

KS2



Environmental Issues



Teacher Information

This pack provides a range of activities to introduce pupils to the topic of **environmental issues** in the community. There are 3 sections:

Ignite

Sparking discussion about environmental issues and asking the big questions

Inspire

Providing real life examples of community matters in action and ways to make a difference to environmental issues.

Empower

Offering opportunities for pupils to find out more and become agents of change through their actions

The activities can be used and adapted to best suit your pupils' learning and curriculum needs.



Teacher Information

Where can you use activities in this resource?



As part of an assembly or collective worship session



Within PSHE sessions as part of Core Theme 3: Living in the Wider World



As part of Citizenship provision learning to be an active citizen



Within RE sessions that explore religious teaching on environmental issues



As part of a unit of work to develop pupils' understanding of social, moral and cultural issues in society



In preparing pupils to take part in a social action project that engages and reconnects with the community



To supplement the KS2 Young Leaders Award materials



Environmental Issues

What are the environmental issues that affect our communities and how can we play our part in solving them?



Archie's Definition

Environmental issues are problems with the Earth's systems (air, water, soil, etc.) caused by human actions that damage the planet.



Environmental Issues Activities List

IGNITE ACTIVITIES

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2. Archie's Mind-Map (ppt slides 7-8, page 10)
3. Who's Responsible? (ppt slide 9, pages 11-14)
4. IGNITE Collective Worship Activity (ppt slide 10, page 15)

INSPIRE ACTIVITIES

5. Taking Action to Help Environmental Issues Video (ppt slide 12)
6. Archie's Inspirational People (ppt slide 13, pages 18-19)
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Ignite Activities



IGNITE Activities Teacher Guidance



1. ARCHIE'S BIG QUESTIONS (ppt slide 6, page 9)

Archie poses 3 big questions to help pupils start to think about and discuss **environmental issues**. You can look at all 3 big questions or just one as a whole class. Alternatively, you can divide the class into pairs/groups giving pupils a different question to consider. Take feedback from pupils.

You might display Archie's Definition: Environmental issues are problems with the Earth's systems (air, water, soil, etc.) caused by human actions that damage the planet.

You can cut out the questions on the handout to give to pupils.

2. ARCHIE'S MIND-MAP (ppt slides 7-8, page 10)

This activity helps get pupils thinking about all the different environmental issues that matter in community.

Task: Ask pupils individually or in pairs to create a mind-map with as many environmental issues or causes of pollution they can think of under the headings: Water Pollution, Air Pollution, Land Pollution, Climate Change and Loss of habitat & Biodiversity (Loss of the natural home & plant, insect and animal species).

The handout provides some of the ideas pupils might identify for teachers to refer to.

Important Note: Share ideas from the mind-map as is appropriate for your pupils. There may be some terms and ideas that need more explanation for pupils.

3. WHO'S RESPONSIBLE? DISCUSSION TOPICS (ppt slide 9, pages 11-14)

In this activity there are 4 different discussion topics based on facts looking at Plastic Pollution, Air Pollution, Food Waste & Endangered Species. Teacher notes are provided to help guide you through the topics. You may want to do additional research to support the discussion.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Many of the issues explored in this activity may elicit a range of different viewpoints. It is essential, as with all PSHE & Citizenship lessons, that you ensure a safe and supportive classroom environment before initiating and facilitating these discussions with clear ground rules in place, that all pupils understand and agree to.

4. IGNITE Collective Worship Activity (ppt slide 10, page 15)

This activity can be used in isolation or as part of a collective worship session, or series of sessions, looking at environmental issues from a Christian Perspective.

In this activity you might look at all 4 Bible quotes as a class or divide the class into pairs/groups giving pupils a different quote to look at and discuss. Take feedback from pupils on what each verse says to Christians about the environment. Cut out the questions on the handout to give to pupils to discuss.

Bible verses context

1. You appointed them (humans) rulers over everything you made; you placed them over all creation: sheep and cattle, and the wild animals too; the birds and the fish and the creatures in the seas. **Psalm 8: 6-8**

- These verses come from the book of Psalms, where King David is reflecting on the role that God gave to humankind in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2), to rule over everything he had made.

