

Environment Tips

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The term 'environment' covers all the elements of the natural world, from the earth, the oceans, the air and the climate to the plants and animals that live there. It also relates to where we live, how we live and the people that surround us. The environment is a rich cross-curricular resource to explore and broaden our children's knowledge of the world and heighten their awareness of environmental issues. Here are some ideas for using, and extending, the environment activities on LearnEnglish Kids. You will find the activities here:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-topics-environment.htm>

1. Use the **Environment flashcards** to introduce the general theme of the environment. Draw 2 pictures of the Earth on the board. Make one happy/healthy, the other sad/unhealthy. Brainstorm the things that make the Earth a good and a bad place to live in. Prompt with the flashcard images. Now your children can complete the **Environment vocabulary** printable worksheet.

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-environment-vocabulary.pdf>



2. What can your children do to help the environment? What are they already doing? Do they recycle glass, plastic and paper at home or school, for example? Do they remember to turn electrical appliances off when they're not using them? Ask your children to complete the online or printable quiz: **How green are you?** to find out how environmentally-friendly they are. As a follow-up activity they could carry out a survey to find out how green their class, school or home is.

Printable: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-green-quiz.pdf>

Or try the online version:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-green-quiz.htm>

3. A song: It's up to me and you!

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-songs-environment.htm>

a) Introduce the **song** by eliciting your children's good, environmentally-friendly habits. Prompt with actions-switch the lights on and off, plug and unplug the CD player, throw some rubbish in the bin; mime turning a tap on and off, taking a shower, walking, cycling, planting a tree, surfing the Net. Play the **song** to see which habits are mentioned.

b) Now invite your children to do the actions as they listen and watch the song.

Actions for the chorus might be:

Can you understand	look puzzled and shrug your shoulders
What we have to do?	put both hands on your chest
There's only one world	make a circle with your arms outstretched in front of you, hands clasped together
There's not much time	point to your wrist
It's up to me and you!	put one hand on your chest, then gesture towards a learner

c) Next repeat the lines from the verses, omitting key words. Ask your children to guess the words:

Brush your... (teeth), but turn off the... (tap).	Unplug the ...(TV), switch off the... (lights)
Take a... (shower), don't have a... (bath),	Go out with...(friends), don't surf all... (night)
Walk or ride your... (bike) to school	Give old... (clothes) to charity
Recycle... (paper), that's the...(rule).	Join a green... (group), plant a... (tree).

d) Finally, ask your children to match the words of the song to the images on the printable worksheet on the song webpage. Your children can then write and tell each other ways they help the environment, such as putting rubbish in recycling bins, bottles in bottle banks, using recycled paper, re-using wrapping paper for presents, re-filling plastic water bottles, re-using jars and shoe boxes for storing things, giving old toys to charity, using rechargeable batteries, walking to school.



e) As a fun activity, you may like to challenge your children to save energy by not watching TV or using a computer for a day or more-how many children can do it?! Suggest other activities they could do instead, such as playing sports, reading, doing puzzles or craftwork.

4. After completing the **Green Tips** printable worksheet, your children might also enjoy designing posters to raise awareness of environmental problems and encourage green habits.

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-green-tips.pdf>

5. How much rubbish do your children throw away every day? Ask your children to write down all the things they have thrown in the bin so far today-sweet wrappers, crisp packets, chewing-gum, banana skins, tin cans, yoghurt pots, paper bags, plastic bags and so on. What else might their family throw away at home? Do they throw all their rubbish in the same bin or in recycling bins? What goes where? What's compost? Brainstorm all the things that are made of glass, metal and plastic. Now ask your children to play '**Clean and Green**' an online game about rubbish & recycling: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-green.htm>

As another fun follow-up activity, ask your children to think of 10 uses for an old jam jar; an empty yoghurt pot; a cereal packet; an egg carton; a comic!

6. A story – Planet Earth

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-stories-environment.htm>

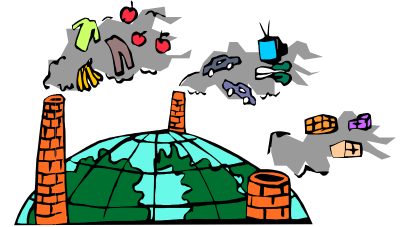
a) Introduce the **story** with pictures of different ecosystems and ask them if they know the names of the rivers, oceans or forests in or around their own country. Alternatively, ask them to point to the different ecosystems on a map. Extend to a world map and highlight the oceans and Arctic/Antarctic, too. To what degree do these environments affect your children's lives? Is the furniture in the room made of wood, for example? Where do we get wood from? What else do we make from wood/ (paper)? What about drinking water and food?

b) In groups, give your children pictures of the 4 ecosystems: the river, ocean, rainforest and Arctic/Antarctic (you'll find these pictures in the flashcards section).

Call out the names of different animals, plants or objects and ask your children to hold up the ecosystem they would find them in e.g. whale-ocean; polar bear-Arctic. Now give your children the printable **story** worksheet and ask them to put the animals and plants in the correct ecosystems. This sheet is on the story webpage.

c) Play the online **story**. Ask your children to look out for different animals and plants in the scenes. After the first viewing and listening, play the story again and check your children's answers to the printable **story** worksheet.

d) Now you could focus your children's attention on the environmental problems they can see in the story scenes: rainforest-deforestation (paper rubbish); ocean-pollution (rubbish, oil spillage); Arctic-global warming; rivers-pollution (agricultural, industrial, household). Ask your children to compare the final scene with the previous ones-where would they like to live? Why?



e) Finally, can your children guess the correct environment words in the online **Hangman activity**?

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-hangman-environment.htm>

f) As a creative follow-up activity, your children could choose different countries or ecosystems and create a collage using recycled materials such as old newspapers, magazines, wrapping paper, cereal packets and egg cartons.

7. To further extend and consolidate language relating to the environment, your children might like to research and produce a poster about different endangered species following the **Endangered animals** printable worksheet:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-endangered-animals.pdf>

You can find out more about endangered animals on the WWF website:

<http://www.wwf.org.uk>.



More research could then be carried out to create quizzes about the Earth or the air, or other environmental issues such as acid rain, aerosols, drought, famine, fossil fuels, the greenhouse effect, the hole in the ozone layer, natural disasters, oil spillages, overpopulation or traffic in their towns:

<http://green.nationalgeographic.com/environment/index.html>

8. Finally, celebrate April 22nd, Earth Day! Encourage your children to do green deeds like decorating cardboard boxes for storing things in the classroom, designing green posters or notices, planting trees, adopting an animal or joining a local conservation group. More ideas can be explored on the following website: <http://www.earthday.org/>