

CONTENTS

Introduction	4	Rainforest facts	26
How to use this book	5	Saguaro cactus timeline	27
Teaching the basics	6	Personal timeline	28
		Bush mementos mobile	29
Literature links		Bush patterns	30
<i>Raindance</i>	7	Clean ocean/dirty ocean	31
Make a didgeridoo	8	Clean ocean patterns	32
<i>Baby Bilby, where do you Sleep?</i>	9	Dirty ocean patterns	33
Bilby burrow	10		
<i>Turtle Taxi</i>	11	Show time	
Swamp displays	12	Program	34
<i>Rainforest</i>	13	The Great White Ghost Gum	35
Rainforest music	14	Ghost gum costume	36
<i>Window</i>	15	Rainforest Rock	37
3-D city and country murals	16	Jingling branches	38
		Over by the Water	39
Environmental awareness		Flower leis	40
Scavenger hunt	17	Flower patterns	41
Nature hunt checklist 1	18	Grand finale	42
Nature hunt checklist 2	19		
Erosion exploration	20	Reaching out	
Conservation counts	21	Eco-newsletter	43
Conservation counts chart	22	Newsletter pattern	44
Save the air	23	Letter to the earth	45
		Letter form	46
Kid-made displays			
What the rainforest knows	24		
Rainforest animal patterns	25		





INTRODUCTION

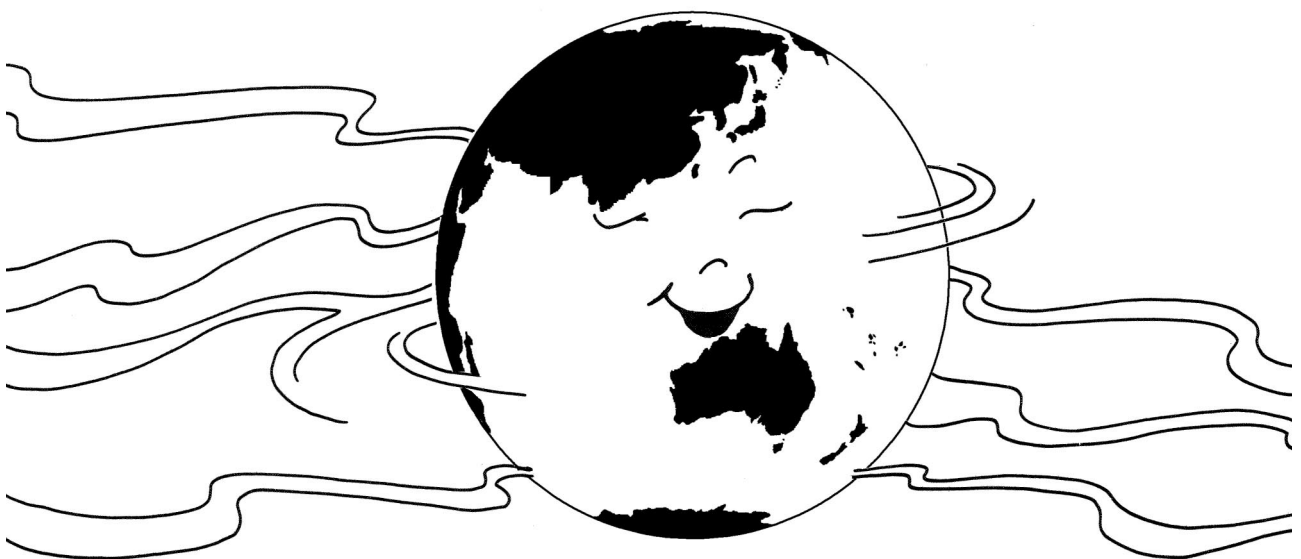
We are all neighbours sharing planet Earth. Some people simply go about their business, believing that they can't make any real changes. But you're different! Just picking up this book proves that you care.

Love the Earth! is about encouraging children to value and protect the many kinds of environments that make up the world – from the rainforests to the grasslands, from deserts to our cities and from lakes to seas.

As a teacher, you will have a lasting effect on future generations. By offering in-depth information to an eager, creative and open-minded audience, you can raise the consciousness of these children, while giving them the tools to make changes in the way we treat the environment.

Love the Earth! includes a multitude of integrated-learning activities that can help children to:

- learn about the many different forms of life that are found in each type of environment
- recognise the importance of undisturbed habitats for all living creatures
- grasp the concepts of erosion, water pollution, energy conservation and other environmental processes
- relate ecological issues to the entire curriculum and to the development of responsibility and citizenship.



HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Love the Earth! is divided into five sections:

Literature links focuses on fiction and nonfiction picture books that introduce information about different types of environments: deserts, rainforests, rivers, cities and grasslands. Crafts, projects and language activities help children make imaginative connections with places that they may not experience in their normal routines.

Environmental awareness uses the children's own world as a setting for hands-on ecological study. These science-oriented projects are simple, authentic and fun!

