

Lesson 1: Earth Catchers

Essential Question: Why is it important to care for Earth?

Time Required: 45 minutes

Materials: globe or map, **Create to Celebrate** classroom poster, **Student Worksheet A: Nature-Walk Checklist**, digital camera, pencils, gently used sealable plastic baggies (one per student), small and empty plastic bottles (one per student), colored tissue paper, scissors, glue, tempera paint, paintbrushes, hole punch, yarn or string, tape

THINK About Our Planet

1. Hold up a globe or map of Earth, and ask students what it shows. Ask: *What makes Earth a good place to live? Why?*
2. Explain that it's important to make sure Earth stays a good place to live. Ask: *What are some things people can do to take care of Earth?*

LEARN the Three R's

3. State that one of the best things everyone can do for Earth is to practice the three R's: Reduce (use less stuff), Reuse (use stuff again), and Recycle (turn old stuff into new stuff).
4. Have students sit in a circle and show them the **Create to Celebrate** classroom poster. Read the pledge out loud. Host a discussion and ask students how people can reduce, reuse, and recycle in their daily lives (sorting their recycling and placing it in the appropriate bins, giving clothing and goods away to charities or others rather than throwing them in the trash, bringing reusable bags to the store, etc.). Explain to your students that the class will be using the poster to track when they have reduced, reused, and/or recycled. Track the class's progress for a full week. Feel free to reuse the poster and continue to track the class's environmental efforts.

DO a Nature Walk

5. Hand out **Student Worksheet A: Nature-Walk Checklist** to each student. Visit scholastic.com/create for a K-1-appropriate checklist. Explain that they'll be going on a walk outside. As they explore nature, they'll look for and collect as many items as they can from the checklist. Provide each student with a plastic baggie to hold his or her collected items.
6. During their nature walk, encourage students to describe what they see and why it's important to life on Earth.

CREATE Earth Catchers

7. Have students use the items they collected on their walk to create "Earth Catchers." For this art project, younger students can leave the items in their plastic bags. Older students can transfer their items into empty plastic bottles (cut off the tops of the bottles to make them easier to fill). Remind students that plastic bags, bottles, and bottle caps can be recycled with other plastic recyclables.
8. Have students use paint to decorate the outsides of their bags or bottles. They can also cut out reused or recycled tissue paper leaves and flowers and glue them onto the outside of their Earth Catchers.
9. Once the catchers dry, tape the baggies to a window so light shines through. Punch a hole on either side of the bottles near the opening. Tie a string to each hole to hang the catcher near a window.
10. Remember to recycle any leftover plastic bags at your local retailer and plastic bottles and caps with other plastic recyclables.

Lesson 2: An Out-of-this-World Mural

Essential Question: Why are reusing and recycling important to conserving Earth's resources?

Time Required: Two 45-minute periods, plus one week to collect bottle caps

Materials: **Create to Celebrate** poster, blue and green plastic bottle caps, paper, crayons, glue, containers to collect and sort caps, large piece of cardboard (more than three feet wide), ruler, marker, green and blue tempera paint, paintbrush

THINK About Earth Day

1. Explain that there is a day set aside each year to help people remember to keep Earth healthy. It's called Earth Day!
2. Share that people celebrate Earth Day in many ways. Some people clean up litter from parks or beaches. Others plant trees or gardens.

LEARN How Recycling Helps Earth

3. Have students discuss what happens to the stuff they throw away. Ask: *Why might trash cause problems for Earth? (It can pile up in a garbage dump or in nature.)*
4. Tell students that recycling can help keep Earth clean. Explain how recycling works: *First, people collect certain types of trash instead of throwing them in the garbage. Then the waste is taken to a recycling factory. Workers there turn the trash into brand-new things!*

DO a Bottle-Cap Drive

5. Find out what types of items students think can be recycled. (glass jars and bottles; metal cans; paper; plastic bags, bottles, and containers)
6. Hold up a plastic bottle cap. Ask: *What is this? (a bottle cap) What is it made of? (plastic)* Explain that students are going to organize a bottle-cap drive. They'll ask people in their community to donate blue and green bottle caps. Students will use them in a creative project to help spread the word about the importance of recycling. Remind students that plastic bottles and bottle caps can be recycled and that they should empty the container and put the cap on before placing the bottle in the appropriate recycling bin.
7. Hand out paper, crayons, glue, and one blue and one green bottle cap to each student. Have students use the materials to design flyers for their bottle-cap drive.
8. Have students post their flyers around your school, along with collection containers for caps. After a week, have students gather the collection containers. Then have them sort the caps into two bins: one for blue and one for green.

CREATE an Earth-Friendly Mural

9. Draw Earth on the large piece of cardboard by sketching a circle about one meter (three feet) across with a marker. Draw in the shape of the continents. Paint the land green and the oceans blue. Allow the paint to dry.
10. Have students work together to glue green bottle caps top side down to cover the green areas of your mural and blue bottle caps to cover the blue areas. When done, display your mural in your school.
11. Remember to recycle any leftover plastic bottles and caps with other plastic recyclables.