

How do we know what to do in order to live in a more sustainable way?

We need data – information on what resources we use, how much we use and what we can do to reduce or eliminate waste of resources. We also need information on more sustainable alternatives to some of resources we are currently using. Small changes can add up over time, and the more people in a community who make these changes, the smaller the ecological footprint of the entire community. How can we educate and encourage people to make these kinds of changes?

Making a Difference Activity:

Student teams will collect and analyze data on how staff and students use resources related to energy, transportation, water and waste disposal. Each team will prepare one of the following to present their findings and practical ways to use the resource in a more sustainable way:

- Newspaper article
- Podcast
- Poster

Materials:

Individual surveys/data charts of resource use

- How Can I Make a Difference? worksheet
- What's My Footprint? worksheet

School and community surveys of resource use

- School Transportation Survey
- Safe Routes to Schools surveys: <http://www.saferoutestoschools.org/>
- PG&E Energy online Energy Analyzer:
<http://www.pge.com/myhome/saveenergymoney/analyzer/en/index.shtml>

Computers and internet access for all students

Software for recording and editing sounds (i.e. Audacity)

Microphone

Headphones

Poster Board, construction paper, markers, etc...

Procedure:

1. Complete the **How Can I Make A Difference?** activity focused on one of the following:
 - Energy use – electricity, natural gas or propane
 - Energy use - transportation
 - Water use
 - Waste
2. Conduct surveys and interviews of students and staff on your chosen topic. Record the information on a data chart.
3. Use Trackstar for Teachers <http://trackstar.4teachers.org/> Track # **407758** to find information about conserving energy and using resources in a more sustainable way
4. Make a list of the following items you need to be include in your project:
 - a. Title – Name of resource
 - b. Importance of this resource and reasons it needs to be conserved
 - c. Summary of data from personal and community surveys
 - d. Practical tips for using this resource in more sustainable way
5. Organize your information and prepare a rough draft of your project

Newspaper article

Podcast – prepare and record a script that is 2 to 3 minutes in length

Online resource/curriculum for creating podcasts is available at

PBS Newshour Extra

- <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/teachers/lessonplans/media/podcasting.html>
- ***Audacity software*** – free download available at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>
- ***Trackstar for Teachers*** <http://trackstar.4teachers.org/>
Track # 392955

Poster – Make a rough sketch that includes diagrams, charts and pictures you want to include plus a draft of the title, captions and resources used

6. Share your project!
 - Publish article in the school or local newspaper
 - Post the podcast to the school website
 - Display posters in classrooms, the library or other highly visible areas of campus