Be Part of the Solution

LESSON 6

GOOD SPORTS ALWAYS RECYCLE™

EASTMAN
Be Part of the Solution
It’s up to each of us to make a difference, so start small, and see what happens!

Remember, even the smallest things you do can have a big impact. Getting into the habit of recycling, reducing and reusing can influence those around you to do so as well. Set a good environmental example and encourage those around you to follow it.

Myth or Fact?
Test your students’ recycling knowledge. Present the myths and/or facts below, and let them decide which is true.

**Myth:** Paper grocery bags are a better environmental choice than plastic bags.
**Fact:** Plastic bags use 40 percent less energy to produce and generate 80 percent less solid waste than paper. Plastic bags are 100 percent recyclable for all environmental impacts related to air emissions, water emissions and solid waste.

**Myth:** Landfills and incinerators are more cost-effective and environmentally sound than recycling options.
**Fact:** Recycling programs, when designed properly, are cost-competitive with landfills and incinerators, and provide net pollution prevention benefits. Recycling materials not only avoids the pollution that would be generated through land filling and incinerating these, but also reduces the environmental burden of virgin materials extraction and manufacturing processes.

**Myth:** Landfills are significant job generators for rural communities.
**Fact:** Recycling, where instituted, creates many more jobs for rural and urban communities than landfill and incineration disposal options.

**Myth:** Recycling metal uses more energy than extracting the raw material in the first place.
**Fact:** Recycling aluminum cans saves up to 95 percent of the energy needed to make new cans from fresh raw material.

**Myth:** Recycling rates are keeping up to the rate at which plastic is produced.
**Fact:** The rate of plastics generation continues to accelerate while recovery is static, and plastic packaging is actually declining.
Even the smallest things you do can have a big impact! Getting into the habit of being environmentally friendly can influence those around you. Start small, and see what happens.

Start a Green Team
You know how important it is to reduce, reuse and recycle, so share your knowledge and encourage those around you.

Start with a group of friends; and together with your teacher, come up with a way to get your entire class or even your entire school involved in being environmental stewards. Maybe you can start a recycling program, find ways to reuse items that are currently being thrown away, hold community drives to collect items for the those in need or even create a new green space for your school. Your efforts today could make a tremendous impact in your school and community for years to come.

Go Green Shopping
Next time you and your parents go shopping, keep in mind that what you buy affects the environment. However, some choices are better than others. Go “green shopping” and shop with the environment in mind. Buy products that will help save natural resources, conserve energy and prevent waste.

The following are some tips to consider the next time you go shopping:

- Every time you purchase a recycled product that means more and more natural resources are being saved. Buying recycled products is easy – simply look for the labels.
- Buy durable, long-lasting products like rechargeable batteries instead of disposable ones that can be wasteful.
- Avoid excess packaging. Don’t buy anything that’s overly packaged – it’s too much of a waste. Instead, buy products with reusable or recyclable packaging.
- Buy energy-efficient items. When buying TV’s, DVD or CD players, look for the ENERGY STAR logo. It’s a program designed to promote energy-efficient products.
Teaching Others New Concepts
In this lesson, the students become the teachers. Divide the class into groups, and assign each group a topic. When put together, the presentations will provide a full overview of environmental stewardship. Each group will research their topic and make a presentation to the class. Students should be creative, but the presentation suggestions below show some things that could be included in presentations.

Presentation Suggestions:
- Posters (which can later be displayed in the school)
- PowerPoint presentations
- Skits
- Games
- Quiz for the class
- Visuals—recycling, reusing and reducing examples
*Avoid handouts that will have a short shelf-life to save paper.

Suggested Topics:
- Why is recycling, reusing and/or reducing important, and what benefits are received by doing each?
- What materials can be recycled in your community? How does your community’s recycling ability compare with other areas?
- What can you do to improve your recycling capabilities in your school/community/state?
- What are some common ways to reuse items?
- How can you reduce your footprint? (waste, power, water use, etc.)
- Focus on specific recyclable items. Discuss things, such as:
  - What is the history of paper, plastic, glass, aluminum, etc.?
  - How is it made?
  - How is it recycled?
  - What are some products the recycled paper, plastic, glass, etc. are used in?
This checklist should give you some good ideas about all the little things you can do to help your environment. Some of these ideas can help you save money as well as resources.

Recycle incandescent light bulbs with fluorescent bulbs.
Fluorescent light bulbs use less energy and last 13 times longer.

Turn off the light if no one is there.
If possible, use sunlight to illuminate the room instead of lights.

Buy recycled goods.
Buying recycled goods creates a market for recycled products. Don’t forget to check the label to see whether the product comes in recycled packaging.

Create a compost pile.
Don’t throw away food; use it to start a compost pile. Remember, you can also compost yard waste!

Plant a garden.
Instead of buying your veggies at the store, plant a garden and learn about organic gardening.

Use cloth rags instead of paper towels.
Why waste money on paper towels when a clean cloth rag is more absorbent and reusable?

Adjust the thermostat.
Turn down the heat and wear several layers of light clothing in the winter, and turn up temperature in the summer. Also, close unused rooms to prevent wasted energy.

Check the label on your laundry detergent.
Make sure it is biodegradable and, if possible, dry your clothes on a clothes line.

Take quick showers instead of long baths.
One bath can waste gallons of water.
Get out and have some fun! Team up and have a recycling scavenger hunt.

