

TOOL KIT

HOW TO CREATE A MEANINGFUL, ENGAGING AND IMPACTFUL ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM FOR TEENS

"Diana's book provides hope, facilitates learning, and pushes us all to fight for this beautiful earth." —**MEGAN RAPINOE**, US professional soccer player, and **RACHAEL RAPINOE**, cofounder and CEO of Mendi

GIRLS WHO GREEN THE WORLD

THIRTY-FOUR REBEL WOMEN
OUT TO SAVE OUR PLANET

WRITTEN BY
DIANA KAPP

ILLUSTRATED BY
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INCLUDES:

- Event ideas with step-by-step guides
- A range of programs for super committed teens to youth with limited time
- Images needed to promote your program and post on social media

GIRLS WHO GREEN THE WORLD: THIRTY-FOUR REBEL WOMEN OUT TO SAVE THE PLANET

TOOLKIT

INTRODUCTION

Teens can help change the world! This coming Earth Day organize an event that will harness the power of young people to show how they can become changemakers in your community.

GIRLS WHO GREEN THE WORLD: 34 REBELS OUT TO SAVE THE PLANET by Diana Kapp aims to inspire future and current environmental activists, social entrepreneurs and green innovators of all kinds. The book profiles 34 diverse revolutionaries—many young—fighting for our future. Pub Date: April 5, 2022. To preorder the book: <https://dianakapp.com/books/girls-who-green-the-world/>

Author Diana Kapp is a well-respected journalist whose work has appeared in *The New York Times* and *Wall St. Journal* among many publications. Her previous book *Girls Who Run the World* was endorsed by Secretary of State Madeline Albright and featured in *Forbes* and on NPR's Marketplace.

The book provides an opportunity to:

- Show teens how a remarkable group of young women are changing the world with their environmental actions.
- Showcase a highly diverse set of role models. They come from a wide range of socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. Half are women of color. Several are first in their family to go to college. They come from London and Louisville, New Delhi and Detroit. They are young and old; artists and activists; molecular biologists, doctors and Instagram phenoms.
- Use the free Toolkit to plan an environmental-based activity which will teach teens how they can make a difference.

Filled with program ideas and resources, this Toolkit features everything librarians, teachers and teens need to easily plan an engaging and meaningful program.

Eco-anxiety Is Real

- Many teens are bombarded by doom and gloom headlines making them feel powerless and hopeless.
- *Girls Who Green* is a positive book offering stories of possibilities.
- These Earth Day-related programs are designed to empower teens.

Rally Around a Common Problem

- Politics divides us but we all care about the Earth. This provides an opportunity to explore ways to unite around pressing problems and shared values.
- The environmental movement was historically white, exclusive, and focused on preserving land for beauty and recreation. The book shows a modern movement, focused foremost on achieving environmental justice and acknowledging that the most vulnerable and marginalized are most deeply impacted.

Timing of Event:

- Earth Day is Friday, April 22nd.
- If teens are too busy on April 22nd, feel free to have your program on another date in April or another time altogether.
- If your environmental activity is a donation drive, it can take place over a number of days or during the entire month.
- *Girls Who Green* is available beginning April 5th.

POWERPOINT: “ENVIRONMENTAL TRAILBLAZERS MAKE COOL HEROES”

[See accompanying PDF titled “Environmental Trailblazers Make Cool Heroes”]

We also provide you with a short powerpoint presentation that is a good way to start your program visually. Begin by showcasing some of the remarkable young women who are paving the way.

The Trailblazers Featured:

- Susan Solomon – Scientist who figured out why the ozone hole was expanding and how to reverse this by banning CFCs. A historic tale that shows that collective actions can work to change the course of our current warming trajectory.
- Jannice Newson and Nana Britwum – Lillian Augusta, making the \$2B braid market eco friendly
- Caroline Danehy – Fair Harbor, sustainable fashion from plastic bottles
- Varsini Prakash – The Sunrise Movement
- Lynn Jurich – SunRun, putting solar panels on 600K rooftops
- Jenny Du – Apeel Sciences, making avocados last twice as long

