

E.T. - A LOCAL WAY OF LEARNING

Title: SCHOOLYARD BEAUTIFICAT7LON

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Grade Level: K-12, School & Community

Concepts: 12. Stewardship

Disciplines: 1. Social Studies

Objective:

School shall set up a standing committee of students, teachers and principal, which may be called the School Beautification Committee, whose agenda would include such things as the following:

- Grounds patrol for trash;
- supervision of the planting of trees and shrubs, after determining which plants are appropriate to the soil type and location;
- school gardens;
- perhaps setting up an outdoor classroom area;
- upgrading the eye appeal of the playground equipment;
- reporting breaks in the fencing and equipment, etc.

As a general statement the committee shall undertake the responsibility for the stewardship of the campus.

Rationale:

A Chinese Proverb says, "Tell me, I'll forget; Show me, I may remember; But involve me and I'll understand." Unless students are a part of the planning and policing of the schoolyard, they will not take the pride and responsibility for maintaining it. Our schoolyards could all be made more attractive and functional. Vow to make no negative statements--only praise and positive remarks
for work well done.

Directions/Activity:

A National Park Ranger can come to your school to kick off your project and show movies regarding trash pollution to the student body. From LSIM, filmstrips such as "Dash McTrash" are available for the lower grades. Try to make this first step a schoolwide day to reinforce your intent.

1. Ask all students to bring a grocery bag to school and from the film motivation, a week-long clean up can be scheduled. Each day a different grade might fan out and pick up all the litter and put it in the dumpster. Search out the hidden-in-the-grass material which may not be biodegradable. Take a walk when you are through to see how much better things look and how it makes you feel. Resolve to keep it that way.
2. Set up a trash can brigade of upper grade students who can empty the outdoor cans before they are so full the paper blows all over the grounds. This also is an on-going activity.
3. Teachers might keep a recycling paper bin in the classroom whether for art work collage or papier-mâché, thus cutting down on the amount of discarded paper. Emphasize the positive in all of these activities.

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4. After viewing the National Park Service or LSIM AV on litter pollution, introduce the concept of material being biodegradable. Make some demonstrations if necessary in the lower grades. How long does it take a paper cup to disappear into the ground?

5. Discuss how we feel in a beautiful environment as opposed to the feeling we have in an unkempt environment; how it affects our emotions and our work and self-image.

6. Discuss the safety factors of broken glass bottles, or broken playground equipment.

7. Include the dollar value of recycling aluminum, a non-renewable resource, and the advantage of picking up cans. Discuss the virtue of charging a deposit on bottles which must be returned as opposed to the no deposit no return bottles of today.

8. Lead the students to the conclusion that each person must properly dispose of his own litter--so that we don't have some littering and others picking up. How can we educate people to see that it costs money to clean up after careless people?

9. In the upper grades tie the discussion in with problems of trash land fill; the toxic waste problems; the nuclear waste problems. What has changed in the land when trash was no big problem? (Packaging for one thing, which uses trees to make the product look larger, etc., by putting it in several boxes which we only throw away).

10. Why are there no longer streams anywhere from which you can safely take a drink? Run off from polluted or contaminated ' areas gets into the streams. - Many, many more people--does people pollution offend your senses?)

11. Do you think loading our nuclear waste in a rocket and sending it to outer space, as has been suggested, is a good idea?