Here are some tips on how to create a fun and successful hunt:

• Create several lists of items for teams to find around the classroom and at home.
• Print the list on recycled paper. Give each team their list, and set a deadline to find as many items as they can.
• Have students bring in their findings, and/or take pictures of them, and write them down to share with the class.
• Include an online component to the scavenger hunt where students research statistics, find out about the local recycling program, etc.
• Extra points can be given for creative items that are found.
• You can also create clues for each item instead of providing a list, making it more challenging for students.

Possible items to search for:

• Blue recycle barrel
• Green recycle rectangle box
• Plastic: #1, #2
• Colored, brown and white paper (bonus if it’s not sheets of paper)
• Newspaper
• Glass: green, brown and clear
• Tin
• Steel
• Aluminum
• Cardboard (bonus if it’s not a box)
• Piece of compost/compost pile
• Something that has been reused for something other than its original purpose
• The local landfill and recycling facility
• Someone in the act of recycling
Now that you have learned about recycling, reducing and reusing in the classroom, it’s time to take it to the next level: the community.

Recycling Drives
One way to incorporate the community in your effort is to have a recycling drive. The drive could include a competition between each grade level or between schools to see which group can bring in the most recyclable materials. Your drive could collect one type of recyclable product (such as phone books) or it could include them all. Within each school district, elementary, middle and high schools could each collect a different material.

The drive can be promoted with recycling signs designed by students and displayed around the community. The school or class that recycles the most should receive recognition in the community. Get local businesses to donate prizes and rewards.

You can also get the community involved in your recycling program by offering it as a service. People in your community could then bring items to your school to recycle.

Clothing/Food/Book Drives
Another way to involve the community is to encourage the reuse of items. Have a clothing, food and or book drive to encourage your community to Clean out their pantries, closets and shelves and help others at the same time.

People could bring items to the school to be donated, or you could plan a community yard or consignment sale. Schools can even host themed clothing, food and book drives, such as used Halloween costumes for elementary schools or used prom dresses for high schools; holiday food collections; and various types of books—from educational to favorite fiction.

Hand-me-down programs are also great ways to reuse items and save money. Schools could collect school uniforms, backpacks, lunchboxes, notebooks and even calculators. If it can be reused, it should be!
Here are a few ways your school can celebrate Earth Day (April 22).

- **Contests:** Hold a photography, art, poster or essay contest for students. All entries can be displayed at the school and used to bring an education component to your environmental activities.

- **Earth Day Fair:** Plan an event that includes games, educational booths and a recycling/reuse drive. This is a great opportunity to work with other schools and your community to expand your environmental efforts. You can even register your event at [www.EarthDay.org](http://www.EarthDay.org).

- **Beautify Your School:** Plant a tree, create a garden, organize a clean-up of the school grounds, paint needed areas—the possibilities are endless.

- **Play:** Have students create environmental games that are both educational and fun! Students can gather information about environmental topics (energy use, water, recycling, reusing, reducing, etc.), and then use that to create a game to teach others about the topic. Spend Earth Day playing games in class and learning from each other, while having a little fun.

**Remember, no matter how you choose to celebrate Earth Day, it’s the things we each do every day that make a big difference.**
• All About Compost: Recycling Household and Garden Waste  
  By Pauline Pears

• How on Earth Do We Recycle Plastic  
  By Janet P. D’Amato

• Trash-to-Treasure Papermaking  
  By Arnold Grummer

• How to Recycle a Disposable Planet  
  By Tommie Clendening

• Fantastic Recycled Plastic: 30 Clever Creations to Spark Your Imagination  
  By Daved Edgar and Robin A. Edgar

• 365 Ways to Live Green for Kids: Saving the Environment at Home, School, or at Play—Every Day!  
  By Sheri Amsel

• Recycle: Make Your Own Eco-Friendly and Creative Designs  
  By Moira Hankinson and Nicholas Hankinson

• Save Our Planet: 750 Everyday Ways You Can Help Clean Up the Earth  
  By Diane MacEachern

• The Toilet Papers: Recycling Waste and Conserving Water  
  By Sim Van der Ryn
Plant a Garden

What you will need:
- Small area outside that receives adequate sun
- Seed Packets
- Shovels
- Plant Food
- Watering Can

Instructions:
- Once a space is decided on, have the class decide what kind of plant they would like to plant.
- Take class time to explain the importance of growing your own food.
- Take the class out to dig and plant the seeds.
- Each day the students can take turns going to water the plants.
- Throughout the year, they can watch the plant grow and learn more about conserving energy and sustainability.
- You can even use the class garden as a way to grow your own food to eat or to sell to the community.
The more we drive, the more we pollute. Learn about the effects cars have on the environment. Vehicles produce about one-third of the pollution in the U.S. Every time we drive cars that depend on gasoline, smog, carbon monoxide and toxins are emitted into the air we breathe.

There are many ways to reduce air pollution, and one is how we travel. Here are some tips you and your friends can follow:

- **Start a carpool.** Instead of everyone riding to school separately, get your parents to alternate driving several kids to and from school. This reduces pollution and can be a great way to make more friends.
- **Leave the car at home.** If you live close to school, switch from four wheels to two—ride your bike or even walk to school with classmates who live near you. This will help your carbon footprint as well as your heart!
- **Take short cuts.** Instead of taking the same way to and from school each day, try different routes to see if there are any shorter alternatives. You’ll save time and gas and pollute less.

Find the words in the puzzle below