, a bird, or whatever element of nature you notice. Lie under a tree and watch the leaves. For a few minutes, simply be in the space of an observer, free from desires. Then, write a poem as though it were from part of nature.

Experiencing Nature

Plan a venture to a natural wonder near the school. Spend a day there, half in nature study and half in silence. Invite a naturalist, aborigine, or someone from a native culture to teach you about plants of the area. Perhaps someone from a native culture can teach you from their wisdom. Write about your experience.

History/Social Studies

Discuss the following Reflection Point in relationship to the cultures and/or historical period the class has been studying in the last few months or semester.

- ◆ Simplicity helps decrease the gap between “the haves” and “the have nots” by demonstrating the logic of true economics: to earn, save, invest, and share the sacrifices and the prosperity so that there can be a better quality of life for all people regardless of where they were born.
- How has the value of simplicity or its lack been demonstrated, and with what consequences?



Science

Study solar power, a simple alternative for dwindling nonrenewable energy sources. How can solar power be used in your local setting?

Study a local environmental problem that was identified during the Simplicity Lessons. Research options and select those that are most natural and environmentally friendly.

What inventions are helping clean up the toxic plastic soup of the ocean's gyres?

Some landfill companies are drilling into the trash to extract methane gas and use it to generate electricity. In some areas this supplies more than half of an area's electricity. Study this. Is this being done in your country?

Study ozone depletion through human production of CFCs and related halocarbon gases and its relationship to cancer, mutation and decreasing crop yields.

Economics

Cost It Out

Step 1. Consider some of the concepts stated in the above Science section and/or ask students to state some of their ecological concerns.

Step 2. Ask them to form small groups and create a simple and effective environmental project and "cost it out". For example, they could think about solar heating systems in the homes if you are in a warm climate. What is the cost of that over 10 years versus the cost of the heating system in existence? If deforestation is occurring in your country, would simple solar stoves be better than using wood for fires?

Step 3. Make a plan. Include in the plan, for instance, the benefits of planting trees throughout the country over a five-year period. Note how it would save by reducing erosion, etc.

Step 4. Invite them to share their ideas.

Think of a project for your country that would be simple, economical, and good for all children and/or people. "Cost it out." Share your ideas with the class.



Mathematics

Simplifying Rational Expression

Start with the statement: Numbers can take different forms. For example, $4/5^{\text{th}}$ can be expressed as $8/10^{\text{th}}$; 15 can be expressed as $-1 + 16$, etc.

Ask:

- Can people like numbers take many different forms? Let the students cite examples. For example:
 - People are like numbers because a person can have different names, positions, and characteristics.
 - A person can be positive or negative.

Discuss the Simplicity Reflection Points:

- ◆ Simplicity is finding one's original value and identifying with it.
- ◆ Simplicity is beautiful. Simplicity is being happy and peaceful.

Ask:

- Of the different forms that a person takes, which is the most comfortable or natural? Why?
- What are the personal benefits?
- What are the benefits for others?

– Contributed by Vicky Calicdan

Art

Explore works of art, historical pictures, or magazines for examples of simplicity versus something gaudily or excessively adorned. What famous artists were recognized for their simplistic style? Make a collage or picture of your own allowing simplicity to inspire your work.

Collect a few leaves and items from nature and make an artistic creation.

Draw simplicity, using only two colors.

A Still Life: Ask the students to set up a still life which expresses simplicity. It could be a small table with a vase of flowers against a white wall, or something else that is easily obtainable. Let them experiment with light falling on the objects. Allow them to draw or paint the still life using only a few colors.

– Contributed by Eleanor Viegas



Dress simply tomorrow.

Create a cartoon or a story on respect for the environment. Share your creations.

– *Contributed by Marcia Maria Lins de Medeiros*

Music

Use native instruments to play music. Study the compositions. Are they closer to the rhythms of nature than many current compositions?

Make your own native instruments.

Home Economics

Think about the simple practices of the native cultures in your land or other lands. Which customs are still practiced? Think of what was eaten, how clothes were made, ways of carrying babies, breast feeding, etc. Ask, “Which of these practices do you want to continue?”

Physical Education/Dance

Dance simplicity.