2. For six years plant your land and gather in what it produces. But in the seventh year let it rest, and do not harvest anything that grows on it. The poor may eat what grows there, and the wild animals can have what is left. Do the same with your vineyards and your olive tree. **Exodus 23: 10-11**

- These verses come from the second book in the Bible where God is teaching the people how best to live on the earth. He tells them to let their fields have a year of rest so the ground is not over-worked, can recover, and the wild animals can enjoy what is left. Many farmers still do this today, it is called 'fallowing'.

3. "If you come across a bird's nest in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs and the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. You may take the young but be sure to let the mother go. **Deuteronomy 22:6**

- Here, God provides his people with another law that is for the protection of nature. Rather than the people taking both the bird and the eggs, God instructs them to leave the mother bird that she may continue to thrive in the wild.

4. I brought them into a fertile land to enjoy its harvests and its other good things. But instead, they ruined my land; they defiled the country I had given them. **Jeremiah 2:7**

- In this passage, we learn that after being given a new and fertile land to enjoy, God's people choose to ruin the land instead and do not take care of it.

1. ARCHIE'S BIG QUESTIONS HANDOUT

Can you think of an environmental issue that has a big impact on our communities?

Who is responsible for the environment and damage to our planet?

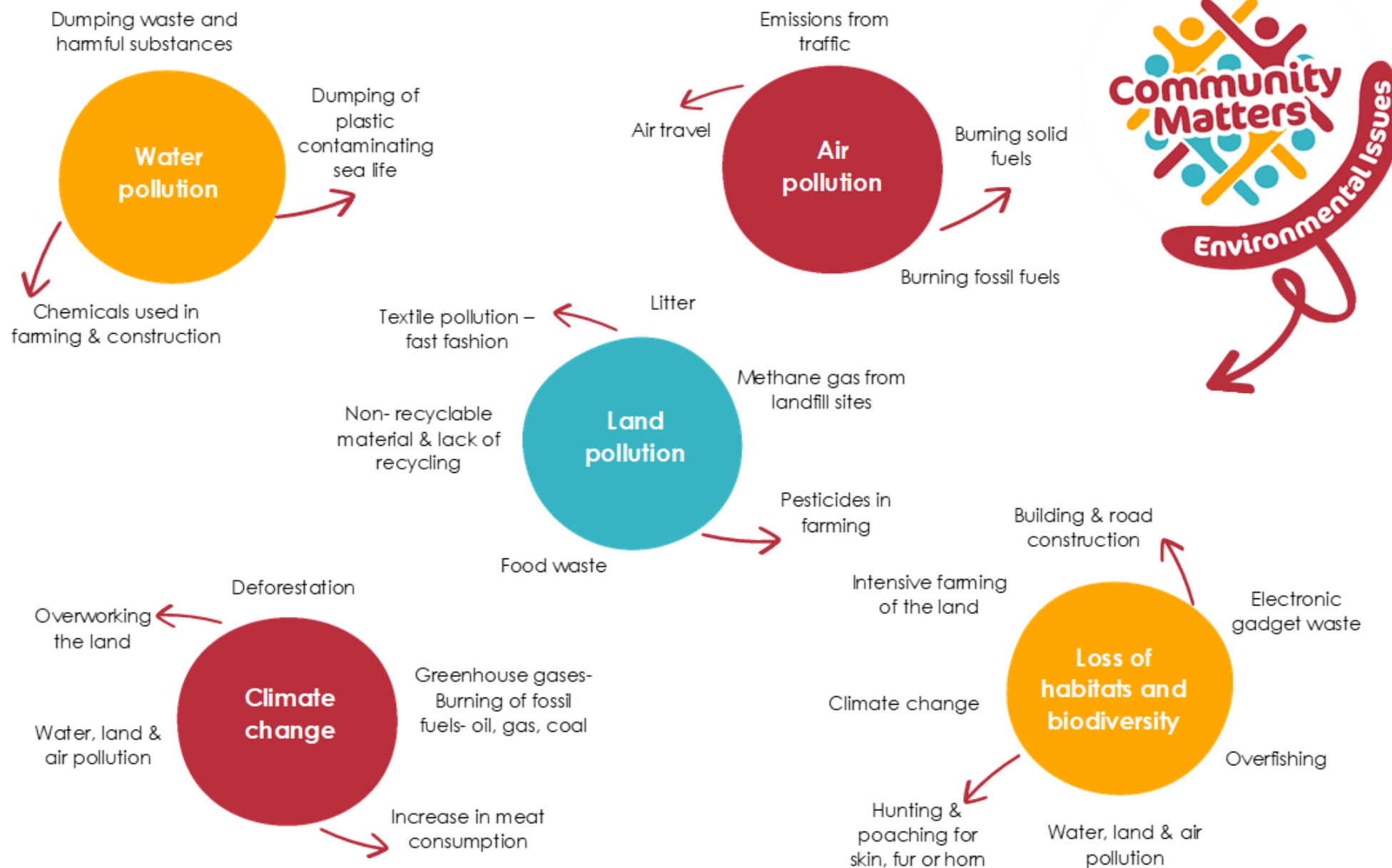
What can people do to help solve environmental issues?

