

Activity four: The environment

Curriculum links:

Science, Geography, Art and Design, IT

Background and preparation:

Rainforests like the Amazon probably contain between 60 per cent and 80 per cent of the land species on Earth. But some species are disappearing and may become extinct. Why?

Every year, 100,000 km² of the world's forests are lost. Commercial logging companies destroy huge areas of forest land in Brazil. Forests are also cleared or burned by people who need land on which to live.

What about sustainable use? Sustainable use means taking natural resources that we need from the environment without damaging it for the future.

The Earth's population is growing all the time. In developed countries, such as in the UK, a lot of energy is required to maintain our lifestyles. But the environment is suffering as a result.

Activity 4a:

Using the accompanying worksheet, make a list of all the ways in which you use energy in a typical day. This includes anything that makes use of electricity, batteries, fuel such as petrol etc.

Activity 4b:

Our lifestyles also create a lot of rubbish. Much of this is taken away and buried in a dump called a landfill.

These are some ways that you can help the environment. Aim to do at least five of these things today.

- Switch off lights
- Use energy efficient lightbulbs
- Don't leave TV, stereo, DVD etc on 'standby'
- Ask your parents to turn down the central heating thermostat (even one degree lower makes a difference)
- Use cars less, walk more
- Use less paper
- Get a compost bin and use it for food waste
- Recycle and reuse. If you don't need something any more, think about how it can be re-used. Take toys and books you no longer need to a charity shop or give to friends.
- Buy products without packaging or with environmentally-friendly packaging. Check the symbols on packaging to see whether it can be recycled before you throw it in the bin.

Activity 4c:

Design a chart to keep a record of which of these environmentally-aware things you have done and when. You could do this on paper or using IT facilities. Think about how many rows and columns you will need. It may help if you sketch out your chart first.

Extension:

Design a poster to help remind people how they can help protect the environment.