Experiment with keeping your mind simple when you dance and play sports. Keep your mind in the moment. How does this effect your game? Do you enjoy the game more?



CHAPTER FOUR:

About Living Values Education

Living Values Education is a global endeavor dedicated to nurturing hearts and educating minds. LVE provides an approach, and tools, to help people connect with their own values and live them. During professional development workshops, educators are engaged in a process to empower them to create a caring values-based atmosphere in which young people are loved, valued, respected, understood and safe. Educators are asked to facilitate values activities about peace, respect, love and caring, tolerance, honesty, happiness, responsibility, simplicity, caring for the Earth and Her Oceans, cooperation, humility, compassion, freedom and unity to engage students in exploring and choosing their own personal values while developing intrapersonal and interpersonal skills to “live” those values.

LVE’s Purpose and Aims

The purpose and aims of Living Values Education were created by twenty educators from around the world when they gathered at UNICEF’s headquarters in New York in August of 1996. The purpose remains unchanged. The aims have been slightly augmented as has our experience and understanding since that time.

LVE’s purpose is to provide guiding principles and tools for the development of the whole person, recognizing that the individual is comprised of physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions.

The aims are:

- ◆ To help individuals think about and reflect on different values and the practical implications of expressing them in relation to themselves, others, the community, and the world at large;
- ◆ To deepen knowledge, understanding, motivation, and responsibility with regard to making positive personal and social choices;



- ◆ To invite and inspire individuals to explore, experience, express and choose their own personal, social, moral, and spiritual values and be aware of practical methods for developing and deepening them; and
- ◆ To encourage and support educators and caregivers to look at education as providing students with a philosophy of living, thereby facilitating their overall growth, development, and choices so they may integrate themselves into the community with respect, confidence, and purpose.

The Living Values Education Approach

After ten years of implementing Living Values Education, a team of LVE leaders around the world gathered together to describe what they felt LVE was ... and had become.

Vision Statement

Living Values Education is a way of conceptualizing education that promotes the development of values-based learning communities and places the search for meaning and purpose at the heart of education. LVE emphasizes the worth and integrity of each person involved in the provision of education, in the home, school and community. In fostering quality education, LVE supports the overall development of the individual and a culture of positive values in each society and throughout the world, believing that education is a purposeful activity designed to help humanity flourish.

Core Principles

Living Values Education is based on the following core principles:

On the learning and teaching environment

1. When positive values and the search for meaning and purpose are placed at the heart of learning and teaching, education itself is valued.
2. Learning is especially enhanced when occurring within a values-based learning community, where values are imparted through quality teaching, and learners discern the consequences, for themselves, others and the world at large, of actions that are and are not based on values.
3. In making a values-based learning environment possible, educators not only require appropriate quality teacher education and ongoing professional development, they also need to be valued, nurtured and cared for within the learning community.



4. Within the values-based learning community, positive relationships develop out of the care that all involved have for each other.

On the teaching of values

5. The development of a values-based learning environment is an integral part of values education, not an optional extra.
6. Values education is not only a subject on the curriculum. Primarily it is pedagogy; an educational philosophy and practice that inspires and develops positive values in the classroom. Values-based teaching and guided reflection support the process of learning as a meaning-making process, contributing to the development of critical thinking, imagination, understanding, self-awareness, intrapersonal and interpersonal skills and consideration of others.
7. Effective values educators are aware of their own thoughts, feelings, attitudes and behavior and sensitive to the impact these have on others.
8. A first step in values education is for teachers to develop a clear and accurate perception of their own attitudes, behavior and emotional literacy as an aid to living their own values. They may then help themselves and encourage others to draw on the best of their own personal, cultural and social qualities, heritage and traditions.

On the nature of persons within the world and the discourse of education

9. Central to the Living Values Education concept of education is a view of persons as thinking, feeling, valuing whole human beings, culturally diverse and yet belonging to one world family. Education must therefore concern itself with the intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing of the individual.
10. The discourse of education, of thinking, feeling and valuing, is both analytic and poetic. Establishing a dialogue about values within the context of a values-based learning community facilitates an interpersonal, cross-cultural exchange on the importance and means of imparting values in education.

