

Title: Conservation Practices at School

Objective: Uncover resource use and current conservation efforts at school through interviews of school leaders.

Time: 45-60 minutes (10-15 minutes: Prepare questions; 20-30 minutes: Interviews; 10-15 minutes: Reflection and possible action steps discussed)

Materials Needed: Journal, Pencils, School Employees (one or more: Custodian, Grounds/Maintenance Director, Food Service Director, Secretary, Principal)

Interdisciplinary Lesson

Theme: Stewardship

Topic: Environmental Decision Making

Suggested grade Level: 3-5

Indoors or Outdoors: Indoors

Directions:

1. Revisit the conservation statements students came up with for the Conservation Greeting.
2. Invite one or more school employees (potential employees listed above) to be interviewed by your students regarding: the school's resource use (energy practices inside and outside the school), garbage and recycling practices, food waste, etc.
3. Have students write questions they would like to ask the school employees in their journals. Encourage students to write 3-5 questions. This helps prepare all students to participate during the interview. Have students star, or rank their questions in their journal, so they can best prepare to ask the question (or questions) they most would like to ask.
4. Align chairs in a circle for the interview. All school employees who can attend will take part in the full-group interview.
5. Use the information learned from the interview to discuss ways your students could conserve energy/resources in your classroom, cafeteria, schoolyard, etc. A possible next step would be to develop an action plan.

Discussion Questions:

1. What surprised you about what our school currently does/or doesn't do to conserve energy and reduce waste? Explain.
2. What conservation practices do you wish our school would implement? Why? Could we do this as a class?
3. Are there things we learned from the interview that we could apply to our energy use and waste production at home? Explain.

Science and Engineering Practice:

1. Asking questions (science); 3. Planning and carrying out investigations; 5. Using mathematics and computational thinking;
8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information.

Crosscutting Concepts:

2. Cause and effect: mechanism and explanation; 3. Scale, proportion, and quantity; 4. Systems and system models.

Disciplinary Core Idea:

Earth and Space Sciences: ESS 3: Earth and Human Activity.

Background Information:

- **Conserve:** to prevent the wasteful use of resources. People can conserve resources by protecting natural places and limiting the amount of resources they use and consume.
- **Reduce:** to use less.
- **Reuse:** to put again into service without changing.
- **Recycle:** to put again into service after changing.

Additional Resources:

- *The Adventures of a Plastic Bottle* by Allison Inches
- *A Plastic Bottle's Journey* by Suzanne Slade
- *Garbage, Waste, Dumps and You* by Connie Colwell Miller
- The Earth 911: Various topics on recycling - www.earth911.com
- The Green Team: Interactive Educational Program and Lesson Plans - www.thegreenteam.org

Correlates with:

Greeting - Conservation Greeting (p. 5)

Activity - Reduce with Juice (p. 63)