**SAVE THE EARTH: IT’S EVERYONE’S HOME!**

**LESSON 3: Grades K-3**

# REDUCE! USE ONLY WHAT YOU NEED!

**Curriculum Connections, Standards addressed:**

**Academic Goals:**  1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7

**Knowledge Goals:** Communication Arts: 1, 3, 4 & 6; Mathematics: 1, 3 & 6; Science: 4, 5 & 8; Social Studies: 5, 6 & 7; Fine Arts: 1 & 4; Health: 6

**Objectives:** Students will develop an understanding of the terms *conserve* and *reduce.*Theywill apply what they’ve learned by producing reminders that will educate others of simple ways to conserve and reduce. Theywill apply what they’ve learned by actually conserving and reducing consumption of energy and resources.

**Common Core-Aligned Activities:**

**SL.3-4.1—Engage effectively in collaborative discussions building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.**

**SL.3-4.1c—Pose and respond to specific questions and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to remarks of others.**

Ask students to discuss resources they use….including water, electricity, heating and cooling, food consumption, etc. What are their needs? How do these resources fill those needs? How do they tap into those resources? How often and in what ways? (i.e. on a really cold day do they immediately push the thermometer to increase the heat or do they put on a sweater?) Discuss.

**Character Concepts:** Responsibility, Citizenship

**Responsibility**: The world is not ours alone. We share the world with others. People, animals and plants need a healthy world to live a decent life. When we waste resources, it has an effect on so many others: people, animals and plants. How can we be good stewards of the earth and take responsible care of our resources?

**Citizenship:** We must all share in the well-being of our earth within our school, our community and our homes. Get involved and make a difference today!

**STEM initiatives: Thinking critically in the connections to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math**

**2-LS2-1—Events have causes that generate observable patterns.**

Cause and Effect are powerful observation tools that can predict patterns. How can cause and effect forecast the health of our resources? How does our use or abuse of our resources affect other creatures, plants and people?

**Materials:**

* One recyclable/reusable cup per child
* 4 small buckets (same size)
* Stopwatch
* Water
* Markers/crayons
* Chalkboard/chalk
* DOWNLOAD handout: “Resourceful Reminders”

**Method:**

1. Without giving away the point of the activity, begin this lesson by splitting the class into two teams, each in a straight line facing one direction, with each team having an empty bucket at one end and a bucket filled to the brim of water at the other. Give each child a cup. The object is for each team to transfer their water from the full bucket to the empty one passing it down the line with the cups, one child filling the next child’s cup with water and so on while being timed.
2. As the team who finishes first is cheering about their win, examine the buckets that are now full at the end of the lines. Are the buckets full to the brim? They are probably not because in their haste to get done quickly, they undoubtedly spilled some water. Announce that no one really wins because water was lost by both teams.
3. Ask them to help you brainstorm things we do during the day that may waste water (letting water run while brushing teeth, taking long showers, etc.). Then brainstorm ways in which we may waste energy/electricity, paper products, food etc.). Write these on the board so they can see how much is wasted, often because we rush through our day not particularly thinking about the resources we use or how we can help to conserve.
4. Explain that life is so hectic and we are so busy most of the time that we don’t think about the wasteful things we do. Is this intentional? Is this bad? Is this necessary? The more energy, resources and products that we use, the more waste and pollution we are creating! Explain that the word **conserve** means to use only what is needed so that less of that resource is used **(reduced**). Next to each wasteful thing we do, have them help you think of ways we could change our wasteful habits to habits that encourage conserving and write them down.

**Call to Action:** Now that we are aware of how much we waste, let’s find a way to leave gentle reminders for ourselves and others to make better choices that conserve and reduce! Ask them if it would be helpful to have little signs reminding them to conserve that are placed in certain areas where the wasting takes place. Hopefully they will agree that it would. Hand out the activity sheet *Resourceful Reminders* to each student and have them color and cut out the reminders. Have them write on the back of each one where they are going to display it at school or at home and share these ideas with the class. Laminate and give back to students to take home to hang. (Laminating will help them to last for a long time, saving paper in the long run!)

**Follow-Up Activities:**

* Develop a set of questions and have the students interview their family members to find out if the reminders caused them to conserve and reduce. Chart the results. Which reminder was most helpful? Which one did people follow the most?
* Have the students make an additional set to give to someone as a gift to celebrate Earth Day. Include a card made on recycled paper with instructions and with the importance of conserving and reducing.

**Reading:** Visit our section entitled ***Recommended Children’s Literature*** for a comprehensive listing of animal-related books.

**Web sites:**

[www.kidsplanet.org](http://www.kidsplanet.org)

[www.environmentalconcerns.org](http://www.environmentalconcerns.org)

[www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/home.htm](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/home.htm)

[www.epa.gov/kids/](http://www.epa.gov/kids/)

[www.kidsface.org](http://www.kidsface.org)

[www.greenpeace.org](http://www.greenpeace.org)

[www.ikecoalition.org](http://www.ikecoalition.org)

[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/eek/](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/ce/eek/)

Visit our section entitled ***Recommended Web Links*** for additional animal-related web sites.