Can you think of an environmental issue that has a big impact on our communities?

Who is responsible for the environment and damage to our planet?

What can people do to help solve environmental issues?

2. ARCHIE'S MIND-MAP TEACHER GUIDANCE



3. WHO'S RESPONSIBLE? **WATER POLLUTION- PLASTICS** DISCUSSION TOPIC TEACHER NOTES



FACT 1

Up to 12 million tonnes of plastic ends up in the ocean every year – that's the equivalent of a rubbish truck every single minute.

Who is responsible for plastic ending up in the ocean?

Notes/further questions to guide discussion

Greenpeace estimate that around 20% of plastic in the ocean comes from human activities at sea – mostly fishing but most of the plastic pollution in the ocean starts out on land. It mainly comes from household and commercial waste, which blows from waste bins and landfill sites into rivers or sewers, then flows out into the sea.

Who is responsible for plastic ending up in the ocean?

Key Questions

Individuals/families?

- Buying items that will only be used once, or for a very short period of time, that are made out of plastic e.g. cheap children's toys, Christmas cracker presents or 'novelty' items
- Purchasing items with excessive plastic packaging
- Drinking bottled water instead of re-filling a re-usable bottle

Companies?

- Supermarkets using unnecessary plastic packaging for fruit and vegetables
- Restaurants and take-aways using single-use plastic straws and food containers that can't be re-recycled
- Many smaller shops and market stalls still give out free single-use plastic bags

Is there anything governments could/should do?

- Since 5 October 2015, large retailers in England have been required by law to charge 5p for all single use plastic carrier bags
- In 2018, the UK government banned the manufacture of products containing microbeads

Fact 1 Source: www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/why-is-there-so-much-plastic-in-the-ocean/

3. WHO'S RESPONSIBLE? **AIR POLLUTION** DISCUSSION TOPIC TEACHER NOTES

FACT 2

Dirty air is estimated to cause 40,000 early deaths a year in the UK.

Who is responsible for air pollution?

Notes/further questions to guide discussion

Who is responsible for air pollution?

Start by thinking about what causes air pollution. Pupils might mention things like:

- Road traffic
- Factories
- Heating our homes with coal or wood fires
- Smoking (younger children often mention this)

Key Questions:

Is there anything individuals can do to reduce air pollution?

Pupils might mention things like:

- Walking, cycling or using public transport instead of using the car
- Only lighting fires when it's very cold, putting on extra clothes instead

Is there anything the government could do to reduce air pollution?

- Explain they can create laws so that cars aren't allowed in city centres or near schools, or make people pay more money to have cars that cause more pollution
- You might tell them about the Clean Air Act which was made law after London's great smog in 1952 which was so thick people couldn't see
- Creating more green spaces and things like 'living walls' to help remove some pollutants from the air

Video Links* What's air pollution and why's it so important? *BBC Newsround*

1. www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/52456215 2. www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/52366573

** Please note we cannot be responsible for external sites, and it is your responsibility to check the suitability of these videos for your pupils beforehand and their accessibility.*

Fact 2 Source: www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/mar/17/air-pollution-breaking-who-limits-surrounds-25-of-uk-homes-study-finds

3. WHO'S RESPONSIBLE? LAND POLLUTION- FOOD WASTE DISCUSSION TOPIC TEACHER NOTES

FACT 3

We waste about a third of all food produced for people to eat.

Who is responsible for food waste?

Notes/further questions to guide discussion

Who is responsible for food waste?

Families?

- Not planning meals and over-buying can lead to food going out of date/rotten and having to be thrown away
- Not knowing how to use up/cook with left-overs
- Confusion over 'best before' dates and 'use by' dates, might throw food away that is still perfectly edible
- Not storing food correctly

Supermarkets?