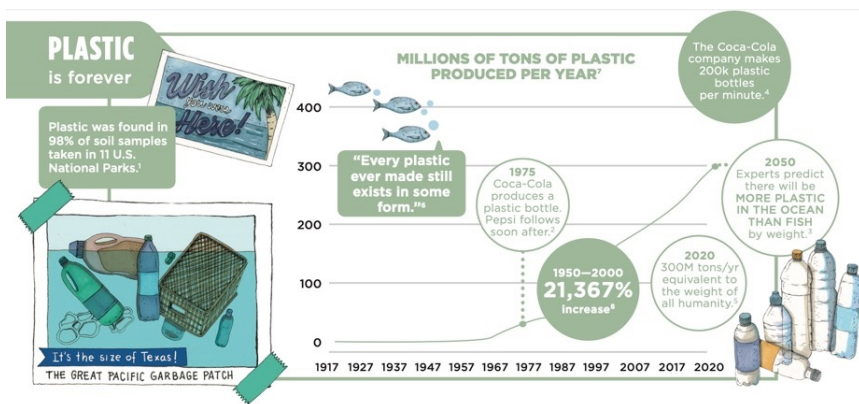
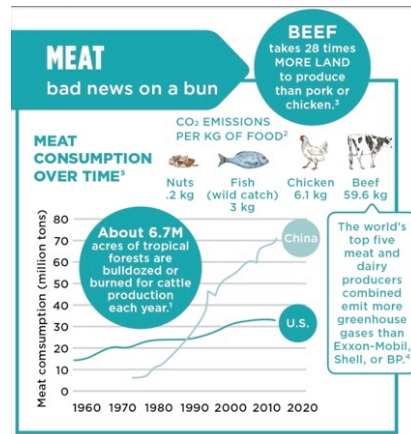
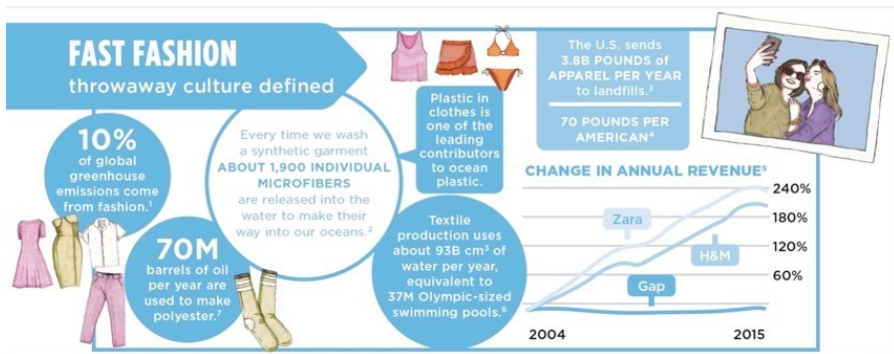
Praise for *Girls Who Green the World* by the country’s top environmentalist:

“I’ve had the privilege of knowing many of these remarkable women, and this book not only tells their remarkable stories, it captures their remarkable spirit. What a wonderful booster shot for anyone who’s feeling a bit of despair!”

– Bill McKibben, author of *The End of Nature*

DISPLAY IDEAS

Download one of these illuminating posters about the harmful effects of fast fashion, meat and plastics on the environment – <https://dianakapp.com/downloads/>

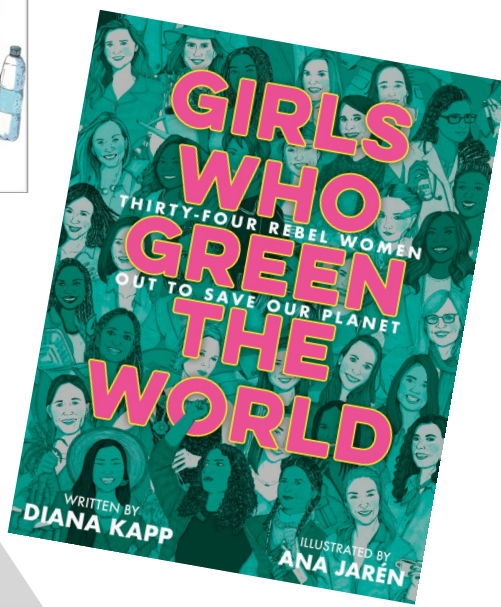


Download book cover and/or collage of featured women to display in library

Link to Book Cover Image
<https://dianakapp.com/downloads/>

Link to Book Collage Image
<https://dianakapp.com/downloads/>

Download sample buttons for social media campaign
<https://dianakapp.com/downloads/>



