

Chapter 4: It's Easy Being Green!

Inquiry 3: I Want to Be Green! - Climate champions

- < **Provocations** – Song, Lyrics
- < **Question Generation** – Five Ws and an H and developing higher order questions
- < **Knowledge Building** – Doodling and Sketching
- < **Determining Understanding** - If....Then..... Book
- < **Pursuing Learning** – Experiment, Book, Create a book
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- < **Assessment** – Create a Video
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A. Provocation

To hook student interest and get them thinking, introduce a provocation to get them thinking about what it means to be green.

Song

Have the students listen to the song [Sesame Street: It's Not Easy Being Green \(Kermit's Song\)](#) Muppets - Kermit - It's not easy being green (original)

Either share the [Kermit the Frog - It's Not Easy Being Green Lyrics](#) on overhead projector or write the lyrics out on large poster paper.

***Students are very literal at this age. This helps them understand that the song can be interpreted many ways and introduces the concept of “being green”.**

Possible Questions:

- What message is Kermit trying to say?
- What do you think Kermit means by “It’s Not Easy Being Green”? Is he right?
- After listening to the song, do you think you would like to be “green”? Why?



B. Question Generation

At this point in the inquiry, we want to harness students’ curiosity and build off of the provocation by generating meaningful questions to continue to drive the learning process. Below are some suggestions for guiding students in creating questions that will drive their inquiry on their understanding of being “green” and being climate champions.

Kermit doesn’t want to be green at the beginning of the song but changes his mind at the end.

Use [Five Ws and an H and developing higher order questions](#) (Who, What, Where, When, Why and How) to get the students thinking about being green.

Example:

- Who can be “green”?
- What does it mean to be “green”?
- Where are “green” people?
- When is a good time to be “green”?
- Why would you want to be “green”?
- How do I start to be “green”?



C. Knowledge Building

At this stage, students may be ready to engage in a knowledge building activity. It will encourage students to open their minds to many alternative ways of thinking about the provocation and ideas that have been generated thus far in the inquiry process.

Sketch Map

Engage students in the [Doodling and sketching](#) strategy. The purpose of this strategy is to begin to understand what “green” means to them. Have them work on their own, in pairs or as a class to sketch some of their ideas. They can add to their sketch or the group sketch throughout the inquiry.

Possible questions:

- What does it mean to be green?
- Is it easy being green?



D. Determining Understanding

At this stage of the inquiry, use responses to inform and guide the learning process. They can provide insight into which concepts need clarity, what students are already well informed about, and a general direction that students want to pursue.

After spending some time learning about being “green”, share this book and reflect on their understanding to determine next steps.

Book

Teach kids sustainability: [What Does it Mean to be Green?](#) By: [Rana Diorio](#), illustrated by [Chris Blair](#)

“In this empowering book, a young boy and girl discover amazing facts (like how our food travels an average of 1,500 miles to be on our plate!) and explore all the different ways they—and we—can help protect the Earth’s most precious resources to save the planet and live “green” lifestyles.”
(Rana Diorio)

As a class, come up with several IF- THEN statements about what it means to be “green”. Write their statements on poster paper and decorate them. Have the students decide where each of the statements should be put in the classroom or in the school to remind everyone of the importance of being “green”.

Example:

If we use the bottle filling station **then** we save water. The students may decide to put this above the bottle filling station in the school hall.



E. Pursuing Learning

At this stage, students may begin research to pursue a question that has been generated, or the following activity could be integrated into the process to ensure that students have an understanding of foundational climate science. The activity listed below will enrich the understanding of being green and becoming climate champions.

