



Quality Theatre In Education

ABN: 61 935 048 984

The Enviro Show - Teachers' Notes

INTRODUCTION

Through a series of comic dramatizations, plus interactive games and experiments, The Enviro Show introduces students to many of the major themes concerning environmental education, both globally and locally.

With a strong focus on practical solutions, simple activities and lifestyle changes achievable by students at all levels are offered as a means by which the entire audience can get involved in maintaining a sustainable environment.

It is not necessary to prepare students for the performance, but these notes may prove useful in the classroom, following the show.

THE PLAY

The performance begins with a character dreaming of his perfect world, but the dream becomes a nightmare when he is confronted by Earth (another character), who demonstrates how the world's environment, like your own body, may change, if it is not looked after. The term "Environment" is defined here and students are told, ***"Whatever you do to the world, you end up doing to yourself"***, for better as well as for worse.

Our leading man "wakes up" to himself and decides to become The Environmental Avenger – a bumbling super hero, bent on saving the world, but with no knowledge of how to do so.

From this point, the production divides into three areas of study;

THE LAND

The importance of ***native***, rather than ***exotic*** flora and fauna is highlighted. Native plants have evolved to grow well in Australia's rugged environment and provide essential food and habitat for native animals and humans. Exotic plants, like crops or pine forests, often don't provide these, and can contribute to other problems such as dangerous fires.

Introduced animals, such as sheep and cattle, contribute to the expansion of arid lands or deserts and erosion because much of Australia is unsuitable for sustaining such grazing herds and millions of hectares of native habitat has been cleared for them, (eg. Mallee) Native animals can also provide equally suitable foods for human consumption.

EXPERIMENT: By placing a windbreak on a soil covered tray, and blowing a hairdryer at the windbreak, it is demonstrated how intelligent tree planting can help prevent soil erosion.

THE WATERS

The issues facing our river systems are highlighted through the journey two Murray Cod, "Murray & Darling", along our largest and most famous river system.

They discover that dams along the river change the temperature of the water at sensitive sites, making these areas unsuitable for the native fish. At their next stop the water has become saltier and the issue of increased salinity through unsustainable irrigation methods is discussed. As they continue downstream, they discover that Adelaide's water supply is becoming too salty and polluted to drink. Finally reaching the sea, they find that devices called barrages, designed to separate the salty sea water from the fresh river water are no longer effective and that wildlife living in our most famous estuary, The Coorong, has been reduced by as much as 90%.

EXPERIMENT: Water conservation measures, including; reducing the use of garden hoses, not leaving taps running, desalinating sea water, and using a rainwater tank, are raised during a comic quiz. The benefits of home rainwater collection in comparison to town (dam) water are demonstrated by showing how efficient water runs off a bare tray (ie. your roof) compared to when the tray is covered with soil (ie. collected in a large dam from an entire catchment). Evaporation is also far greater from an uncovered dam, than from a covered tank.

THE AIR

The Environmental Avenger attempts to tackle air pollution and global warming, by stopping a bus driver to complain about the dangerous gases spewing from his bus. As it turns out, the bus is one of Perth's new eco-bus fleet, running on a hydrogen fuel cell. The only thing that comes out of the exhaust pipe is steam and a little water.

The use of fossil fuels in electricity generation as well as for powering vehicles is discussed, and flow-on effects like rising sea levels are shown to contribute to the destruction of the Great Barrier Reef and the submergence of low-lying island nations. A wide range of alternative fuel sources are suggested, including; wind power, solar power, and wave power.

Finally, foot power (walking) for shorter journeys is suggested as a great way to help the environment in the show's closing number.

EXERCISES

1. List the foods you eat and decide which ones are native or environmentally sustainable. Then list native or more sustainable foods you could eat to replace non-environmentally friendly components of your diet.
2. Using a small sheet of corrugated plastic or similar, along with a section of guttering of the same length (or material of similar shape), and a bucket, create a portable water collection device in the classroom. When next it rains, take the device outside and see how much water you collect. Compare this to just placing a bucket outside.
3. Plant a windbreak along one edge of your school oval from trees which are native to your local area. Alternatively, if you have a natural water course on your grounds, plant the trees along the bank to prevent soil erosion.

CONCLUSION

A central theme to the show is that everything in the environment is connected to and reliant upon everything else, as if The Earth was itself, a living body. All discussion of maintaining a sustainable environment should highlight this by recognizing that everything you do to the world, you end up doing to yourself.

REFERENCES

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| The GAIA Atlas of Planet Management | Editor Norman Myers | Doubleday |
| Tukka | Jean-Paul Bruneteau | New Holland |
| My Country | Dorothea McKellar | Various |
| My Darling Murray | Nick Byrne | TIE |
| www.transperth.wa.gov.au | (regarding Eco-bus) | |

Enjoy the show!

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