EVENT IDEAS

FUN & GAMES

Make your environmental activity fun, engaging and informative!
Have an environmentally-themed prize for the winner

- Prize ideas – reusable water bottle, metal straw, reusable bamboo utensils

Play Environmental Bingo

- Potential Squares: Walk or ride your bike to school, unplug your computer at night to save energy, eat leftovers, thrift instead of buy new, carpool to your activities, swap clothes with friends, cancel catalogs.
- Use “My Free Bingo Card” generator – Create randomized bingo cards for free in seconds with its Bingo Card Generator <https://myfreebingocards.com>

Have an Environmental Scavenger Hunt

- Armed with their cell phones, participants take photos of both your town’s environmental treasures and trash



Sponsor a Guessing Game – Everyone loves a contest

- Guess how much trash is collected in your town each week or another interesting fact!
- You could also have a daily fact and people could try to guess whether it's true or false. There are many sources of climate change information online. These are a few: https://earth.org/data_visualization/11-interesting-facts-about-climate-change/ or <https://sustainability.georgetown.edu/50-facts-for-50-years/>
- Winners could be entered into a drawing.
- Here are some sample trivia questions you can use:

What percentage of food is thrown out?

- A) 5 percent
- B) 30 percent
- C) 40 percent

What year was the first Earth Day?

- A) 1975
- B) 1970
- C) 1982

How many trees are cut down daily to make toilet paper?

- A) 27,000
- B) 5,500
- C) 275

How long does a LEGO last in the ocean before decomposing?

- A) 400 years
- B) 50 years
- C) 1300 years

FIGHTING FAST FASHION

CRAZY FACTS:

Americans on average trash 70 lbs of apparel every year.
10% of global greenhouse emissions come from fashion.

In America, we toss out clothes faster than we finish a bottle of ketchup.
Six months (on average) is all the airtime we grant our fashions, then we trash them.

Host a Clothes Swap

While we get sick of our clothes, there's no need to trash them and buy something new.

- Educate about the harmful effects of fast fashion.
- Have teens cull their closets and bring their clothes to the library for a fun clothing swap or to donate to a worthy organization.

The Great Fashion Revolution Clothes Swap has created a step-by-step guide to how to host a clothes swap. You'll find all the information here:

https://issuu.com/fashionrevolution/docs/howto_clotheswap



FIGHTING FOOD WASTE

CRAZY FACTS:

Over 20 percent of waste in municipal landfills is food, according to US EPA data.

One third of all food produced in the world is wasted or lost, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

If food waste were a country, it would be the third-largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world, after the U.S. and China, according to the United Nations Environmental Program



Save the (Precious) Avocado!

The best way to attract teens to the library is to offer them some of their favorite snacks.

FRUSTRATING FACTS:

19% of all avocados on grocery store shelves never get purchased.

25% of the avocados that we bring home still end up in the trash!

Let's do better with avocados and other fruit and vegetables!

- Begin by serving avocado toast or guacamole and chips. What teen doesn't love them?
- If possible, buy an Apeel avocado. You can find out where Apeel produce is sold in your area by entering your zip code into their website – <https://www.apeel.com/find-us>
- Go to the Apeel website – <https://www.apeel.com/sustainability> – and show some of the amazing videos about Apeel spray which provides an additional layer of protection for fruit and vegetables, enabling them to last two to four times longer!
- Here's an amazing video – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBrlpmCuoXU&t=59>

Cooking Demonstration

The goal of this program is to show how leftovers and food that is starting to go bad can be used to make delicious meals and healthy snacks.

