

FROM STUDENTS TO ACTIVISTS

Lesson plans on plastic pollution
and our zero-waste future



Lesson plans for students 6-12 years

GREENPEACE

FIRST... FIVE TIPS

for setting up the classroom!



Avoid single-use plastic packaged supplies



Clearly mark recycling bins for paper, plastic, and organics



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



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



Install a compost box in your classroom



BUILDING UP THAT KEEN CURIOSITY!

At this age, students can channel their natural curiosity, kindness, and empathy into a concern for the environment. Here are some developmentally appropriate lesson ideas you can try with them.

Feel free to adapt them to your classroom needs.



Identifying Plastic Pollution (Presentation)



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

Materials needed:

- ✓ Large drawing of the planet Earth
- ✓ Printed photos of natural, unpolluted settings
- ✓ Natural items that could be found in the photo settings:
 - Stones
 - Fallen leaves
 - Sand
 - Grass
- ✓ Single-use plastic examples:
 - Water bottles
 - Beverage caps
 - Utensils
 - Product packaging

Steps:

1. Gather your students together in a semi-circle.
2. Share the photos of different landscapes. Ask students what the photo depicts and where the scene might be located. Then place it on an appropriate place on the Earth drawing.
3. Introduce the natural items. Ask students to identify each, and to decide which of the photos they might belong in.
4. Next, bring out the single-use plastic items. Ask students to identify them, and then place them onto the Earth drawing and the photos until almost completely covered.
5. Ask students if this pollution is good or bad for the environment and wildlife. Discuss how plastic pollution happens and how it can be avoided.



Video Adventures (Storytelling)



Use simple yet informative videos to spark curiosity about plastic pollution.

Materials needed:

- ✓ Projector and screen
- ✓ Computer
- ✓ Speakers
- ✓ [Sea Turtle and Girl's Plastic Story Animation](#) or [Blue Planet II series](#)

Steps:

1. Present a video about plastic pollution. You could choose a short clip like [Sea Turtle and Girl's Plastic Story Animation](#) or even a full episode of [Blue Planet II series](#).
2. Ask some discussion questions to start a classroom conversation. What did the students learn from the video? Could they relate to the animals? How is the environment changing? Using the class blackboard, ask students to think of questions they might have about plastic that were touched on in the video.
3. Ask the students what questions they still have about plastics. Write these questions on the board.
4. Have the students collectively decide which questions they find most important. Then try to contact an expert in your area.
5. When you receive a response, share it with the class!



Classroom ocean collage (Arts & Crafts)



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Get creative and help students see the big picture by making a classroom collage that shows the difference between a healthy ocean and a polluted one.

Materials needed:

- ✓ Large wall space
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Clean plastic and other single-use items, such as:
 - Water bottles
 - Beverage caps
 - Utensils
 - Bags
 - Cups
 - Plates
- ✓ Non-toxic paint
- ✓ Brushes
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Recycled paper

Steps:

1. Devote a wall of your classroom to create an ocean scene. Cover this wall with blue paper. At the bottom, draw a sea floor. At the top, cut or draw some waves.
2. Place the single-use items on the floor. Then pick up each item and ask students if it can enter the ocean. If it can, attach it to the collage. (Most likely, all items will qualify.)
3. Discuss the damage that plastics can do to the ocean and other environments.
4. As homework, have students create a list of solutions to keep our environment clean and write about how they can contribute to this goal.
5. During your next class meeting, have students share and discuss their solutions.
6. Remove the plastic items from the collage, or make a new one without plastic pollution.
7. Have the students draw and cut out examples of happy, healthy ocean life, and add them to the collage.
8. As always, consider what materials you can reuse or upcycle for this art project. The fewer materials you buy, the less waste you create!



Green Storytime (Reading)

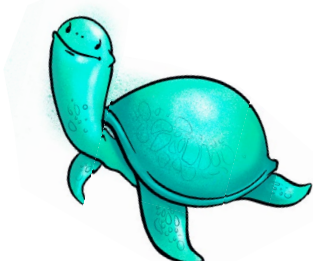
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Create a special corner in your classroom especially for books about protecting the environment. In addition to making them available for individual reading, consider reading one title a week to the whole class.

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. *The Magic School Bus and the Climate Challenge* by Joanna Cole
2. *Pesky Plastic: An Environmental Story* by Leticia Colon De Mejias
3. *What Milly Did* by Elise Moser
4. *Life in the Ocean: The Story of Oceanographer Sylvia Earle* by Claire A. Nivola
5. *The Good Garden: How One Family Went from Hunger to Having Enough* by Katie Smith Milway
6. *Greta and the Giants* by Zoë Tucker
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.

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