



Celebrate Earth Day

April 22, 2009 marks the 39th anniversary of the establishment of Earth Day. This is a day to celebrate our planet and its beauty that surrounds us each day. It is also a time to think about the environmental problems our planet is experiencing.

PROGRAM PLANS

This program invites children to think of themselves as a part of nature and how instrumental they are in keeping our earth beautiful and reusable. The first step in educating young children about their environment is helping them notice the nature surrounding them. Children, ages 4 and older, will enjoy learning about their Earth and what they can do to keep it beautiful for their future.

BOOKS

In My World by Lois Ehlert. This story, told through die-cut illustrations, describes some of the many things in the natural world – worms, seashells, flowers and stars – that a child can appreciate.

In the Tall, Tall Grass by Denise Fleming. This great read-aloud picture book introduces the children to the wonderful images surrounding them each day. They will delight in recognizing some favorite creatures they encounter in their own backyard.

What Planet Are You From, Clarice Bean? by Lauren Child. Clarice decides to join her family to save an old neighborhood tree from being destroyed.

MUSIC

Evergreen, Everblue by Raffi. Massachusetts: Rounder Records, 1990. Raffi sings fun songs about respecting and caring for the earth. This CD is great for background music or to stimulate creative expression.

ACTIVITIES

EcoArt by Laurie Carlson. This book presents art and craft projects that benefit the environment through such activities as recycling. The book is full of ideas that can be used with children of all ages.
Pine Cone Feeder and More (p. 55)

Materials needed:

Pine cone

Peanut butter and birdseed

String, about 12" in length

Popsicle stick

Shallow pan

Use the stick to spread peanut butter all over the pine cone. Place a layer of birdseed in the pan and roll the cone in the seed until all the peanut butter is covered with birdseed. Tie the string around one end of the pine cone and hang it from a tree branch. You may use a toilet tissue tube instead of a pine cone if you wish.

If you wish to do an Earth Day program for older children, grades 4 and up, try these ideas:

BOOKS

Just a Dream by Chris Van Allsburg. When he has a dream about a future Earth devastated by pollution, Walter begins to understand the importance of taking care of the environment.

Button, Bucket Sky by Jacqueline Briggs Martin. Annie Livemore, her cat, and two of her friends collect acorns, carefully nurture them until they are big enough to be planted in the ground, and then grow old with all the oak trees they have planted. Includes instructions on growing oak trees from acorns.

ACTIVITIES

Button, Bucket Sky Reader's Theatre. Read the story aloud to the children first so they may become familiar with the story line and enjoy the illustrations. The script is available in *LibrarySparks*, April 2007, pages 15-19.

Let's Recycle!

When promoting the program, invite children to bring in recyclable items. Place three big plastic bins labeled *paper*, *plastic* and *glass & cans* within the program room. The children may then place their items in the appropriate bin. Have a discussion with them on why it is important that we recycle, and where the materials go once they are collected. A good source for information on this subject is *Earth Smart: how to take care of the environment* by Leslie Garrett.

More information or questions?

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