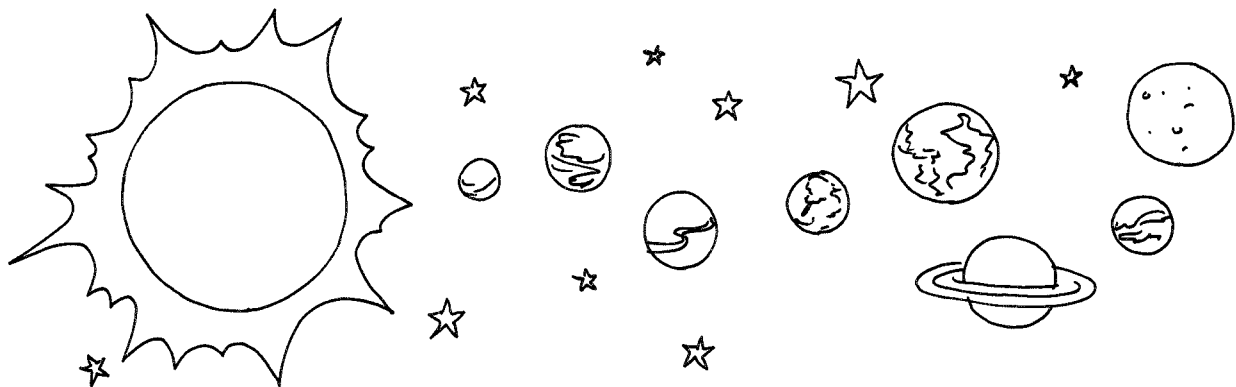
Kid-made displays, such as noticeboards, timelines, exhibits, mobiles and other eye-catching creations, enable children to share what they learn about the Earth with other classes.

Show time presents songs and costumes to be used in an ecologically oriented program. The pieces bring environmental issues to the children's level. Your students can put on a performance for other classes or parents.

Reaching out involves students in ecological action through community-oriented projects such as letter-writing and newsletter publishing.

The bonus poster can be used to introduce this environmental unit as well as to decorate the classroom. Certain activities in this book refer to information provided on the posters.

The main goal is to help your students learn about, explore and appreciate the environment. As a group, they will make their world cleaner, healthier and more livable for themselves and their neighbours. The idea is to change the world; what better place to start than at home?





TEACHING THE BASICS

Your students need to grasp certain concepts in order to understand various environmental problems. The following background information may prove useful in maximising the value of the activities in this book.

Air Pollution: Harmful gases produced by cars and factories cause air pollution. Today, many scientists fear that too much carbon dioxide is being produced. Polluted air is bad for people, animals, plants and trees. Trees can absorb carbon dioxide. However, billions of trees are being cut down. The 'Save the air' activity in the 'Environmental awareness' section describes how planting a tree can help clean the air.

Conservation: We waste a lot of resources. Consider the following facts:

- In one year, people use up the amount of fossil fuel it took the earth one million years to produce.
- Australia, the world's the driest inhabited continent, is the second highest user of domestic water in the world. Water will be in critically short supply for more than 1/3 of the earth's population during the 21st century.
- 12.5 million acres of rainforests are being destroyed each year by commercial loggers. It is estimated that everyday 48 tropical forest species are lost forever.

These problems can be reduced through conservation. There are easy ways to save resources such as energy, water and forests on a day-to-day basis. If the average Australian reduced their shower time to three minutes a day this would mean a saving of up to 200 litres per person per day. Multiply that by a population of 20 million and 365 days and see how much difference just one individual can make in one year. Introduce students to this concept with the 'Conservation counts' activity.

Erosion: This natural process caused by rain and floods involves the washing away of the top layer of the Earth. However, misuse of land – for example, by clear-felling trees – can increase the loss of the topsoil required for plant growth. This type of erosion occurs when plant roots, which hold soil in place, are destroyed and nothing is left to anchor the soil. Luckily, intelligent land management limits erosion. The 'Erosion exploration' project in the 'Environmental awareness' section can help children understand the process of erosion.

Water Pollution: Water is a precious resource – all life on Earth depends on it. Unfortunately, much of our water has become polluted. The dumping of garbage and poisonous chemicals pollutes our rivers, lakes and oceans. Harmful fertilisers used by farmers or gardeners can drain through the soil and pollute underground water sources. The 'Clean ocean/dirty ocean' project will illustrate the need to save our seas.



RAINDANCE

Story:

Raindance by Cathy Applegate (Margaret Hamilton Books) describes the difficult life for farmers in the dry Australian outback. The harsh climate has won and the farm is for sale. It has been two years since it has rained. And then with a sighing breeze the clouds roll in, and with them comes the rain. The dance is one of joy and celebration as the refreshing downpour revives the parched land, animals and people. Finally the rain stops and calm descends on the farm. The rain has washed out the 'For Sale' sign and there is a sense of a new beginning.

Environmental Connection:

This is an important book, particularly for children who live in the city. It shows the difficulties faced by the farming community and the dependence on the elements of nature. Australia is a dry land and this poses very real problems for those who work to produce food from the land. This book can help children appreciate that we are dependent on the land for our food.

Language Extension:

Activity 1

The pictures in this book are vibrant and help tell the story. Look at the ways the illustrator has created the feeling of the heat, the rain and finally the coolness after the storm. Then provide art supplies for children to try to create their own pictures showing weather conditions such as heat, rain, wind, cold etc.

Activity 2

We also use words to create pictures. We do this by comparing the thing that we don't know with something that we can relate to. Point out to the class the way the author has used similes to help describe the situation. 'It [the silence] spreads and suffocates everything like a hot, dry blanket' or the 'gentle breeze like a sigh of relief against my skin'. Then get the children to try writing their own similes. You might like to start with similes about the story and then move on to descriptions of their own experiences.

ADDITIONAL DESERT BOOKS: *Big Rain Coming* by Katrina Germein (Puffin)

