



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
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What We As Students Can Do To Save Our World

Guide for Curriculum Unit 93.05.08
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The using up of the Earth's natural resources and the destruction of our world is a universal concern. This concern should be passed on to the younger generations so as to modify or change behaviors that cause this rapid use or destruction. I would like to bring young people into contact with their environment in such a way as to stimulate a desire to investigate and provide them with an understanding of the methods they can use to help save our planet and make it a better place to live. Recent changes in the amount of information being circulated having to do with the environment has been staggering. Teachers can no longer depend upon easy generalizations as in the past; ideas become obsolete almost as soon as they are presented. This is especially true concerning the environment.

My objective in this unit is to provide information on the following subjects that will cause a change in behavior which will have a beneficial effect on the environment.

Air pollution

You probably already know that air pollution is a very serious problem. Air pollution is caused in numerous ways but probably the most harmful is the burning of fossil fuels. This burning releases pollutants into the atmosphere. The most common pollutants are nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides, ammonia and carbon dioxide. These pollutants cause numerous problems such as eye irritations, respiratory and breathing problems. Some of these gases combine with water vapor and form weak acids. These acids fall to earth in rain, this rain is called acid rain. This acid rain can destroy plant and animal life. It can also be harmful to buildings.

Water pollution

You probably already also know water can be polluted in many ways. Industrial chemicals and sewage are dumped into streams and rivers. These chemicals cause sickness and can even result in death. Also many chemicals used in farming such as fertilizers or pesticides also cause water pollution.

Natural Resources

You probably already also know we need natural resources in order to survive and we use them every day of our lives. Natural resources are living and non-living. Some natural resources are renewable and some are non-renewable. Through the use of various lessons and experiments I will try to impart to my students that there is a cause and effect relationship between us and our environment, and it is our duty to seek knowledge, and change our behavior as individuals, because we can make a difference in saving our world.

(Recommended for Science, Grades 5 - 8)

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