



ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Judi Ratner

Touchstone Text:

Job, 12:7-9: "But ask the animals, now, and they shall teach you; the birds of the sky, and they shall tell you. Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach you. The fish of the sea shall declare to you. Who doesn't know that in all these, the hand of the Lord has done this,"

GOALS: For participants to have a better understanding of the terminology associated with environmental issues

For participants to better understand the causes of environmental problems, their effects, and to be able to explore possible solutions.

Objectives: Children will be able to define some commonly heard environmental terms and be able to list these definitions. Children will be able to explain these terms and definitions by using various examples and activities.

Timetable:

00:00-00:05 - Give kids a brief overview of what will be happening and how you'll be discussing a number of things to help repair the world.(Tikkun Olam)

00:05-00:15 - First Topic

00:15-00:25 - Second Topic

00:25-00:35 - Third Topic

00:35-00:45 - Fourth Topic

00:45-00:55 - Fifth Topic

00:55-01:00 - Final wrap-up of what each PP can do in his/her house.

Detailed Procedure:

First Topic:

ENVIRONMENT

1. Begin with the question of what this word means, or what this word makes you think of.
2. List their ideas on the board, but don't let this be the main focal point.
3. Define environment to them as everything that surrounds us. Buildings, trees, plants, animals, etc. Ask them for examples to assure their understanding.
4. For the time remaining of the 10 minutes play the game of This _____ 's Environment. Yes, I made the game up. Here's how you play:
 - A. Pick a person to be in the center. The game will be to create that person's environment.
 - B. The person in the middle begins to describe the things around where he/she lives. This can be real or fictitious.
 - C. As the person in the center says something a member of the class stands by the person pantomiming what was just said.
 - D. Continue for as long as time permits.
5. At the end briefly add that our environment is in serious danger. Use this as a lead in to the other terms.



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Second-Topic:

POLLUTION

1. Begin with the question of what this word means, or what this word makes you think of.
2. List their ideas on the board, but don't let this be the main focal point.
3. Define pollution as things that make your environment dirty such as oil, car exhaust, trash that isn't thrown away properly, etc. Again ask for examples to assure understanding and list these on the board.
4. Explain that there are many ways to prevent pollution. Take examples from the board and give children large sheets of paper and markers or crayons.
 - A. Have children fold paper in half and on the left side draw where the pollution comes from, and on the right side draw what happens to our environment afterwards.
 - B. Allot 3-5 minutes for this.
 - C. Have each child show his/her drawing and briefly explain it.
 - D. Come up with solutions to the problems and what each child can do to help. (Use basic common sense for this. If a child sees someone littering, tell them to pick it up or pick it up for them if they aren't there. Etc.)

Third Topic:

OZONE

1. Begin with the question of what this word means, or what this word makes you think of.
2. List their ideas on the board, but don't let this be the main focal point.
3. Define the ozone (Not the one on Nickelodeon which many children will quickly associate with.) as a covering that stops harmful rays from entering the Earth and hurting the environment on Earth.
4. Time for another game.
 - A. Choose one person to be the Earth and one to be harmful rays.
 - B. Have the other children make a circle, holding hands, surrounding Earth facing out.
 - C. Explain that the children are the ozone and need to protect the rays from getting in.
 - D. After a minute or so pull out one or two people to show holes in the ozone. Make sure the children know that they can't just close up the hole. They will see that they can no longer protect the Earth.
 - E. Another variation is to have more than one person be the rays that are trying to get in.
5. Close by saying how much the ozone is necessary to protect the Earth.
Solutions will be given in the final wrap-up.



Fourth Topic:

RECYCLING

1. Begin with the question of what this word means, or what this word makes you think of.
2. List their ideas on the board.
3. Define recycling as the process of using things over and over again. This can be something like using a grocery bag over again, or turning in aluminum cans to make new ones. Ask what things can be recycled, and how you can tell. (the three arrows symbol)
4. Have a prepared bag of recyclable and recycled things such as aluminum cans, bottles, a paper towel, newspaper, etc. Pull things out one at a time and create stories of what they were before, and what they will become.

A. An example for a piece of newspaper:

At one time this was a piece of stationary used by President Bush. Then it became a piece of writing paper that Michael Jordan wrote someone's phone number on. Then it became this piece of newspaper. Next it will become the newspaper that says who won the Super Bowl. You get the idea.

B. Also talk about what things are recyclable locally and/or at your temple if such a program exists.

Fifth Topic:

ENDANGERED SPECIES

1. Begin with the question of what this word means, or what this word makes you think of.
2. List their ideas on the board, but don't let this be the main focal point.
3. Define Endangered Species as animals and plants that are dying out and are almost extinct. Define that as well. See if anyone knows of an animal or plant that is almost extinct. Agree with almost every example except for pigeons and squirrels.
4. Again pass out markers, crayons and paper. Have each child draw their favorite animal and write the name above it.
5. Take all the pictures and create a collage in the room or hallway with the slogan of "Keep Our Friends Alive".

Final Wrap-Up:

1. Solutions to pollution were already looked at in the second topic, but the ozone depletion, recycling and saving endangered species was not. So, that's what will be done now.
 - A. For the ozone discuss what chemicals cause the depletion, or holes and tell them to ask their parents not to use those products.
 - B. For recycling remind them of what things can be recycled and again to tell their parents how important it is to recycle.
 - C. For endangered species discuss why species are endangered (hunting, destroying their native homes etc.) and how the only protection is a law that is being debated now. The Endangered Species Act. Tell them that they should ask their parents to write to legislators and voice support for this activity.
2. Also prepare a sheet for the children to take home and show their parents.