Structure

The development and advancement of Living Values Education is overseen by the **Association for Living Values Education International (ALIVE)**, a non-profit-making association of organizations around the world concerned with values education. ALIVE groups together national bodies promoting the use of the Living Values Education Approach and is an independent organization that does not have any particular or exclusive religious, political or national affiliation or interest. The development and



implementation of Living Values Education has been supported over the years by a number of organizations, including UNESCO, governmental bodies, foundations, community groups and individuals. LVE continues to be part of the global movement for a culture of peace following the United Nations International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World.

ALIVE is registered as an association in Switzerland. In some countries national Living Values Education associations have been formed, usually comprised of educators, education officials, and representatives of organizations and agencies involved with student or parent education.

Activities

In pursuing its mission and implementing its core principles, the Association for Living Values Education International and its Associates and Focal Points for LVE provide:

1. *Professional development courses, seminars and workshops* for teachers and others involved in the provision of education.
2. *Classroom teaching material and other educational resources*, in particular the Living Values Education series of books containing practical values activities and a range of methods for use by educators, facilitators, parents and caregivers to help children and young adults explore and develop widely-shared human values. This series of books is now updated and expanded. There are an additional 11 values-education resources for young people at risk, including for street-children, refugees and children affected by war, and those in need of drug rehabilitation. The approach and lesson content are experiential, participatory and flexible, allowing – and encouraging – the materials to be adapted and supplemented according to varying cultural, social and other circumstances.
3. *Consultation to government bodies, organizations, schools, teachers and parents* on the creation of values-based learning environments and the teaching of values.
4. *An extensive website*, www.livingvalues.net, with materials available for downloading free of charge, including songs, posters and a distance program for adults, families and study groups.



LVE Resource Materials

Designed to address the whole child/person, Living Values Education Activities engage young people in exploring, experiencing and expressing values so they can find those that resonant in their heart, and build the social and emotional skills which enable them to live those values. The approach is child-centered, flexible and interactive; adults are asked to act as facilitators. The approach is non-prescriptive and allows materials and strategies to be introduced according to the circumstances and interests of the users and the needs of students.



APPENDIX

Item 1:

How to Mind Map

A Mind Map is a powerful graphic technique that engages both sides of the brain. It can be used in many different ways – to outline stories, plan talks, organize details for functions, or to create and develop thoughts about a topic. It is simple to use. Using the values words is an excellent way to begin to learn “mind mapping” and understand the effects of values and anti-values.

Mind Mapping

1. Take a blank piece of paper this size or larger and place it horizontally, or use a whiteboard with a large group.
2. Start in the center with a Central Image that personally represents the topic about which you are writing/thinking. You can put the value of focus inside one side of a circle, and the name of the anti-value on the other side. Images can be added to the circle later, representing the overall outcome of the group’s input.
3. The Main Themes around the Central Image are like the chapter headings of a book. Print the words and place them on lines of the same length. The central lines can be curved and organic, i.e., like branches of a tree to the trunk. For example, when exploring values you might always want to use Self, Family and Our organization/school. However, feel free to explore other areas such as Society, Business, Health, Environment and World.
4. Start to add a Second level of thought for one of the branches. Allow the students to supply all the answers and acknowledge them as you write their responses. These words are linked to the main branch that triggered them. The lines connect and are thinner.
5. Add a Third or Fourth level of data, as response continue. Use images as much as you wish. If students are doing a mind map individually, they may “hop about” the Mind Map as the links and associations occur to them.



6. Add Dimension to your Mind Maps if you wish. Box and add depth around the word or image, use different colors and styles, and if you like, add arrows to show connections.
7. Have fun making each Mind Map beautiful, artistic, colorful, and imaginative.



Item 2:

What We Can Do Daily List

Note from the author: The below is not a definitive list. It simply contains ideas of practical things to do daily, some of which may have not been generated during the lessons. Send in any ideas not on the list to content@livingvalues.net and we'll add it to the next edition of the book! Thank you for helping our beautiful Earth and Her Oceans ... and all of us!

