



Lesson 1

Define and research an environmental issue in your community

Find Out About Environmental Issues: Throughout the years, as science has advanced, we have learned more about the Earth and its environment. Many discoveries have been made about how the Earth works and how we as Earth's occupants, affect it. What is one way you positively or negatively affect the Earth? _____

STEP 1

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is an organization created by the United States federal government. The primary purpose of the EPA is to protect human health and the environment by writing and enforcing regulations based on laws passed by the U.S. Congress. The EPA has created a list of environmental issues currently facing the Earth. Review the list of environmental issues below and learn about how these issues specifically impact you, your community and your world. Use the Internet to explore each issue and collect information as you complete the chart that follows.

*Your teacher has a list of websites for you. (Use additional paper as needed for your responses.)

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES CHART

Environmental Issues Identified by EPA	What I Already Know:
AIR	
CLIMATE CHANGE	
NATURAL EMERGENCIES	
GREEN LIVING	
LAND & CLEANUP	
PESTICIDES, CHEMICALS, & TOXICS	
RECYCLING/ELECTRIC WASTE (e-waste)	
WASTE (including e-waste)	
WATER	
What other issues have you heard or read about that are affecting our environment?	



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STEP 2

Observing My Neighborhood: Compare 3-4 of the environmental issues you researched, to the issues you see in your own neighborhood. Complete the chart with your observations. The first is completed as an example:

Environ. issue:	I see:	Cause, and effect	What we can do:	Pictures/proof?
Pollution (soil and water) and waste.	Litter. Potato chip bags, soda bottles on the side of the road.	Cause: Humans, overpopulation, not recycling. Effect: It will eventually get into drains, streams, rivers, lakes and possibly harm animals.	Recycle Pick up after ourselves or others.	(you could take a picture of what you see- or take a neighborhood walk and describe what you see).

Examples to look for: effects of urbanization, weathering, trash, 'green space' (parks, nature preserves, trails). Think about alternatives to what is currently in place, alternative fuels, climate...etc.





Lesson 1 (cont.)

STEP 3

Brainstorm Solutions: Now that you have read about how individuals and organizations are taking action to protect and save the environment, it's time to think about the actions you can take to become a global citizen protecting the environment and inspire others to do the same. In the space below, list as many solutions as you can think of that you can do to protect and save the environment. At this point, no idea is too big or too small—just write down every solution that you can imagine! When you are finished go back and check the five solutions that most interest you.

There are items that I am not currently recycling or reusing. What are these items?

What is e-waste?

Think about some alternative energy ideas that I can use in my school or home

Maybe I can educate my classmates and family about this environmental issue!



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