

Our Earth News

OBJECTIVE

To research and accurately describe the plight of the inhabitants of the Earth and propose solutions to prevent and curb the problems that we face. To feel a collective and individual responsibility to our Earth and a sense of urgency about the steps necessary to its (and our) survival.

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Students will research a variety of topics regarding the Earth and the plight of its inhabitants. They'll create their own newspaper, "Our Earth News," and will be assigned different topics to write about.

MATERIALS

- 🐾 Books on selected topics
- 🐾 Various newspapers
- 🐾 Computer accessibility (if possible)

ACTIVITY

Preliminary Discussion

- 🐾 What does the planet Earth consist of?
- 🐾 What types of problems and challenges does the Earth and its inhabitants face?
- 🐾 Discuss some specific examples of problems that the students are aware of (i.e., trash in their neighborhood, stray animals, violence, graffiti, pollution, pesticides, stripping of our natural habitats).
- 🐾 Who is responsible for making changes? Standing up for the Earth? Solving problems?
- 🐾 How does the media affect our view of the Earth? What are the positive and negative aspects of newspaper, television and radio coverage of these types of issues?
- 🐾 If we had our own newspaper which represented our feelings about the Earth, what would we say? How would we say it?

Procedure

As a class, discuss what kinds of topics and ideas you would like your newspaper to cover (the title of the paper can be anything the students choose). Create a mission statement for the paper and make sure to include it on the first page. Make a list of topics and keep them posted in the classroom. Discuss what type of layout the paper should have, how long it should be and what kinds of graphics should be included.

Take a look at local newspapers together and discuss the students' likes and dislikes. Next, assignments should be made for covering all areas of the newspaper (i.e. editorials, feature articles, local events and activities that are "Earth friendly.") Students can team up to work on various assignments. Books should be provided on the various topics the students want to cover. Specific times should be designated for research and gathering information, as well as writing (preferably on computers if available) and discussing issues in groups and as a class. Perhaps there's a school volunteer that's proficient in computers and can help with the layout and design of the paper and/or can teach the students to do it themselves.

Once everyone has completed assignments and have put the newspaper together, go over the final product as a class, to critique, give feedback and suggestions. Once final revisions are complete, decide on the distribution list (the entire school, families, community, etc.).

Post-Discussion

- 🐾 After distribution, request feedback from the various people who read the newspaper. What did they learn? How can they help save our precious Earth?
- 🐾 Does the class feel that they accomplished their mission?
- 🐾 What did they learn about the topics they covered?
- 🐾 Does the class want to produce another issue of the newspaper, or perhaps continue it on a regular basis?

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Invite a writer from a local newspaper or magazine, who covers Earth-related topics, to come speak to the class. You might also take a trip to a local newspaper company to see firsthand how they write and produce their newspapers.