Book

Read: [What Matters](#) By [Alison Hughes](#), illustrated by [Holly Hatam](#) find the read along version [here!](#)

“What happens when one small boy picks up one small piece of litter? He doesn't know it, but his tiny act has big consequences. From the miniscule to the universal, What Matters sensitively explores nature’s connections and traces the ripple effects of one child’s good deed to show how we can all make a big difference.”(Alison Huges)

AND

Read: [I AM ONE- A Book Of Action!](#) By [Susan Verde](#), illustrated by [Peter H. Reynolds](#) by “One seed to start a garden, one note to start a melody, one brick to start breaking down walls: Every movement and moment of change starts with purpose, with intention, with one. With me. With you.” Peter H Reynolds.

Experiment

Drop a rock in a pan of water so that the students can see the ripple effect. Ask the students what they notice. Explain that when a rock is thrown, there is a movement in the water that widens and expands. Like the rock, our actions and words can have far reaching effects.

Possible questions:

- What is the relationship between the boy and the ripple that the rock caused?

- Why is a tiny act important?
- What tiny act have you done that you think helped another species?

Climate Champions Book

Create a book together. Each child creates a page for their book illustrating an action they would like to take to become a climate champion. Decide on the title for your book.

Possible title: Climate Champions!



F. Consolidation

This step is designed to encourage students to integrate and synthesize key ideas. When students make connections and see relationships within and across lessons, it helps them to solidify knowledge and deepen their understanding.

There are many ways that we can help the earth, animals and people. Let's start to answer the question "Is it easy being green?" by creating something that will immediately help our environment and help stop climate change.

Seed Bombs

These [wildflower seed bombs](#) are made with local species and natural clay and are thrown into natural spaces anytime of the year. When Spring arrives and the rain washes away the clay, it leaves the wildflower seeds which will hopefully grow and encourage different insects and wildlife to the area. The students will start to understand another important and easy way to be "green" and how much we rely on pollinators.

Suggestion: focus on specific seeds so that you can help certain species in your area.
E.g., milkweed seeds for Monarch butterflies

**Have the students take pictures and short videos of the process so that they will be able to create and share their videos with other students.



Assessment Idea

Teachers will assess learning at different points throughout the inquiry using multiple methods. The following assessment provides an alternative evaluation method to standard quizzes and tests, that can be used after consolidation or at any point in the lesson to check for understanding.

[Student-Created Videos in the Classroom | Edutopia](#)

- *Learning product videos*
- *Response videos*
- *Reflection videos*
- *Tutorial videos*

Have the students create a video or take pictures and do a voice over to demonstrate their learning. The students show how they made seedballs, where they threw or want to throw them and what they hope will happen. They can finish the video by explaining why they think this will help the climate.



Take Action:

Allowing time for students to take action is an essential part of the learning process on climate change, as it empowers students and eases their eco anxiety.

These ideas for action can be utilized at any point in the learning process, whether it's now or after completing more guided inquiries. Please note that the suggestions are consistent in each chapter. Remind students that even when things get hard and seem so big they can always do something by taking action. Their actions will create an impact.

You might introduce the idea of students taking action by sharing the following YouTube [“Climate Change Song”](#)

Ask the students what they want to do to positively impact climate change. List their ideas and come up with a plan to put their action in place.

Ideas for Taking Action:

- Model green behaviour - use a reusable water bottle, actively recycle, compost, bring your bags to the grocer, bring your mug to the coffee shop, repair things that need mending, buy second-hand when applicable, pack a litterless lunch, use cloth napkins, use toxic-free cleaners (or make your own), walk or bike instead of driving when possible - these are just some basic ideas. Check out [Ideas to Think Green](#) for more suggestions.
- Collect rainwater for the garden
- Compost your kitchen waste
- Try more plant-based foods
- Enrol in the EcoSchools program The core of the EcoSchools program is the EcoSchools Certification Application (ECA), our bilingual, online application platform that enables schools across the country to create and implement a customized environmental action plan that meets the needs of their community. At the end of each

year, school plans are submitted and assessed by EcoSchools staff, and schools are awarded a certification level ranging from Bronze to Platinum.

