

BERNADETTE VALLELY
WITH AMY CHARUY-HUGHES AND BETHAN STEWART JAMES

YOUR PLANET NEEDS YOU!



**AN EVERYDAY GUIDE
TO SAVING THE EARTH**

AGES 9+ NOTES FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

Virago: TEACHER RESOURCES
Prepared by SHAPES for Schools www.shapesforschools.com



YOUR **PLANET** NEEDS **YOU!**

AGES 9+ NOTES FOR TEACHERS & LIBRARIANS

Explore themes of:

- ✓ The Earth
- ✓ The Environment
- ✓ Conservation
- ✓ Global Citizenship

Subject checklist:

- ✓ PSHE
- ✓ Citizenship
- ✓ Art, Design & Technology
- ✓ Geography
- ✓ Science

The activities included here are suitable for home learning or in the classroom.

They have been created to prompt discussions around the themes in ***Your Planet Needs You: An Every Day Guide to Saving the Earth*** – encouraging children to work together to understand the challenges we face in protecting the planet, and how we can create a better future for our world.

THEMES OF THE BOOK

If there was ever a time to stand up for your planet, for Mother Earth, **this is the time**.

But what are the most pressing environmental issues affecting us today? And what actions can you, as an individual, take to combat them?

Your Planet Needs You! is the essential beginner's guide to understanding the environment and the threats to its wellbeing.

DISCUSS AS A CLASS:

- Look at the cover of ***Your Planet Needs You!*** What is the effect of the large font?
- How does the cover grab your attention?
- What do you think are some of 'the most pressing environmental issues affecting us today'?
- Why do you think 'this is the time' to 'stand up for your planet'?
- How do you think you can help protect the planet?



Consider why the earth is a beautiful place that deserves our protection. For each category below – ‘LAND’, ‘SEA’ and ‘SKY’ – write down or draw any words, ideas or images that you think of in the boxes.



What amazing natural things do you find on land? What brilliant creatures live in the sea? What do you see when you look to the sky?

When you have written your initial ideas down, choose one of the categories and create a collage. Finally, put all of your collages together in one single classroom display – to remind you of Earth’s variety and beauty!


LAND

A large, empty rectangular box with rounded corners, outlined in a dark green border. It occupies the bottom half of the page and is intended for students to draw or write their ideas related to the 'LAND' category.

SEA



SKY





FUN ACTIVITIES!

ACTIVITY 1: IMAGINE A WORLD

Imagine a world that's clean all around,
People work together. Happiness is found.
Let's show respect, it's who we are.
Let's not treat our earth like a disposable jar.

When all the plants are healthy and green,
When all the seas are thriving and clean,
That is what our earth could be.
Why don't you come and help out me?

If you could see that I can see,
When the world is not a catastrophe,
Then you would 100% help me!

Bethan Stewart James, age nine, January 2020

DISCUSS AS A CLASS:

- *Why do you think Bethan's poem starts with the word 'Imagine'? Why is this powerful?*
- *What do you notice about Bethan's age? How does this inspire you?*
- *Why does Bethan compare the earth to a 'disposable jar'? What does this make you think of?*
- *Which words stand out to you in the second stanza of the poem? Why?*
- *What is the effect of the question: 'Why don't you come and help out me?'*
- *Define the word 'catastrophe'. Is this how you see the world?*

There are lots of different ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS described in *Your Planet Needs You!*

You can see some of them (but definitely not all of them – there are nearly one hundred!) in the grid provided.

| ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM | DEFINITION (WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?) | HOW PASSIONATE AM I ABOUT THIS TOPIC? Rank (1-8) <i>1 = THE MOST PASSIONATE</i> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| AIR POLLUTION | | |
| CLIMATE EMERGENCY | | |
| PLASTICS | | |
| RECYCLING | | |
| SPECIES EXTINCTION | | |
| LITTER, WASTE AND LANDFILL | | |
| YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT | | |
| | | |

- Which of these environmental problems interests you the most or do you feel most passionate about? If you need to do some research by reading the book or by looking online, then take your time!
- You might notice that a row has been left blank for you to fill in. In this row, choose an environmental problem of your own from the book.
- Then, in the table, write a short definition for each environmental problem and rank it according to how passionate you are about it. Can you ‘imagine a world’ where these things aren’t problems at all?
- Write your own ‘Imagine a World’ poem in three stanzas, using Bethan’s poem as inspiration. How would the world look without these environmental problems?
- Begin your poem with the words, **‘Imagine a world...’**

Imagine a world

ACTIVITY 2: AN A-Z OF ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES



As human beings we find it hard to see the connections between our own personal actions, environmental emergency and our own lives and ultimately deaths.

Our lives have changed forever because of the fragility and vulnerability of our species, and our arrogant and false belief that we can choose how we engage with nature.