- "Buy one, get one free" and other offers designed to make us buy more than we need
- Pre-packaged fruit and vegetables also mean you often buy more than you can use before it goes rotten/bad.
- A lot of fruit and vegetables are thrown away as they don't look the right size or shape, even when they are perfectly good to eat.

Government?

- Are there any laws that help tackle the issue of food waste?
- Should/could there be new laws?

In 2016, France became the first country to ban supermarkets from throwing away unsold food. Large supermarkets are no longer even allowed to throw away good quality food approaching its "best-before" date. Instead, they are forced to donate surplus food to charities and food banks.

Video Links* Food Waste: What is it and how does it affect the environment? BBC Newsround www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/54466096

** Please note we cannot be responsible for external sites, and it is your responsibility to check the suitability of these videos for your pupils beforehand and their accessibility.*

Fact 3 Source: friendsoftheearth.uk/food-waste

3. WHO'S RESPONSIBLE? **ENDANGERED SPECIES** DISCUSSION TOPIC TEACHER NOTES



FACT 4

More than a million species are believed to be on the verge of extinction.

Who is responsible for animals becoming endangered and threatened with extinction?

Notes/further questions to guide discussion

Remind pupils that 'animals' aren't just mammals but also insects like bees (that are essential for putting food on our plates) Pupils may mention things like:

- Loss of habitats through things like deforestation
- Hunting animals for their skin, fur or horn (this may be used for clothing, decoration or in traditional medicines in some cultures)
- Use of chemicals on plants that can harm insect populations

- Destruction of marine habitats due to things like plastic pollution and rising sea temperatures (caused by climate change)

Who is responsible for these causes?

Individuals?

- Buying and using things that cause animal habitats to be destroyed (e.g. gardeners use weed-killers that can be harmful to insects) You might show pupils the Greenpeace video about palm oil and deforestation www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Ha6xUVqezQ*
- Things like palm oil are in so many products however, it can be very difficult to avoid!

Companies?

- Big companies are responsible for a lot of deforestation and destruction of habitats as large areas of land are needed to grow the crops (such as palm oil) they need for the foods and household products they sell.
- Oil companies cause a lot of destruction to the environment, but we rely on oil for transport, to heat our homes and generate electricity.

Governments?

- Building new roads or railway lines (e.g. HS2 High Speed Rail) can cause damage to habitats and displace wildlife.

Video Links* Biodiversity: 1. 'Humans can save animals from extinction if they act' - BBC Newsround www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/54040156

2. One million species face extinction, says UN - BBC Newsround www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/48041537

** Please note we cannot be responsible for external sites, and it is your responsibility to check the suitability of these videos for your pupils beforehand and their accessibility.*

Fact 4 Source www.imperial.ac.uk/news/219933/biodiversity-your-life-depends/

7. IGNITE Collective Worship Activity Cards



Time to Discuss

What does this Bible Verse say to Christians about the environment?

"You appointed them (humans) rulers over everything you made; you placed them over all creation: sheep and cattle, and the wild animals too; the birds and the fish and the creatures in the seas."

Psalms 8: 6-8

Making Community Matter

- How well do you think humans have ruled over and guarded planet earth?
- Can you think of one way where people have helped to guard planet earth and one way where they have damaged it?
- How do you watch over and guard the planet?

Time to Discuss

What does this Bible Verse say to Christians about the environment?

"For six years plant your land and gather in what it produces. But in the seventh year let it rest, and do not harvest anything that grows on it. The poor may eat what grows there, and the wild animals can have what is left. Do the same with your vineyards and your olive tree."

Exodus 23: 10-11

Making Community Matter

- How well do communities & individuals look after the land?
- What are the consequences of not looking after the land?
- Is there anything you could do to help?

Time to Discuss

What does this Bible Verse say to Christians about the environment?

"If you come across a bird's nest in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs and the mother sitting on the young or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. You may take the young but be sure to let the mother go."

Deuteronomy 22:6

Making Community Matter

- Why should people care for wildlife?
- In what ways do people harm wildlife?
- How could you help protect wildlife?

Time to Discuss

What does this Bible Verse say to Christians about the environment?

"I brought them into a fertile land to enjoy its harvests and its other good things. But instead, they ruined my land; they defiled the country I had given them."

Jeremiah 2:7

Making Community Matter

- Can you think of 'good things' in your community environment, which have been damaged or ruined?
- How have they been damaged?
- What could you do to change this?

