

FROM STUDENTS TO ACTIVISTS

Lesson plans on plastic pollution
and our zero-waste future



Lesson plans for students 12+ years

GREENPEACE

FIRST... FIVE TIPS

to setting up the classroom...



Organise single-use challenges, like a zero waste day



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



Ask students to only use reusable water bottles in your classroom



Encourage the use of fabric or eco-friendly binders in place of ones made from plastic or paper



Assign more group work to avoid using large amounts of paper



EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO FIND CREATIVE SOLUTIONS!

As students enter their teenage years, they're ready to explore concepts like justice, stewardship, and community. Here are some developmentally appropriate lesson ideas you can try with them.

Feel free to adapt them to your classroom needs.



What is Plastic? (Presentation)



© Mandy Barker / Greenpeace

Present a short quiz to test students' knowledge about plastics and help them understand the effects of plastic pollution on the environment.

Materials needed:

- ✓ Projector
- ✓ Screen
- ✓ Computer
- ✓ [The Big Plastic Quiz](#) (presentation)

Steps:

1. Ask students what they know about plastic, and if they think they can easily identify it.
2. Then challenge the students to [The Big Plastic Quiz!](#)
3. Click through each question and ask students to take their best guess. Students can answer by raising their left hand for A and right hand for B.
4. Discuss any questions that they had trouble with, and have a conversation about what they can do to help create a greener world.



Sick of Plastic? (Video storytelling)

© Greenpeace



Use video clips to spark a conversation about plastic pollution, the ridiculous amount of plastic in everyday life, and how students can help make change.

Materials needed:

- ✓ Projector
- ✓ Screen
- ✓ Speakers
- ✓ Video clips such as Greenpeace Australia Pacific's [Excessive Plastic Running Your Day?](#)
- ✓ Blackboard or digital worksheets with the headings:
 - What plastic do I use in one day?
 - ...in a week?
 - ...in a year?
 - What can I do to change this?

Steps:

1. Present a couple of videos about the prevalence of plastics in everyday life. For example, see [Excessive Plastic Running Your Day?](#) from Greenpeace Australia Pacific.
2. Discuss the videos. Encourage students to see that while each use of plastic may seem relatively harmless, the cumulative effect has huge consequences.
3. Either as a group or individually, ask students to list out the plastic items they use every day, week, and year.
4. Upon completion use this large image as a reminder of the impact of plastic can have and how this is NOT the ideal ocean we have.
5. Brainstorm together about how we could use fewer plastics, and how we could encourage others to do the same. What kinds of collective action could help us end our global dependence on plastic and single-use products?



Hack single-use plastics! (Arts & Crafts)



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

Materials needed:

- ✓ Clean plastic and other single-use discarded items, such as:
 - Water bottles
 - Old magazines
 - Scrap fabrics
 - Cups
 - Plates
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Rubber bands
- ✓ Strings
- ✓ Colouring markers

Steps:

1. Organise an art supplies corner, complete with discarded items that students can use as raw materials.
2. Check out Greenpeace's [MAKE SMTHNG Instagram page](#) for inspiration, and make a few example projects, like notebooks, plant pots, or reusable bags.
3. Give your students time to exercise their creativity and create items they can use again and again! These personalised and reusable versions are sure to be way cooler than their single-use alternatives!
4. Consider organising a MAKE SMTHNG or other such events to encourage students to reuse items and avoid purchasing new plastic products and challenge consumerism.



Green Storytime (Reading)

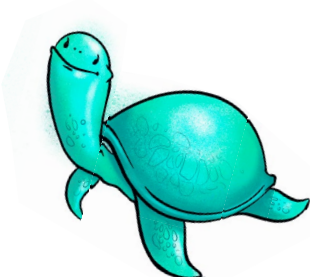
© Bernd Lauter / Greenpeace



Create a special corner in your classroom especially for books about protecting the environment.

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. *Greta and the Giants* by Zoë Tucker
2. *Water, Water Everywhere! Stop Pollution, Save Our Oceans*
3. *Barefoot Books World Atlas* by Nick Crane and David Dean
4. *Heroes of the Environment: True Stories of People Who Are Helping to Protect Our Planet* by Harriet Rohmer
5. *The Talking Earth* by Jean Craighead George
6. *We Are All Greta: Be Inspired to Save the World* by Valentina Giannella
7. *Taking on the Plastics Crisis* by Hanna Testa



FACTS ABOUT PLASTIC POLLUTION

ABOUT 8.3 BILLION
TONNES OF PLASTIC
HAS BEEN PRODUCED
SINCE THE 1950s

**THE WEIGHT
OF A BILLION
ELEPHANTS.**

UP TO
9 OUT OF 10 SEABIRDS
HAVE INGESTED PLASTIC.

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.

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

GREENPEACE