

Earth Day

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First Grade

***Note to the teacher: This lesson is anchored by a video about a character named Sally who meets Mother Earth and learns about water/energy conservation and recycling. It was written for Sally to be present in the room for teaching.

OBJECTIVES:

The learner will be able to:

1. recognize and describe the historical events associated with the national holiday of Earth Day by watching the video and participating in a class discussion and activity afterwards (from Objective 4.03 of SCOC).
2. demonstrate responsibility of the care and management of the environment within school and the community by first watching the video and discussing the importance of this responsibility then participating in an activity which facilitates raising awareness (from Objective 5.05 of SCOC).

MATERIALS:

- . video
- . large sheets of paper/poster board/8x11 white paper
- . markers
- . chart paper
- . graphics representing chart topics
- . examples of different recyclable material (paper, plastic, glass, aluminum)
- . recycle bins

FOCUS AND REVIEW (7 minutes):

- . The teacher will engage students in a discussion about holidays that the class is familiar with. Students will give examples and explain celebrations that they have previously been a part of. The teacher will then transition the class into a discussion on Earth Day. By asking questions like “Does anyone know about the holiday that we call Earth Day? If so, what do you know?” Students will give their experiences with the holiday, if any. The teacher will lead the discussion by explaining that Earth Day is a holiday that we celebrate to remember to take care of the earth on which we live. *Earth Day was officially made a holiday in 1969. A senator (person that makes laws) knew that the earth was getting very dirty and many of the plants and animals that live here were dying. He created this holiday to tell everyone about how important it is to take care of the earth. It is supposed to be a special day to teach everyone about helping the environment.*
- . The class will be meeting a new friend Sally that had a troublesome dream about it and really needs their help to decide what the dream means and how they can help Sally solve the problem.

TEACHER INPUT (10 minutes):

- . The teacher will show the video to the class. The video is about a little girl who has conversation with Mother Earth about the ways that people in the community are hurting the environment. The end of the video poses the question to the class: what are other ways we can help save Mother Earth, and how can we tell our friends?
- . After the video, the teacher will facilitate a discussion on video comprehension. Ask questions such as:

What's wrong with Mother Earth?

What are Sally and her friends doing wrong?

What did Mother Earth ask Sally to do?

GUIDED PRACTICE (12 minutes):

- . The teacher will use the answers from the comprehension questions to help students create a class chart of how Sally can help Mother Earth at home and at school. The teacher will present students with graphics that represent several different ways to help. Students try to think of what they could stand for with the teacher's help.
School: don't leave the water fountain running when you are not drinking; try to use fewer paper towels; use the backs of paper; recycle in the classroom
Home: recycle; don't leave water running; don't leave the lights on; make a compost pile
- . The teacher will then transition into an activity where each student is given a piece of potentially recyclable material. There will be boxes at the front of the room that read *plastic, glass, aluminum, paper, and trash*. The teacher will explain to the students that one of the things Sally did not know how to do was recycle, and they can help her remember and practice doing this. The teacher will remind the students to make sure that their material is recyclable by checking on the bottom for the special symbol (and number, if it's plastic) to be sure. Before the activity begins, there will be a demonstration done by the teacher to model into which bin each type of material will go.
- . Once the demonstration is complete, the students will discuss in their groups about what kind of material they have. They will then come up in their groups and put their materials in the proper bin one by one. Each student says why they are putting their material into the bin that they choose. This reinforces the things they have learned in the lesson so far about recyclable material.
- . When every student has had their turn, the teacher will go through the bins briefly with the class to make sure that everything is in the correct place and make necessary corrections if something is put in the wrong bin.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE (15 minutes):

- . Sally will thank the class for all of their hard work in coming up with so many great ideas. Now she just has to get the word out to the community and needs their help to do it.

- . Using the topics on the class chart, each student will choose an area of helping Mother Earth. Each student will make a small poster with a short poem or a few sentences about their topic. If the students choose to write sentences, they can use the prompt “We should help Mother Earth by _____ because....” These will be shared with the class at the end of the activity. The posters can be displayed in the hall or all around the school to help spread the word, and Sally will take pictures of their work to take home and share with her friends.

CLOSURE (5 minutes):

- . The teacher will review all of the things they learned that day with Sally. Questions should be asked as well to involve the class.
 - Let’s remember the three ways that Mother Earth told Sally to help her.*
 - Can anyone tell me what Earth Day is for?*
 - Who remembers the numbers on the bottom of plastic materials that tell us they are able to be recycled?*
 - Remind me of a few of the ways to help Mother Earth that we helped Sally to come up with?*
- . Sally thanks the students for all of their help and encourages them to keep on helping Mother Earth stay clean and beautiful.