Inspire Activities



INSPIRE Activities Teacher Guidance



5. TAKING ACTION TO HELP ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES VIDEO (ppt slide 12)

The video contains stories from two charities: **A Rocha UK** and **Hope For The Future** are working to address environmental issues in their communities.

As pupils watch the video, ask them to consider these questions:

- What positive actions are these charities taking to help solve environmental issues in their communities?
- What actions could you take to help solve an issue in your community?

There is the opportunity to discuss as a class and take feedback from pupils.

6. ARCHIE'S INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE (ppt slide 13, pages 18-19)

This activity focuses on the personal stories of Hugo Taco (CEO of the charity Surfers Against Sewerage) and Amy and Ella Meek (Founders of Kids Against Plastic) and their work to address environmental issues in their communities. Before looking at the case studies with pupils, you may want to explore what pupils already know about them or the charities they are involved in.

After reading their stories, there is space on the handout for pupils to identify how Hugo, Amy and Ella have made a difference to their communities and what leadership skills they have shown.

7. INSPIRE COLLECTIVE WORSHIP ACTIVITY (ppt slides 14-15, page 20)

This activity focuses on extracts from Psalm 102 verses **1-28**. You can use the passage from the Good News Bible Translation on the PPT or look at the psalm in a Children's Bible with pupils.

The questions encourage pupils to think about God's creation and the environment and what people can do to protect it.

Context

The writer of this Psalm describes all the wonderful things that he sees in the natural world.

Archie's Inspirational People

HUGO TAGHOLM

What do you know about Surfers Against Sewerage?

Concerns:

- That science suggests there are only 10 years left to save the Earth's oceans.
- The impact of human behaviour on the environment and natural habitats.



How has he made a difference to his community?

“One single action won’t solve the problem, but a lot of single actions joined together makes a significant impact.”

He has always had a passion for nature and the environment and loves to surf. He became CEO of the charity Surfers Against Sewerage in 2008, which focuses on caring for the oceans, fighting to preserve them and their inhabitants, and creating better, cleaner and safer surfing habitats.

What leadership skills has he shown?

He regularly campaigns and lobbies MPs in Parliament on climate change, plastic pollution, water quality and marine protected areas. He encourages charities, businesses, researchers & scientists to explore ways to protect the ocean.

Through the charity, 100,000 volunteers have been encouraged to become active citizens, carrying out beach clean-ups and becoming plastic free communities. In 2021 he was awarded Environmentalist of the year by Save the Waves.



Archie's Inspirational People

AMY & ELLA MEEK

What do you know about Kids Against Plastic?

Concerns:

- That although plastic is a magnificent invention, it is also an enormous environmental monster in waiting.
- That people had a lack of knowledge about plastic and its impact.



How have they made a difference to their community?

“Plastic is having a catastrophic effect on the planet, and it's only going to get worse in the coming years.”

When researching the UN Global Goals and number 14: Life Below Water, they found out about the disastrous impact that plastic pollution was having on the environment and decided to do something about it.

What leadership skills have they shown?

They set up a campaign, Kids Against Plastic, with the goal of getting UK supermarkets to stock non-plastic packaged water alternatives on their shelves instead of single use.

They have picked up over 90,000 pieces of single-use plastic litter (and developed an app to log it), done their own TEDx talk and gathered a team of incredible kids around the UK who are tackling plastic pollution.



7. INSPIRE COLLECTIVE WORSHIP ACTIVITY



What does this Bible story teach people about God's creation and the environment?



Extracts from Psalm 104: 1-28

Praise the Lord, my soul! O Lord, my God, how great you are!

You have set the earth firmly on its foundations, and it will never be moved. You placed the ocean over it like a robe, and the water covered the mountains. You make springs flow in the valleys, and rivers run between the hills. They provide water for the wild animals; there the wild donkeys quench their thirst. In the trees near by, the birds make their nests and sing. From the sky you send rain on the hills, and the earth is filled with your blessings. You make grass grow for the cattle and plants for us to use so that we can grow our crops...

You created the moon to mark the months; the sun knows the time to set. You made the night, and in the darkness all the wild animals come out. The young lions roar while they hunt, looking for the food that God provides. When the sun rises, they go back and lie down in their dens. Then people go out to do their work and keep working until evening.

Lord, you have made so many things! How wisely you made them all! The earth is filled with your creatures. There is the ocean, large and wide, where countless creatures live, large and small alike....All of them depend on you to give them food when they need it. You give it to them, and they eat it; you provide food, and they are satisfied.

