

true green®

TRUE GREEN KIDS: Teachers Notes

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Classroom:

- Display/introduce *true green kids*, and read the *foreword* and *introduction* to the students.
- Discuss what the students already know/do about the health of the planet.
- Start a display list of the catch phrases students have seen, heard or read about living sustainably, such as: *Think globally, act locally*; *Save water*; *Save the whales*; *Stop logging/mining*; *Use eco-friendly shopping bags*.
Explain that as students read or hear other phrases they can add them to the class list.
- Read the chapter headings, explaining that the book is addressed to young people, as they are the ones most likely to make a difference to the health of the planet.

Decide on the first chapter to be considered by the class.

If *at school* is seen as an appropriate starting point, briefly display pages 70-83 (*at school* and *teamwork*) and read the headings aloud.

- Brainstorm possible behaviours that could make a difference to the classroom and school.
Read and discuss the text from several pages.
Add further ideas to the brainstormed list. Students could work in groups to choose, plan and carry out one of their ideas.
- If students have school-wide goals, invite appropriate visitors to the classroom to hear their ideas and to enlist support. For example, if students want to create a native garden, (p85), they might need to discuss this with the principal, representatives of the parent

organization, and a local nursery. Ensure that students are well prepared to discuss their ideas, with written discussion points if necessary.

- Keep records of the action students take in response to *true green for kids*. Photograph or video tape what they do and have an ongoing display in a school area. Contact the local paper when there are special events, such as the start of a walking bus (p72), or an eco festival (p92), so that the community is aware of what is happening.

Use ideas from all sections of the book:

- Start a classroom garden (p36), and then have students take spare plants home.
- Have students collect letterbox advertising (p61). Discuss the who/what/ and why of such advertising. Encourage students to recognise their own reactions to such advertising. Work together to develop a set of questions to ask, such as, *Did I think I needed this before I saw the advertisement?*
- Invite knitters or sewers to the classroom to help students make items to support a charity (p49). These could be by direct assistance, such as knitted squares to make cot rugs, or smaller items to sell at a stall for financial support. Ask for donations of materials such as wool and fabric from the school community.
- Help students appreciate the wind (p115). Find a simple pattern for kites, use scrap materials to construct them, and have a kite flying session. There might be a local kite group who will help.

School

- If the school has not already adopted an eco-friendly approach, students might need to start an advertising campaign to raise general awareness. They could make and display posters, address the school assembly, or ask for time to visit other classrooms to share their new information and ideas with the students.
- If the whole school already has a focus on sustainability, encourage students to start a forum of ideas for possible school-wide projects. One class or grade could be responsible for collecting and collating suggestions from all the students. Arrange a vote to find the most popular, realistic project for the school.

- With the students, create an action plan for the project. List who needs to be involved, what needs to be done, and who will be responsible for the continuity of the action. Help students to start with a manageable idea, such as a school paper recycling plan (pp73-74). If adults need to be involved, help students plan how to approach them and how to make clear requests. Consider letters, emails and face- to -face meetings.

Home

- Start with a family discussion about the need for every one to take responsibility for the environment, and emphasise that we should all start with our own lifestyles.
- Look at the *eco quiz* on page 133. Take a family walk around your home.
Discuss how the family rates on the quiz, and the changes you could focus on. What immediate action could you take to improve the household's global impact? What do you need to do to get started on one idea?
- Go through pages 10-33. What else could you do, individually or as a family? What action will you take? Who will be responsible for the plan? How will you know when you have been successful?
- Encourage your children to read other sections in the book, or read them together, and support their ideas and implementation plans. Help them to set realistic goals, so that they are likely to succeed. When they have a suggestion for a family activity, such as recycling waste (p30) or clothing (p60), or changing to more efficient light bulbs (p28), give them your enthusiastic support, but let them remain in charge of their ideas.
- If you are planning a holiday, consider ideas from the *on holiday* section (p95). Discuss as many of the issues as you can with your children, and help the family research places they visit and eco concerns there.
- Start a family record of the actions you have taken/still want to take to help the planet. Share it with other family members and friends, and consider it a 'work in progress' rather than a 'one off' activity. Go back and review the questions on page 133. Reassess how the family is becoming more eco friendly.