



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1997 Volume VII: Environmental Quality in the 21st Century

A Hands-On Approach to Environmental Quality

Guide for Curriculum Unit 97.07.06
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This unit is designed to acquaint the student with problems of environmental quality and to demonstrate ways by which the student can better cope with problems of pesticide residues and other environmental contaminants. The students will learn to plant, tend and harvest an organic garden. More importantly, they will learn about environmental quality and what they as individuals may do about the problem. They will become aware of potential hazards in foods and learn how to partially avoid them.

This unit guides student and teacher through the construction of a community garden and the basic principles of organic gardening. By learning about these subjects, the students can better understand environmental quality and the toxic residues we are all exposed to. They learn how to avoid some of the toxic residues we all ingest in our foods through learning to raise a portion of their own food with no added toxins.

The approach is hands-on, with each student planting his or her own garden. This promotes group cooperation and develops a sense of self-confidence in the students. The students learn to be proud of what they have accomplished, as well as learn practical gardening skills that will stick with them for the rest of their lives.

Most importantly, they learn about environmental quality and what they may do to bring about some change.

(Recommended for Environmental Science, Biology, and General Science, grades 7-12)

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