Decrease fossil fuel energy use and conserve water

- ❖ Turn off the lights when leaving the room for more than a few minutes.
- ❖ Turn off the television, and put computers and gadgets on sleep mode/off when not in use.
- ❖ When it's cold, wear a sweater and socks before turning on the heat.
- ❖ When it's hot, don't set the temperature very low on the AC unit.
- ❖ Turn off the water when brushing your teeth.
- ❖ Short showers use less water than baths.
- ❖ Water outdoor plants early or late in the day to minimize evaporation.
- ❖ Cooler water releases less pollutants into the water when washing clothes.
- ❖ Use a clothes rack instead of a dryer when possible.
- ❖ If possible, use sustainable energy sources such as solar power.
- ❖ Walk or bicycle when practical.
- ❖ Consider an eco-friendly or zero emissions vehicle.
- ❖ Consider doing a few errands at once rather than making more trips in the car.
- ❖ Carpool.

Food – Avoid plastic, go organic and reduce or eliminate meat and dairy consumption

- ❖ Use and reuse glass or durable plastic bottles daily instead of single-use plastic bottles for carrying water.
- ❖ Pack food in reusable containers when going out; use paper instead of plastic bags.
- ❖ Buy vegetables and other food products with the least packaging possible.
- ❖ Buy organic food products, if possible.
- ❖ Being vegan dramatically reduces your carbon footprint. Consider reducing or eliminating meat and dairy consumption.
- ❖ Grow some of your food, if possible. Use organic fertilizers only.
- ❖ Buy locally grown organic food when possible.



- ❖ Never use or accept plastic straws.
- ❖ Carry your own reusable cup for use at places that usually serve paper, plastic or Styrofoam cups.
- ❖ If you must use disposable plates, use paper plates, never plastic or Styrofoam.
- ❖ Use metal or wooden utensils instead of single-use plastic forks and spoons.
- ❖ Use a cloth napkin instead of paper napkins. If you wish to reduce washing, perhaps each person can have their own cloth napkin with a different color or pattern and wash them once a week.
- ❖ If possible, compost food scraps or use resin compostable garbage bags instead of plastic.

At School

- ❖ Set up recycling bins.
- ❖ Use paper on both sides.
- ❖ Pick up trash from the grounds.
- ❖ Plant trees.
- ❖ Compost.
- ❖ Create an organic garden.

General

- ❖ Bring your own reusable bags to stores rather than accepting plastic bags.
- ❖ Buy fewer clothes and fewer things.
- ❖ Buy clothes with natural fibers, rather than with plastic fibers, when possible.
- ❖ Reuse, repurpose, recycle, refill.

Household Products

- ❖ Use planet-friendly detergents and cleaning products.
- ❖ Use hygiene products without harmful chemicals.
- ❖ Use cooler water when washing clothes as it releases less plastic fibers into the water system.
- ❖ Rather than use aerosol sprays that emit hydrofluorocarbons, use sprays with a manual pump.

Use Renewable Energy Sources

- ❖ Promote and use renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind.



Promote Healthy Land and Sea Use and Sustainable Practices with those in your connection – people, schools, restaurants, businesses, city councils, legislators. . . .

- ❖ Talk to managers or owners of stores and restaurants about eco-friendly practices when you see non-friendly practices.



Item 3:

Relaxation / Focusing Exercises

For young people from ten years of age through young adults

Note from the author: The below relaxation/focusing exercises are some of those in *Living Values Education Activities for Young Adults, Book 1*. As young people today are often discouraged by climate change and increasing disrespect and violence, this resource for wellbeing may be helpful.

