



## Lesson Plan: **Earth Week** (April 23, 2021)

### History of Earth Day:

#### Materials

- Chalk

#### Instructions:

1. Ask kids what Earth Day means to them--have them draw this with chalk
2. Discuss the history of Earth Day
  - a. The first Earth Day came about after a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, Gaylord Nelson, saw the devastating impact of a massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, California. Not willing to sit on the sidelines anymore, Senator Nelson organized a national "teach in" to educate and inspire people to protect the environment.
  - b. Since the first Earth Day was celebrated in 1970, it has generated public support for the Environmental Protection Agency, as well as environmental laws such as the Clean Air Act, the Water Quality Improvement Act, and the Endangered Species Act
  - c. Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WA8FpGI5Sw>
  - d. More info: <https://www.plt.org/educator-tips/earth-day-activities/>
3. Talk about vampire energy (something plugged in, even when not in use is always using power--like a vampire sucking blood, the device sucks up energy)

### Trash Pick Up

#### Materials

- Bucket

#### Instructions

1. We will not pick up cigarette butts or glass or needles--they are litter, but it is not safe
2. Walk in the back dune looking for trash
3. Count how many pieces of hard plastic, soft plastic, metal, and paper you find
4. Discuss:
  - a. Could any of what we found today be recycled?
  - b. Was there a lot of trash?
  - c. How would you feel if you lived here?
  - d. How can we reduce trash in the environment?
    - i. Buy only what you need
    - ii. Donate old clothes and items that can be reused
    - iii. Recycle
  - e. What do microplastics do to marine animals?
    - i. Microplastics come off of certain types of fabric such as fleece
    - ii. Microplastics are plastics photo-degrading
    - iii. They poison fish and other marine animals because they are toxic
    - iv. They can also sit in an animal's stomach so even though the animal thinks it is eating, it actually starves to death

## Wild Flower Egg Carton Activity

### Materials

- cardboard egg cartons
- native florida flower seeds
- potting soil

### Instructions

1. Cut each carton in half
2. Have students put soil into each spot where eggs would go
3. Have students add seeds
4. Discuss biodegradation
  - a. This container will biodegrade over time
  - b. The flowers will grow and help attract butterflies and bees which help pollinate the flowers
  - c. Cardboard will biodegrade over time, but plastic never truly does
  - d. Do consumers have the power to determine what packaging companies use?
    - i. The more we buy items that are sustainably packaged, the more companies will try to meet that demand
    - ii. Power of purchase means that by changing our individual consumer habits, we have the power to change how companies package things
5. Discuss soil
  - a. Soil sustains plant and animal life, regulates water, filters pollutants, cycles nutrients and supports structures
  - b. Soil is the building block of all natural systems and is a crucial resource for all life on earth. When managed properly, soil supports healthy and productive habitats in your garden and in nature.

## Earth Flap Activity

### Materials

-earth flap template:

<https://www.primarythemepark.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Earth-Templates.pdf>

-crayons

-pens

-scissors

-stapler

### Instructions:

1. Before the lesson, print out the front and back pages
2. Have students color their Earth (front page)
3. Have students write down 4 things they like to do in nature (second page)
  - a. Hiking
  - b. Kayaking
  - c. Swimming
  - d. Going to the beach ect.
4. Have students write down 4 things as a family they can improve to be more earth minded

- a. Shopping locally rather than having items shipped
  - b. Reduce, reuse, recycle
  - c. Buy veggies without individual plastic packaging
  - d. Walk / bike more, drive less
5. Have students write down 4 ways they can help make a positive impact in the local environment (last page)
- a. Picking up after their pet
  - b. Picking up trash
  - c. Unplugging electronics that are not in use
  - d. Shutting off lights
  - e. Reducing water waste

## Books

- The Great Kapok Tree: A Tale of the Amazon Rain Forest
  - [https://smile.amazon.com/Great-Kapok-Tree-Amazon-Forest/dp/0152026142/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=The+Great+Kapok+Tree%3A+A+Tale+of+the+Amazon+Rain+Forest&qid=1619102836&sr=8-1](https://smile.amazon.com/Great-Kapok-Tree-Amazon-Forest/dp/0152026142/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=The+Great+Kapok+Tree%3A+A+Tale+of+the+Amazon+Rain+Forest&qid=1619102836&sr=8-1)
- Planting a Rainbow
  - [https://smile.amazon.com/Planting-Rainbow-Lois-Ehlert/dp/015204633X/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crd=1Q5R297I6K8ML&dchild=1&keywords=planting+a+rainbow+by+lois+ehlert&qid=1619102881&sprefix=planting+a+rai%2Caps%2C171&sr=8-1](https://smile.amazon.com/Planting-Rainbow-Lois-Ehlert/dp/015204633X/ref=sr_1_1?crd=1Q5R297I6K8ML&dchild=1&keywords=planting+a+rainbow+by+lois+ehlert&qid=1619102881&sprefix=planting+a+rai%2Caps%2C171&sr=8-1)
- Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya
  - [https://smile.amazon.com/Mama-Miti-Wangari-Maathai-Trees/dp/1416935053/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=Mama+Miti%3A+Wangari+Maathai+and+the+Trees+of+Kenya&qid=1619102915&sr=8-1](https://smile.amazon.com/Mama-Miti-Wangari-Maathai-Trees/dp/1416935053/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Mama+Miti%3A+Wangari+Maathai+and+the+Trees+of+Kenya&qid=1619102915&sr=8-1)
- Seed folks
  - [https://smile.amazon.com/Seedfolks-Paul-Fleischman/dp/0064472078/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=seedfolks&qid=1619102935&sr=8-1](https://smile.amazon.com/Seedfolks-Paul-Fleischman/dp/0064472078/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=seedfolks&qid=1619102935&sr=8-1)
- Nature Recycles, How About You
  - [https://smile.amazon.com/Nature-Recycles-About-Arbordale-Collection/dp/1607186152/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=nature+recycles&qid=1619102963&sr=8-1](https://smile.amazon.com/Nature-Recycles-About-Arbordale-Collection/dp/1607186152/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=nature+recycles&qid=1619102963&sr=8-1)
- Meditations of John Muir: Nature's Temple
  - [https://smile.amazon.com/Meditations-John-Muir-Natures-Temple/dp/0899972853/ref=sr\\_1\\_2?dchild=1&keywords=natures+temple+john+muir&qid=1619102993&sr=8-2](https://smile.amazon.com/Meditations-John-Muir-Natures-Temple/dp/0899972853/ref=sr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=natures+temple+john+muir&qid=1619102993&sr=8-2)
- More book ideas:
  - <https://www.plt.org/educator-tips/summer-reading-list/>
  - <https://www.bookculture.com/blog/2015/04/22/earth-day-reading-list>

## At home lesson ideas:

- <https://www.weareteachers.com/meaningful-earth-day-activities/>
- <https://www.amnh.org/learn-teach/curriculum-collections>
- <https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/who-we-are/how-we-work/youth-engagement/nature-lab/>