- Do some of the [Eco-Activities | Earth Rangers: Where kids go to save animals!](#) to reduce our impact on the environment
- Develop a plan to conserve energy at home and/or at school and communicate this to this to the rest of the student body
- Enter one of the Little Inventors Climate Champions invention challenges offered by the Child Rights International Network. At [Little Inventors Events](#) you can find current, past and upcoming events such as Climate Champion Inventions and Protect Our Oceans Mission. It's worth exploring prior contests so students can see what other students across the globe have designed.
- The Little Inventors site (<https://www.littleinventors.org/>) also provides a variety of mini challenges under the heading "Challenges" with many related to the environment and climate change. Students can upload their creation to the site and hope it gets published and/or complete to share with the class or upload to a class' shared Google document. Here are some relevant mini challenges:
 - [Challenge to Protect Nature](#)
 - [Invention to Protect Trees & Wildlife](#)
 - [Make Sustainable Energy Through Exercise](#)
 - [Invention to Waste Less Food](#)

Action Project Examples

"CLOTHING SWAP AND CLOTHING INDUSTRY POLLUTION"- Port Elgin Regional School-NB (2021) K-1

- This class did an action project of a clothing swap to try to help reduce, reuse and recycle. They also did some research to see what materials are best for the earth. They want to encourage others to do clothing swaps and try to reduce the amount of clothing everyone uses. [See their project here.](#)

"SUSTAINABILITY AT HOME CHALLENGE"-St. Mary Catholic Elementary School-ON (2021) AGE

- The teachers at St Mary developed an educational program to deliver to students virtually through their classroom teachers that involved a presentation, supporting activities and an at-home challenge. The goal was to have students submit photos, videos, drawings and written descriptions of the things they were doing at home to live more sustainably. As a result of participation all students will receive a St. Mary Grafton reusable water bottle to use at home or at school. [See their project here.](#)

*How could you use these great examples to come up with action projects with your K-2 students?

[Project 2050: Climate-friendly habits to change the world!](#)

Welcome to **Project 2050: Climate-friendly habits to change the world!** This national movement, powered by [Earth Rangers](#) in partnership with EcoSchools Canada, is about connecting youth with the knowledge and skills needed to tackle climate change.

The program will provide an easy and fun way for youth and their families to contribute to the fight against climate change by adopting small but impactful climate-friendly habits.

To participate **select and complete at least three** of the following actions to contribute to Project 2050:

- Active and Sustainable School Travel
- Divert Textile Waste
- Heating and Cooling
- Meatless Mondays
- Reduce Your Food Waste
- Sort Your Waste
- Switch Off Lights and Devices
- Tree Planting and Maintenance at School
- Vermicomposting and School-based Composting
- Waste-Free Lunch

[Eco-Activity: Collect and Conserve! | Earth Rangers: Where kids go to save animals!](#)

[National GOOS paper Day](#)

GOOS stands for Good On One Side. GOOS paper is paper that has been used on one side, but is still blank and usable on the other side. Using GOOS paper means ensuring both sides of a piece of paper are used before it is recycled.

A GOOS paper bin collects and stores your GOOS paper in a convenient and accessible place to help ensure it can be used easily. Get creative and decorate your GOOS bins with a “goose” theme or other eye-catching styles.

Join students, teachers, workplaces, and families across the country on the **first Thursday in April** to celebrate National GOOS Paper Day.

On this day of action, get creative as you learn about responsible paper use and promote effective ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle paper.

[The \[Roberta\] Bondar Challenge](#)

Dr. Roberta Bondar is unique, not just for being the world’s first neurologist in space, the first Canadian woman in space, or for her pioneering space medicine research. Academically one of the most distinguished astronauts to have flown in space, Dr. Bondar is also the only astronaut to use fine art photography to explore and reveal Earth’s natural environment from the surface.

The Bondar Challenge is an opportunity for students to learn about the art of photography and to discover new perspectives on nature through a camera lens. The challenge is designed for students aged 6-18. Student entries will be judged in one of three age categories: 6-10; 11-14; or 15-18.