Physical Relaxation Exercise

Sit comfortably . . . be aware of how you are feeling . . . and relax. . . . As you begin to relax your muscles, take in a deep breath . . . and let your body feel heavy. . . . As you breathe out, focus your attention on your feet. . . . Tighten all your muscles for a moment . . . and then relax them . . . let them stay relaxed. . . . Now become aware of your legs, letting them be heavy . . . tightening the muscles . . . and then relaxing them. . . . Breathe in slowly . . . and as you exhale, let any tension melt away. . . . Now tighten your hands for a moment . . . and then relax. . . . Be aware of your breathing, and take in a deep breath. . . . As you breathe out, let any tension melt away. . . . Breathe in deeply again . . . let the air out slowly . . . and let go of any tension. . . . Now tighten the muscles in the back and the shoulders . . . and then relax them. . . . Move your shoulders up . . . and relax as you move them down. . . . Tighten the muscles in your hands and arms . . . and then relax them. . . . Gently move the neck . . . first to one side, then to the other . . . relax the muscles Now tighten the muscles of the face . . . the jaw . . . and then relax the face and the jaw. . . . Let the feeling of wellbeing flow through the body. . . . Focus again on your breathing, breathing in deeply . . . and then letting go of any tension. . . . I am relaxed . . . I am peace . . . I am ready to be at my best.

– Contributed by Guillermo Simó Kadletz

Peace Relaxation Exercise

Let the body be relaxed and still. Let go of thoughts about the world outside, and slow down within. Be in the present, focusing on this moment in time. . . . Breathe in deeply . . . and let go of any tension through the bottoms of your feet. . . . Breathe in deeply again . . . and let go of any tension through the bottoms of your feet. . . . Breathe in deeply . . . and let the mind be still. Slowly absorb waves of peace. . . . Imagine being outdoors on a clear day – in a beautiful setting. . . . You may imagine being by the ocean, or in a meadow. . . . As you picture the beauty of nature in front of you, absorb waves of peace. . . . Let the



self feel totally safe and relaxed. . . . Let the self feel beyond time. . . . You are full of natural tranquility. . . . You are naturally peaceful. . . . Think of your natural qualities . . . be present . . . and lovingly accept the self. . . . Surround the self with love . . . surround the self with peace. . . . When I am at peace, I am able to access my creativity and strengths . . . I am able to be part of creating a peaceful world. . . . I bring my attention back to the room . . . peaceful . . . peaceful . . . focused . . . alert.

Peaceful Star Relaxation Exercise

One way to be peaceful is to be silent inside. Take a deep breath . . . and let yourself be surrounded by peace. . . . Be aware of any tension . . . and let it begin to release as you breathe out. . . . Take in a deep breath of peace . . . and slowly breathe out, letting go of any tension. . . . For a few moments, think of the stars in the sky and imagine yourself to be as still as a star in the distance. They are so beautiful in the sky . . . so quiet and peaceful. . . . Let the body be still. . . . Relax your toes and legs . . . relax your chest and stomach . . . and your shoulders. . . . Relax your arms . . . and your face. . . . Be aware of your breathing . . . and allow the feeling of peace to come into your mind. . . . Let a soft light of peace surround you. . . . Be surrounded by peace . . . stillness . . . be peace. . . . You, the tiny star, are naturally peaceful. . . . Relax into the light of peace. . . . Let the self be still and peaceful . . . You are focused . . . concentrated . . . peaceful . . . content . . . a star of peace.

Garden of Respect Relaxation Exercise

Sit comfortably and let your body relax. . . . As you breathe slowly, let your mind be still and calm. . . . Starting at your feet, let yourself relax . . . relax your legs . . . stomach . . . shoulders, neck . . . face . . . the eyes . . . and forehead. . . . Let your mind be serene and calm . . . breathe deeply . . . concentrate on stillness. . . . In your mind picture a flower . . . enjoy its fragrance . . . observe its color . . . enjoy its beauty. . . . Each person is like a flower . . . each one of us is unique . . . yet we have many things in common. . . . Picture a garden around you with many varieties of flowers . . . all of them beautiful . . . each flower with its color . . . each flower with its fragrance. . . . giving the best of themselves. . . . Some are tall with pointed petals, some have rounded petals, some are big and others little . . . some have soft colors . . . others have bright colors . . . some attract the eye because of their simplicity. . . . Each one of us is like a flower . . . enjoy the uniqueness of each one. . . . Each adds beauty to the garden . . . all are important. . . . Together they form the garden. . . . Each flower has respect for itself. . . . When one respects the self it is then easy to respect others. . . . Each one is valuable and unique . . .



with respect the qualities of others are seen. . . . Perceive what is good in each one . . . each has a unique role. . . each is important. . . . Let this image fade in your mind, and turn your attention to this room again.

