

FROM STUDENTS TO ACTIVISTS

Lesson plans on plastic pollution
and our zero-waste future



Lesson plans for students up to 6 years

GREENPEACE

FIRST... FIVE TIPS

for setting up the classroom!



Avoid single-use plastic packaged school supplies



Hang facts about plastic pollution on your wall for everyone to see



Store art supplies in repurposed glass containers (eg. food jars)



Ditch single-use utensils and replace them with reusable ones



Use decorations that can be reused



LESSON IDEAS FOR THE LITTLE ONES

You're never too young to start caring for the planet! Here are some developmentally appropriate lesson ideas you can try with your students.

Feel free to adapt them to your classroom needs.



Plastic pollution (Presentation)



© Franziska Viviane Zobel

Use visual aids and real world items to help students make the connection between plastic use, wildlife, and the local environment.

Materials needed:

- ✓ Coloured chalk or dry erase markers
- ✓ Blackboard or whiteboard
- ✓ Photos of the nearest river and ocean ([some examples](#))
- ✓ Natural items that could be found in the river and ocean, such as:
 - Stones
 - Seaweed
 - Sand
- ✓ Single-use plastic examples:
 - Water bottles
 - Beverage caps
 - Utensils
 - Product packaging

Steps:

1. Gather your students together in a semi-circle.
2. Show students the photos of the ocean and river. Using these photos as your models, draw the two bodies of water on the board.
3. Ask the students which animals live in each environment and add them to the drawings.
4. Introduce the natural items. Ask students to identify each item and match them to their home environment. Do they belong in the river, the ocean, or both?
5. Show the single-use plastic items and ask students to identify them, then almost completely cover the board with drawings of plastic items. Ask if this pollution is good or bad, and how it can affect the environment and wildlife.
6. End the lesson by discussing how plastic pollution happens and how students can create a greener world. Think--> REDUCE, REUSE, REFILL!



The Story of Plastic (Storytelling)

© Mandy Barker / Greenpeace



Choose a plastic item and tell the story of its lifecycle, comparing its short period of usefulness with the long period in which it pollutes the environment.

Materials needed:

- ✓ Clean plastic items, such as:
 - Water bottles
 - Beverage caps
 - Utensils
 - Bags
 - Cups
- ✓ Recycled paper
- ✓ Colouring pencils

Steps:

1. Choose a simple everyday single-use plastic item and share it with your class.
2. Tell the story of its lifecycle. Remember to include its origin, why it was made, and where it ends up. Emphasize the short time it spends serving its intended purpose compared to the long time it spends polluting the environment.
3. Ask students how this item affects nature, animals, and humans.
4. Have students make their own plastic story. They can glue plastic items to their papers and then illustrate each stage of their item's lifecycle.
5. Have each student share their plastic story with the class.
6. Close the lesson with a conversation about avoiding single-use plastics.



Personalising Reusable Items to Replace Single-Use Plastics (Arts & Crafts)



© Ivan Šejic / Greenpeace

Empower students to ditch single-use plastics by helping them personalise their own reusable alternatives.

Materials needed:

- ✓ Waterproof markers
- ✓ Non-toxic paints and brushes
- ✓ Reusable items that students can personalise, such as:
 - Small ceramic mugs
 - Reusable durable utensils and plates for snacks
 - Reusable water bottles

Steps:

1. Organise an art supplies corner, complete with cleaned reusable items that students can decorate (eg. mugs, utensils, water bottles).
2. Have students personalise their items with markers and paints.
3. Encourage students to use these items instead of their single-use equivalents. Why use a styrofoam cup when you've got a cool unique ceramic mug?



Green Storytime (Reading)

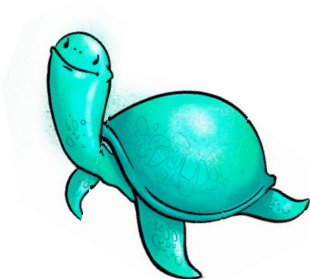


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Create a special corner in your classroom especially for books about protecting the environment. In addition to making them available for individual reading, consider reading one title a week to the whole class.

Materials needed:

- ✓ Label a special corner or bookshelf specifically for "Earth Books" or "Green Books."
- ✓ Stock with a selection of books on plastics, the climate, and the environment.



Here are some books to explore:

1. *Someone Swallowed Stanley* by Sarah Roberts ([bonus lesson plan](#))
2. *One Plastic Bag* by Miranda Paul
3. *I Can Save the Earth* by Alison Inches
4. *Don't Throw That Away!* by Lara Bergen
5. *Touch the Earth* by Julian Lennon
6. *Miss Fox' Class Goes Green* by Eileen Spinelli

FACTS ABOUT PLASTIC POLLUTION

TENS OF BILLIONS

OF PLASTIC CHIP BAGS
ARE SOLD EACH YEAR BY
COMPANIES LIKE PEPSI CO.

THE EQUIVALENT OF A
**TRUCKLOAD
OF PLASTIC**
ENTERS THE OCEANS
EVERY MINUTE.

DRINK COMPANIES
PRODUCE OVER
500 BILLION
SINGLE-USE PLASTIC
BOTTLES ANNUALLY.

UP TO
9 IN 10 SEABIRDS
AND MORE THAN HALF OF
WHALE AND DOLPHIN SPECIES
HAVE INGESTED PLASTIC.

THE MAJORITY OF THE
PLASTIC
THAT ENTERS THE OCEAN
ENDS UP ON THE SEAFLOOR.

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