- Grain Bowls – This is a wonderful way to utilize random ingredients in your refrigerator.
- Begin by cooking a whole grain such as quinoa, farro or rice.
- Add protein such as chickpeas or leftover chicken or salmon.
- Incorporate any vegetables that you think will go well with the other ingredients.
- Finish with a little sauce or dressing.
- Banana Bread – There is no better use for overripe bananas than this wonderful treat!
- Pickling – Most vegetables and even lemons and grapes can be pickled!
- Here's an easy recipe – <https://stopfoodwaste.org/tips/eat/pickled-veggies>

School Cafeteria Challenge

An estimated 530,000 tons of food is wasted each year at school cafeterias, according to a report from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

- Speak to your school administrators and see if you can measure how much food waste there is each day.
- Then educate students about food waste and methane by putting up signage in the cafeteria.
- Make signs informative but not too critical – you don't want to turn off people.
- Measure the amount of food waste at the end of the challenge.
- Can you have a competition between grades or lunch periods?

**TAKE THE
TOO GOOD
TO WASTE
CHALLENGE**

Eat Less Meat

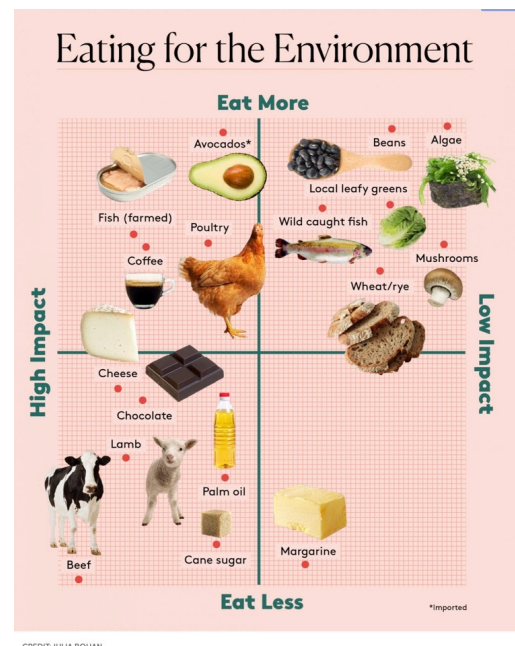
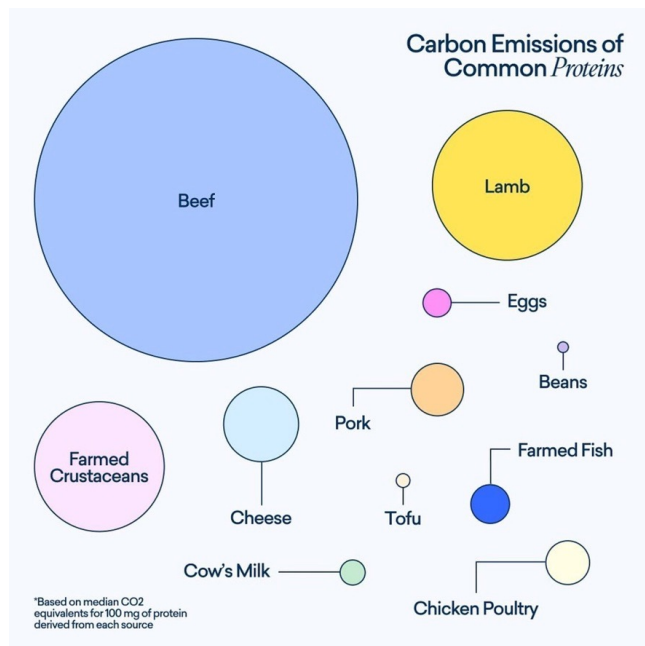
Cutting out meat from your diet it is the **single most significant action** you can take to help our environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, and soil degradation.

Did you know that beef takes up 28 more times land to produce than pork or chicken?

The world's top five meat and dairy producers combined emit more greenhouse gases than Exxon-Mobil, Shell and BP.

"If everyone in the country reduced their consumption of beef, pork, and poultry by a quarter and substituted plant proteins, we'd save about 82 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year. That would be a reduction of a little more than 1 percent," according to a study in the journal Scientific Reports.

- Send participants a link to this fascinating article about how eating less meat would help the environment
– <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/21/climate/what-if-we-all-ate-a-bit-less-meat.html>
- Have teens pledge to cut back on their meat consumption by 25% each week.
- Begin by starting #Meatlessmondays
- The “Meat Eaters Guide to Climate Change & Health” provides important facts about which meat and dairy products are “greener” – <https://www.ewg.org/meateatersguide/>
- Provide them with some great meatless alternatives.
- Have a mini cooking demonstration of some of the recipes.