I Am A Mountain Relaxation Exercise

Allow yourself to relax and be aware of how you are feeling. . . . Take in a deep breathe . . . and release it, letting go of any tension. . . . Take in a deep breathe . . . and let the body relax. . . . Now visualize yourself as a mountain. . . . If you were a mountain what would that mountain look like? Would it be a large mountain? . . . Would it have lots of trees and foliage? . . . Would it have a granite cliff on one side? As you visualize yourself as a mountain . . . ground in your self-respect. . . . Think of two or three of your qualities or values. . . . You are stable . . . you are strong . . . you are powerful Breathe in and feel yourself to be like a mountain, stable, strong . . . connected to the beautiful Earth. . . . Sometimes in nature there are winds or rain or storms. . . . The rains are just rain, the wind is just wind . . . they do not affect the mountain. . . . Sometimes people are negative . . . they are like rain or wind when they are not happy with who they are at that moment . . . and don't know how to stay in their self-respect. . . . If there is sometimes a person who is like rain or a wind . . . ground more deeply into your self-respect. . . . Visualize the self as a mountain, stable and strong. . . . You are beautiful. . . . The rain and wind will not last forever Observe the rain . . . observe the wind . . . feel your quiet yet awesome strength. . . . As the rain stops, enjoy the warmth of the sun. . . . In the sunlight, across the valley, perhaps there are other mountains . . . family or friends. . . . Breathe in deeply . . . and relax. . . . I am a mountain. . . . I am connected . . . to me . . . to the Earth . . . to other beautiful mountains. . . . I ground in my self-respect . . . Breathe out and relax more. . . . Now . . . slowly bring your attention back to the room . . . feeling relaxed . . . and centered.

Star of Respect Relaxation Exercise

Think of the stars . . . imagine the self in the silence the stars seem to radiate. They are so beautiful in the sky, they sparkle and shine . . . quiet and peaceful. . . . Be very still. . . . Relax your toes and legs. . . . Relax your stomach . . . and your shoulders. . . . Relax your arms . . . and your face. . . . Feel safe . . . and allow peace to surround you Inside you are like a star . . . peace is at your core. . . . You are capable . . . you are who you are. . . . Each person brings special qualities to the world . . . you are valuable. . . . Enjoy the feeling of respect inside. . . You are stars of respect . . . let yourself be quiet and peaceful inside. . . . Focus. . . . You are concentrated . . . full of respect . . . content. . . . Slowly bring



your attention back to the room . . . feeling relaxed . . . focused . . . and ready to be at your best.

Lovingly Accepting the Self Relaxation/Focusing Exercise

Let the body be relaxed and still. Let go of thoughts about the world outside, and slow down within. . . . Allow yourself to be in the present, focusing on this moment in time. . . . Let the mind be still, and slowly absorb waves of peace. . . . Imagine being outdoors in a world where everyone is kind and caring. . . . Imagine a garden or a meadow . . . or an ocean or river . . . whatever you wish. . . . And in the picture of your mind imagine a world where everyone knows they are love . . . and are loved . . . and are capable. . . . Breathe in slowly and relax. . . . Let a light of love surround you. . . . Each child comes into the world with love and beauty. . . . Sometimes people around us forget to remind us of our love and beauty because they are stressed . . . or busy . . . or mean . . . or have too many burdens. . . . Or maybe they just don't have enough love inside themselves to let others know they are gorgeous and worthy of love. . . . I may not like what others do, but for now I let that go . . . and I go into the truth that I have love at my core. . . . (Please pause for at least ten seconds.) Allow yourself to breathe in love. . . . Allow yourself to know that you are good . . . you are worthy of love. . . . Lovingly accept the self . . . your positive qualities . . . and even your negative emotions. . . . Accept yourself exactly as you are. . . . Breathe in that loving acceptance of the self. . . . Each person comes into the world to bring a special gift of his or her qualities . . . and his or her talents. . . . Be still . . . quiet within . . . focused . . . and enjoy feeling full of love and peace. . . . As you begin to bring your attention back to this place . . . allow yourself to feel loving acceptance of yourself. . . . Please wiggle your toes and move your shoulders . . . and bring your attention fully back to this place, fresh and alert.