This often wilful ignorance, unwillingness and inability to act together means an immense and serious environmental emergency has been building for years. We pretended it wasn't as bad as the statistics said it was. We learned to live with it.

It has become very clear that reducing polluting emissions from transport and industry dramatically changes the day-to-day living conditions and air quality for millions of people. Due to the reduction in air pollution caused by coronavirus lockdowns, we could see cities without smog. For the first time in thirty years people could see the Himalaya Mountains over Kathmandu. The skies above Los Angeles were clear in less than two weeks.

Our choices after the pandemic emergency subsides – choices of transport for work, reasons for air travel, how we shop, how factories operate – will determine whether this window into healthier urban future is a footnote or a foreword.

We could see how animals and creatures all around us reacted. They ventured back into urban areas and streets and ate our flowers, the grass, privet hedges and anything they could find. Animals enjoyed having a rest from the constant noise and intrusion of human beings and their machines.

People who survive serious accidents such as a car crash re-evaluate everything in their lives – not just the causes of the accident, but what they value, which relationships they should have given more time to, which didn't matter, the choices they've made over their life.

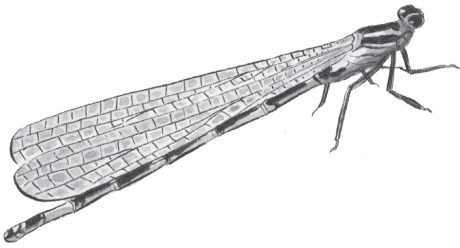
Coronavirus is humankind's car crash. Sometimes it takes a massive jolt for people to wake up, to make changes and take action.

Bernadette, Amy & Bethan, May 2020

DISCUSS AS A CLASS:

- According to Bernadette, Amy and Bethan, what do humans find hard 'to see the connections between'? Why do you think this might be?
- How do the authors refer to the pandemic in this extract? What do they compare it to? Why do they believe it to be important? Do you agree?
- What is the tone of this extract? What can you tell about the emotions of the authors here?
- What changes did we see to the environment during the pandemic?
- What is meant by the phrase: 'a footnote or a foreword'?

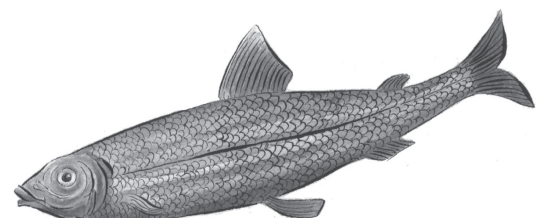
AN A-Z OF ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION



Acid Rain 15
Action, Protest and Empowerment 16
Additives in Food 20
Aerosols and the Ozone Layer 25
Agriculture 27
Air Pollution 29
Allergies 33
Animals and Insects in the Cosmetics Industry 35
Animals in the Textile Industry 40
Animal Testing 45
Batteries, Rechargers and Instant Energy 49
Biodegradability and the Environment 52
Chemicals 54
Chlorine 58
Cigarettes 61
Climate Emergency 64
Conscious Living 74
Consumer Power 75
Consumption and Consumerism 77
Cosmetics and Toiletries 80
Cotton 88
Cycling 92
Deodorants and Antiperspirants 95
Deserts 97
Detergents, Cleaners and Your Kitchen 98
The Development of Humanity 102
Disposable Products 105
Dolphins, Whales and Sea

Creatures 108
Dry-cleaning 110
Ecology 112
Economic and Environmental Business 113
Energy Efficiency and Energy Conservation 116
E Numbers 119
Environmental Heroes and Inspirational People 121
Environmental Law 128
Environmental Stewardship 133
Ethical Living 135
Factory and Intensive Farming 137
Fashion and Clothing 139
Fast Food, Takeaways and Restaurants 144
Fertilisers 147
Festivals, Concerts and Outdoor Events 150
Flowers and Plants 153
Food Waste 156
Fossil Fuels 160
Gaia 165
Gifts, Presents and Greetings Cards 167
Glitter and Shiny Metallic Decorations 170
Graffiti 171
Group Action and Protest 174
Grow Your Own Food 177
Habitats and Biodiversity 180
Hair Products and Hair Accessories 183
Hazardous Waste 186
Heavy Metals 188
Holidays, Travelling and Relaxing 191
Hormones 196
Insects, Bugs and Bees 203
Irradiation 206
Jewellery 209