Limit Home Food Waste

Food waste constitutes 22% of residential solid waste.

- Donate your edible excess food to help others in need.
- Practice strategies to reduce the amount of wasted food such as making sure leftovers are eaten and not thrown away.
- Compost at home, if possible.
- Participate in a local residential food scrap program to recycle spoiled, raw, cooked and unusable foods.
- Contact your local municipality to see if it participates in a program.

Get Composting!

Begin by explaining why reducing food waste lowers your carbon footprint. **The basic fact:** Huge piles of decomposing material in landfills generates methane, a potent greenhouse gas with 80 times the warming power of CO² (over the first 20 years after it reaches the atmosphere). Cutting methane emissions is the fastest opportunity we have to immediately slow the rate of global warming, even as we decarbonize our energy systems.

- How much food waste?

Food scraps and yard waste together currently make up more than 30 percent of what we throw away, and could be composted instead.

Food waste is responsible for 135 million tons of greenhouse gases every year, or about 1.5 percent of all emissions.

The average family is responsible for about 1,800 pounds of emissions from food waste, while an individual contributes about 440 pounds a year.

Team up with a local environmental or gardening group that will co-sponsor a “How to Compost” program.

Everyone can compost, whether you live in an apartment in the city, in a house in the suburbs or on a farm in the country.

The EPA offers this extremely useful manual
<https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home>

Here’s another great guide to composting with lots of useful links –
<https://www.npr.org/2020/04/07/828918397/how-to-compost-at-home>

RECYCLING, CLEANING UP AND REDUCING TRASH

CRAZY FACTS:

Our throwaway-plastic culture has produced a global mass of plastic equivalent in weight to 80 million blue whales, or 822,000 Eiffel Towers, or one billion elephants.

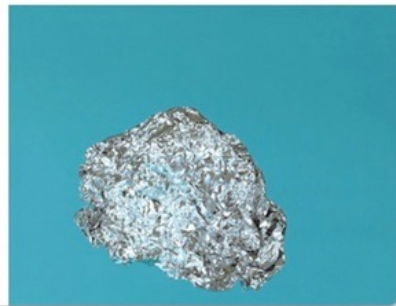
By 2050, experts expect more plastic will be in the ocean than fish (by weight).

Plastic doesn’t break down—basically ever.

Play the "Recycle or Not" Game

Eliminate the Confusion About What Can Be Recycled (In Your Community)*

Recycle or Not?



- Divide everyone into two teams
- Provide each team with a large box filled with identical items. Teams have to decide whether each item is "recyclable," "other: reusable/donatable" or "trash"
- Set a time limit, have a judge and award a prize to the winners
- Contact your local recycling center to check the recyclable status of various items and to find out what items are often incorrectly recycled.

Possible items for game*:

- Newspaper – recyclable; Plastic bottle with cap – recyclable, wash bottle and put on cap; Plastic bag – other, take to your local grocery store or place which recycles plastic bags; Plastic food container – depends upon your community; Battery (non-rechargeable) – trash; Cardboard and Magazines – recyclable; Towels – other, donate to a pet or homeless shelter; Paperback book – recycle; Old cell phone – other; Tennis balls – other; Piece of clothing – other, donate; Egg carton – recyclable; Greeting card – recyclable (unless it has glitter on it); Used food wrap – trash; Potato chip bag – trash; Tea bag – trash (has a staple in it); Styrofoam – other; Aerosol spray can with cap – some communities have a special recycling program for them; Frozen food box with plastic coating – trash; Ink cartridge – other; Dry cleaning bag – other, take to your local grocery store or place which recycles plastic bags.

*Contact your local city or county recycling center to check the recyclable status of various items. Each community differs on what can be recycled and what cannot be recycled.

RECYCLING IS COMPLICATED

Use this game (and other recycling activities below) for a discussion about the current difficult state of recycling. In many parts of the U.S., items collected in recycling bins are not actually being recycled.