Dissolving Stress with Love Relaxation/Focusing Exercise

Be aware of your surroundings . . . be mindful of your emotions . . . and take in a deep breath of the light of love. . . . As you exhale, let any tension go out the bottoms of your feet. . . . Breathe in the light of love . . . breathe out any tension through the bottoms of your feet. . . . As you breathe in the light of love, let your muscles relax. . . . Sometimes we experience stress or tension or anxiety. . . . Be aware of where you hold that in your body. . . . Now breathe in the light of love . . . relaxing that area . . . and lovingly accept your emotions. . . . Perhaps that area has a dull gray light. . . . Accept that gray light and know that sometimes fear makes us doubt our ability or our worth. . . . Let the light of love begin to surround that area of gray . . . and begin to dissolve the edges. . . . I am



good . . . I am worthy of love . . . I am worthy of respect . . . all will be well. . . . I acknowledge my goodness . . . and the vulnerability of myself . . . and all others. . . . Each of us desires peace . . . and love . . . and sometimes we are not sensitive to our own needs . . . or the needs of others. . . . The light of love surrounds all of me . . . and this area of gray . . . and that area of gray becomes smaller. . . . I lovingly accept my stress and my beauty. . . . I now let the light of strength mix with the light of love. . . . I am capable to facing my challenge. . . . I have the strength to stay in the present and enjoy doing one thing at a time. . . . I am loving, I am strong, I am powerful . . . I am light. . . . Breathe in . . . and now gradually bring your attention back to this space, feeling light and refreshed.

Sending Love Relaxation Exercise

Allow yourself to be aware of how you are feeling at this present moment. Be aware of your breath and any tension in your muscles. Let yourself be surrounded by the light of peace. Breathe in the light of peace and relax. . . . Breathe out any tension. . . . Breathe in the light of peace and let that peace sink into your muscles. . . . You are a peaceful and powerful light . . . full of love. . . . Be a star of peace for a few minutes and send love to people all over the world. . . . Let the self be full of loving energy. . . . We can all send love and peace any time we want. . . . Concentrate on increasing the experience of the light of love . . . let the self relax more. . . . As you relax, that love will automatically extend to people all over the world. . . . Let the body relax more. . . . Take in more love. . . . You are focused . . . you are contributing to a better world. . . . Let the mind be still Now, move your shoulders, wiggle your toes and bring your awareness back to your surroundings.

Taking Care of Me Relaxation/Focusing Exercise

Let the body be relaxed and still. Slow down within. . . . Breathe in deeply . . . and as you exhale, begin to relax. . . . Be aware of how you are feeling. . . . Breathe in deeply. . . and relax as you exhale. . . . Are your arms tight or your chest? Is there a feeling of sadness or hurt inside? . . . Allow yourself to feel where you are holding emotion in your body . . . perhaps in your throat . . . perhaps in your chest . . . perhaps in your stomach . . . perhaps in your gut. . . . Breathe in deeply . . . and exhale slowly. . . . Lovingly accept your emotions. . . . Be in the present . . . and lovingly accept how you feel. . . . Pay attention to that feeling . . . accept it with love . . . and it will quiet down a little. . . . Surround your sadness or hurt with the light of love. . . . Visualize the light of love surrounding that pain . . . and feel that love. . . . Breathe in . . . and relax as you breathe out. . . . Let the mind be still . . . and absorb the light of love. . . . Perhaps that area of



pain is getting smaller as you absorb the light of love. . . . Feel that light of love. . . . You are lovable and capable. . . . Breathe in slowly and relax. . . . Know you are lovable and capable. . . . Allow yourself to breathe in love. . . . Think for a moment of what quality or value would help you now. . . . Imagine that quality or value taking the form of a jewel and let that jewel appear in front of you. . . . It may be a jewel of love . . . or courage . . . compassion for yourself . . . or others . . . patience . . . or fearlessness. . . . You are a beautiful jewel. . . . You have the courage to be kind to yourself . . . and to live your truth. . . . Be still . . . quiet within . . . focused . . . absorb the light of love and peace. . . . Gradually begin to bring your attention back to this place . . . Wiggle your toes and move your legs . . . and bring your attention fully back to this place.