- Which parts of the natural world amaze you or fill you with awe and wonder?
- How could you work to protect them, so that people for generations to come can enjoy the beauty of the natural world?

Empower Activities



EMPOWER Activities Teacher Guidance



8. FIND OUT MORE (ppt slide 17, pages 23-24)

For this activity we have provided teachers with some suggestions for pupil friendly websites and videos that explore different environmental issues. **Please make sure these websites and videos are suitable for pupils in your school context.**

You may focus pupils on a particular issue you want them to explore or ask them to research an issue they are passionate about. How you want them to present their findings is up to you. Perhaps get them to be creative in their response or deliver a mini-presentation. You might want to provide a research framework handout to help focus pupils on the key information they are looking for.

9. ARCHIE'S YOUNG LEADERS IN ACTION (ppt slide 18)

Through our Young Leaders Award, Archie's young leaders are involved in helping solve lots of environmental issues in their communities. Using the pictures for inspiration, ask pupils what environmental issue matters to them and why? What ideas have they got for taking action to solve these social issues in their community? There is no handout for this activity.

10. ARCHIE'S CHALLENGES (ppt slide 19, page 25)

We've provided a challenge grid with 6 practical actions that pupils could take to explore and act upon environmental issues in their community.

11. EMPOWER COLLECTIVE WORSHIP ACTIVITY (ppt slide 20)

If you have been using the resources as part of Collective Worship, a prayer finishes off this session and is just on the ppt slide.

8. FIND OUT MORE

Below are some suggestions for pupil friendly websites and videos that explore different environmental issues.

Please make sure these websites and videos are suitable for pupils in your school context. We cannot be responsible for links to external content.

WATER POLLUTION

www.sas.org.uk Surfers Against Sewage, charity set up by Hugo Tagholm

www.mcsuk.org Marine Conservation Society, a UK charity fighting for a cleaner, better-protected, healthier ocean

www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/science-ks2-blue-planet-live/zd9y7nb Series of short films taken from Blue Planet Live

www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/55678801 Story explaining how scientists have discovered a "natural mechanism" for catching and removing plastics from the water.

AIR POLLUTION & CLIMATE CHANGE

<https://climatekids.nasa.gov/air-pollution> Launched in 2010, NASA's Climate Kids website tells the story of our changing planet through the eyes of the NASA missions studying Earth.

www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/57241183 The story of St Ambrose RC primary school in Manchester, which sits next to one of Europe's busiest roads, where air pollution levels are around five times higher than the World Health Organisation (WHO) safe limits.

<https://ypte.org.uk> Young People's Trust for the Environment: short videos explaining 'how electricity is made', 'renewable energy' and 'the Greenhouse Effect'

www.natgeokids.com/uk/discover/geography/general-geography/what-is-climate-change/ What is climate change and how can we stop it?



LAND POLLUTION

www.kidsagainstoplastic.co.uk Charity set up by Amy and Ella Meek

www.keepbritaintidy.org A charity working to eliminate litter and waste in public spaces and the environment

www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/56210735 Is the drinks industry doing enough to reduce single-use plastics?

www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p07cjgm1 Video showing what a primary school is doing to be more sustainable

LOSS OF HABITATS & BIODIVERSITY

www.wwf.org.uk World Wide Fund for Nature, an international organisation focused on wilderness preservation and the reduction of human impact on the environment.

www.wildlifetrusts.org a UK charity saving wildlife and wild places through looking after nature reserves and running conservation programmes.

www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/nature-on-your-doorstep/garden-activities/build-a-bug-hotel/ How to build a bug hotel.

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2019/09/how-to-build-a-bug-hotel/ How to build a bug hotel.

www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/54729728 Story about re-wilding Britain



Archie's Challenges

How can you start to take action in your community?

Choose at least one of the action ideas below or create your own.

Write to your MP explaining your concerns about the environment and giving ideas for taking action.

Create a recipe book with ideas for using up leftover food, sharing this with the wider community to help reduce food waste.

Build a 'bug hotel' to provide safe shelter for insects and small mammals.

Carry out a survey of all of the single-use plastics currently used in your school. Research and introduce alternatives.

Write to your local supermarket explaining your concerns about excessive plastic packaging.

Create a leaflet or poster raising awareness of sustainability logos to look for when shopping e.g. FSC, MSC and Rainforest Alliance.