- *Historically, the U.S. sent more than half of its plastic to China for recycling and reuse.*
- *In 2018, China banned imports of most scrap materials because shipments were too contaminated, the NYT reported; the country no longer wanted to be the “world’s garbage dump”. With many countries lacking infrastructure, much went to landfill or was incinerated.*

We realize this issue is fraught. We still want people to recycle but also to be more mindful of what can and cannot be recycled. Also, to remember that many objects that are thrown out can have another life.

What can be done to fix our recycling problems? Learn what can and can’t be recycled. Keep non-recyclables out of bins. Wash recyclable items thoroughly so they can be recycled. Most importantly, produce less waste by donating and sharing old items, using reusable water bottles, containers, wrapping paper, grocery bags, and more; buy in bulk without packaging.

Catalogue Cut-Down

Encourage teens to cancel catalogs that are delivered to their family home
Junk mail is an enormous waste of paper and resources.

This is an easy task that teens can do on their own time and make a difference.

- Start reducing unwanted catalogs and paper mail by signing up for Catalog Choice –<https://www.catalogchoice.org>.
- Call the company if you are getting two of the same catalogue—a common occurrence—and alert them.

Donate for Good!

There are so many items in our garages, closets basements and attics that are no longer used. Have teens organize a donation drive of sporting goods or other items that can benefit someone in need.

Decide what objects you will collect.

Research a local organization that is willing to accept the goods and that also may be able to pick them up directly from the library.

Here's a list of potential items to collect:

- Sports Equipment for a local team/organization in need (soccer cleats, tennis rackets)
- Pet Items for your local pet shelter (old towels and blankets, pet carriers and beds)



Recycling Non-Recyclables

Explore "collection drives" to deal with items that cannot be put in your recycling bin

- Terracycle offers a variety of programs through which you may recycle any type of waste https://www.terracycle.com/en-US/about-terracycle/recycle_your_waste#
 - Go on their website and find out about their free recycling programs. You'll be astonished.
 - They also offer zero waste boxes so you can recycle such things as candy wrappers and coffee capsules.
- Organize a cell phone donation drive – used cell phones will be wiped of their information and then given to active-duty military members and veterans <https://www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com>



Environmental TikToks

Have teens create an environmentally-themed TikTok.

This is a great activity for busy teens who have a lot of after-school activities. They can make their TikTok on their own time and with friends.

Possible topics include:

- Recycling Tips (what to recycle and what not to)
- Forget About Fast Fashion and Counter the #haul Trend (TikTok'ers showing off mountains of newly acquired, disposable duds)– showing you wearing the same item again and again (that's cooler) #Borrowedisthenewblack, #Proudfitrepeat, # #SwapDontBuy, #BorrowDontBuy, #ShopSecondhand
- Thrifting is a top teen trend – display all the treasures you and your friends bought at second hand shops. #Wearingnothingnew
- Preparing a plant-based meal with information about meat and how unenvironmental it is #MeatlessMeals

Cultivate a Library or a Community Garden

Starting a community garden is a wonderful way to foster a sense of community and promote sustainability.

- Investigate whether there is any land at or near the library that can be used for a garden. You can have a raised bed garden on asphalt if you do not have land available.
- Here's an uplifting video about a community garden that was started by college students. The produce grown will be donated to a local food pantry.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Asdw2gG9hJ0>
- Earthday.org offers some great tips for teens who want to advocate and build a garden at their school – <https://www.earthday.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/EARTHDAY.ORG-Advocacy-Packet-School-Garden.pdf>
- This article shows how a community garden in an urban space can make a difference
https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/project-eden-dc-urban-garden/2021/04/06/ea661858-96e7-11eb-b28d-bfa7bb5cb2a5_story.html

“I don't want to overestimate the value of urban gardening – it is not a one-size-fits-all, quick fix for the structural problems affecting society,” Garden Manager for Project Eden Kwesi Osaze Billups said. “But I've seen how gardens can help alleviate the impact of food deserts and also help residents build a sense of community.”

BE AN ACTIVIST

Make Protest Signs

Harness the creative talents of teens.

Host a sign-making session at the library.

Begin event by showing images of climate change protest signs. (These are readily available on the internet.)

Provide oak tag or poster board along with markers or Sharpies.