Sending Peace to the Earth Relaxation/Focusing Exercise

Sit comfortably and let yourself be still inside. . . . Be aware of how your body is feeling. . . . Relax the body and breathe in the light of peace. . . . Let the light of peace surround you Breathe out any tension . . . and breathe in the light of peace. . . . Breathe out any tension . . . and breathe in the light of peace. . . . Invite the peace to relax your muscles more. . . . This peace is quiet and safe . . . it reminds me that I value peace. . . . Let yourself be very still and think . . . I am me . . . I am naturally full of peace and love. . . . Let your body relax even more . . . and focus on surrounding yourself with the light of peace. . . . The more you concentrate on peace, the more that peace will naturally go outward to nature . . . to the mountains and streams . . . to the clouds and the ocean . . . to the dolphins and the whales . . . to the birds . . . to the animals large and small. . . . Concentrate on peace and see that peace flowing outward to our planet . . . to the rivers and ocean . . . to the trees and the meadows . . . to the mountains and the sky. . . . I am full of peace. . . . I am one who is acting to help our Earth be healthy again. . . . This will happen in time. . . . Our planet will be well. . . . I picture the light of peace all around the Earth . . . and our beautiful oceans being healthy again . . . our beautiful Earth being healthy again. . . . Feeling relaxed and peaceful . . . begin to be aware of where you are sitting and bring your attention back to this room.





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for your love for young people and our Earth and Her Oceans.*





About the Author

Diane G. Tillman is the primary author of the award-winning Living Values Education Series of five books, and twelve additional educational resources, including Living Values Education Activities books for street children, children affected by war, young offenders, at-risk youth and young people in need of drug rehabilitation. A Licensed Educational Psychologist and Marriage and Family Therapist, Ms. Tillman worked in a California public school system for 23 years as a School Psychologist. A co-founder of Living Values Education in 1996, she continues to develop content and training materials for the Association for Living Values Education International (ALIVE). In 2018 she began updating and expanding the original LVE Series, published in 2000. Additionally, she authored a children's book and "Living Values Education Parenting Guide". In the latter, she illustrates how to bring values into parenting by sharing not only theory but stories about life, her work with children and thousands of parents, and experiences with LVE around the world. A Lead Trainer for ALIVE, Tillman has traveled to more than 30 countries in all regions of the world to conduct training and LVE seminars at conferences and refugee camps, for educators, UNESCO, street-children agencies and Ministries of Education. She is on the Association for Living Values Education International Board of Directors and is the President of LVEP, Inc, the non-profit ALIVE Associate in the U.S.A.







Living Values™
Education



Climate Change and Values

Reflect for a moment on the world your heart longs for....

How might the values of peace, love, respect, honesty, cooperation and freedom create a social fabric of harmony and change?

Climate Change is no longer coming, it is here now and the majority of the eight billion people on the planet are aware of this to varying degrees. Large numbers of people are in some way starting to experience the dynamic of a world fast disintegrating into a very real potential of global deprivation, and terror for many.

Climate Change effects food production, and causes extreme weather events and temperature fluctuations. These risk crops, cause food scarcity and often threaten the safety of homes. Floods and drought imperil safe water supplies and rising ocean levels effect entire cities. All cause mass migration, a reduction in sustainable living and destruction of the flora and fauna that support the biosphere. Millions of species will soon be lost. We, together with our children, are at risk of a devastating future.

Einstein said that you cannot solve a problem from the same level of consciousness that created it.

If this is true then we need to look not at a quick fix to each drama that unfolds, rather at the reason we have created this experience. Clearly, our collective Values need to be addressed and change the way we live our lives.

Embracing Values in our daily life directly impacts how we live on the planet.

We can be the change we want to see in the world, with a goal to change the way we live and give our Earth and Her Oceans the opportunity to heal.

This book is dedicated to that objective – to bring awareness through engaging in these carefully thought-out activities for children and adults to create understanding of climate change, affirm our Values, and stimulate positive action in our daily lives, before it is too late.

Roger Miles, Deputy President, Association for Living Values Education International