Keeping Well and Safe 213
Litter, Waste and Landfill 218
Malnutrition 223
Noise Pollution 226
Nuclear Power and Nuclear Weapons 229
One Planet Living 234
Organic Everything! 238
Packaging 240
Paper 242
Pesticides, Herbicides and Agri-Chemicals 244
Pets 247
Phones, Computers, Tablets and TVs 249
Plastics 253
Plutonium 259
Questions? 261
Radiation 263
Recycling 265
Refugees and Human Displacement 268
Renewable Energy 270
Sanitary Products 273
Seals and River Life 276
Seas, Oceans and Rivers 278
Soil 283
Species Extinction 285
Sustainable Textiles 288
Transport 294
Trees and Tree Planting 300
Tropical Rainforests 304
Veganism, Vegetarianism and the 'isms' of our Food 308
Walking 315
Water 317
Your Carbon Footprint 322
Zoos and Captive Animals 328



ENVIRONMENTAL A-Z BOARD

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A | B | C |
| D | E | F |
| G | H | I |
| J | K | L |
| M | N | O |

| | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| P | Q | R |
| S | T | V |
| W | Y | Z |

- Use the Environmental A–Z Board to make a note of the environmental issues covered in the book's contents page.
- Then, distribute one letter of the alphabet to each member of your class. Individually, draw a big template of your given letter on a sheet of A3 paper. Illustrate your letter with all of the things listed in that section of the contents page. Use lots of bright colours and interesting textures to make your letter stand out. When you've finished, cut it out and mount it on a piece of card. Using string, hang your drawings around the classroom, to remind you that your planet needs YOU!

ACTIVITY 3:

A SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS MANIFESTO



- Schools should grow their own foods: potatoes, leeks, tomatoes, etc.
- Schools should do local workshops to raise awareness of world problems and fundraise for solar panels or eco-school supplies. (At my school this went very well and we even had some local eco heroes coming in to talk to us.)
- Schools should do litter pick-ups in the school grounds and public areas.
- The younger kids in our school definitely enjoyed making animal habitats such as bird homes, insect hotels, hoverfly pools, etc.
- Being a vegetarian or vegan definitely makes a big difference so why not suggest a vegetarian day every week or, even better, become a vegetarian?
- In our school we have a small wild area we could expand, and I think all schools should start a small one.
- In our school it is hard to give up single-use plastics but we can give it a shot.
- I think it would make a difference to do eco assemblies to inform everyone about what you are doing as a school; you could even have some visitors coming in to talk.
- A good idea I got from an Eco Schools conference is to write a letter to your local MP; this is a great classroom activity.

- In 2019, my best friends, Eliza and Leila, and I started a litter pick-up club with the school litter-pickers. It would make a big difference if you could start one too.
- If you live close to your school why not cycle or walk to school; if you live far away then catch a bus.
- It is very important that school kids are well informed about world problems. What better way to do it than to go on an eco school trip to places such as local companies, farms and beaches.
- On warm days, instead of being inside, why not go outside for outdoor classes?
- Starting a mini farm is such a good idea; you could have vegetables and chickens – the only thing is someone has to look after them during the holidays.
- Plastic-free lunches and packed lunches are an awesome idea (I got this idea from an Eco Schools conference).
- Another good idea is to go to school with a reusable water bottle as then the school won't need to buy plastic cups.
- Our school makes art out of litter instead of using new materials.
- Encourage your school to use fewer chemicals by using eco-cleaning products.
- In my garden at home we have a compost bin. All schools produce so much green waste they should compost it.
- Book swaps, clothes swaps and toys swaps at school would be very worthwhile. We do this at our school.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- *What is a 'manifesto'? What do we mean by the word 'sustainable'?*
- *What is your favourite thing on Bethan's manifesto? Why?*
- *Which things do you think could work in your school? Place a tick next to them.*
- *Which things do you think wouldn't work in your school? Why not? Place a cross next to them.*
- *Who would you need to persuade to create a manifesto like this for your own school?*
- *Why do you think it is important that schools help to take action for the planet?*

OUR SUSTAINABLE CLASS MANIFESTO

| ACTION | IMPACT | CHALLENGE |
|--------|--------|-----------|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |
| 4. | | |
| 5. | | |

- *Make a five-step Sustainable Manifesto for your class. You can use Bethan's manifesto as inspiration, adapt some of her ideas or come up with your own original action plan.*
- *Think about: what actions you want to prioritise and the impact these actions will have.*
- *What challenges do you think you'll be met with as you try to create your own Sustainable Manifesto? Why? Why is it hard to stick to some of the action points that you come up with?*
- *Once you've created your Sustainable Classroom Manifesto, make sure you reflect and keep a record of your progress. Keep a diary with all five action points listed somewhere so that you can check them off.*
- *How often do you meet the action points? Who is the most eco-conscious member of your class at the end of each week?*
- *Finally, create a campaign with your classmates to persuade the rest of your school to follow your manifesto, to make your school a more eco-conscious place. You might want to create presentations, videos, posters, banners or leaflets to help your campaign.*