Teens can use their signs at a local environmental rally or to post on social media on Earth Day.

Have a vote for most clever sign.

Participants can also make smaller versions of their signs to decorate a library display space.



Teach Teens How To Write an Editorial

Teens need to use the power of their voice to affect change for the future – they are the leaders of the environmental movement.

Op-Ed Writing Lesson

1. Educate teens about creating a powerful and persuasive op-ed piece for your local paper or for an online news site.
2. Try these tips to write an op-ed that provokes action:
 1. Hook readers by starting with a surprising fact. If fast fashion is your burning issue, an attention-grabbing opener might be this personal revelation: "Feeling virtuous driving my load of give-away clothes to Goodwill, I had no clue that over 80 percent of discarded items get burned or buried in a landfill."
 2. Tie your piece to current news. The day after a wildfire breaks out nearby is the moment to offer up your view that Smokey the Bear may be cute, but he has led us astray. His message to put out every fire is dead wrong. An unexpected take gets noticed, read, and shared. We would imagine that extinguishing every flame is ideal, but actually dead wood build-up from not letting fires burn naturally is exacerbating the frequency and size of forest fires.
 3. Get to the point. Come out swinging rather than making the reader hang in for a few paragraphs to get your point. The whole piece should typically be around 500 to 800 words and have a strong point and point of view.
 4. Research who the editor is of your local paper and send them your piece.

5. Use the OpEd Project (www.theopedproject.org) as a resource. The site lists many publications where you can pitch opinion pieces, and provides contact info and submission guidelines. The site provides advice for strengthening your argument. They also offer opinion-piece writing workshops—with scholarships available to cover the cost.

6. Tell a story that only you can tell. Maybe your family raised cattle and then you all became vegetarians, or you convinced your high school to install wind power (a teen did this in Massachusetts).

The New York Times's curriculum about Argumentative Writing is a fabulous teaching tool
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/12/learning/argumentative-writing-unit.html>

- In the lesson plan, there are two great videos:
 - “How to Write an Editorial” is a three-minute video by the former editorial page editor which provides seven tips for writing an effective editorial
<https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000002691088/how-to-write-an-editorial.html>
 - “Teaching Argumentative Writing” is a 45-minute Webinar. You’ll find the video near the end of the New York Times’s lesson plan.

The Sunrise Movement offers some powerful examples of op-eds written by teens:
<https://medium.com/sunrisemvmt/these-10-op-eds-from-youth-climate-strikers-explain-their-need-to-take-action-c2891e983a6f>

Show a Documentary and then Discuss

- You can watch these together at the library or have people watch at home and then come together for a discussion.
- The Story of Stuff documentaries are particularly well suited for a teen audience as they are short.

The Story of Stuff Project

<https://www.storyofstuff.org>

- The first movie, *The Story of Stuff*, is an eye-opening conversation about our consumption-crazed world.
- *The Story of Plastic* received an Emmy Award.
- The website features links to a number of “Story of Stuff” documentaries and animated shorts and provides lots of activities tied to watching them.

The Island President

Free place to stream: https://tubitv.com/movies/454010/the-island-president?start=true&utm_source=google-feed&tracking=google-feed

1 hr. 40 min.



No Impact Man

Free place to stream: https://tubitv.com/movies/527869/no-impact-man?start=true&utm_source=google-feed&tracking=google-feed

1 hr. 33

Who Killed the Electric Car?

<https://www.whokilledtheelectriccar.com>

Stream on Apple TV, Amazon Prime, Google Play Movies & TV

1 hr. 32

BOOK SYNOPSIS

*Girls Who Green the World:
34 Rebels Out to Save the Planet*
by Diana Kapp

Part biography, part guidebook to the contemporary environmental movement, and part girl-power manifesto, *Girls Who Green the World* aims to inspire future and current environmental activists, social entrepreneurs and green innovators of all kinds. The book profiles 34 diverse revolutionaries – many young – fighting for our future. It is the antidote to the truism: You can't be what you can't see. Young women get the inside view on how SunRun founder Lynn Jurich put 600,000 solar panels on rooftops, Kathy Hannun pioneered home-based geothermal energy, and Lisa Dyson adopted an old NASA experiment into a business now producing chicken and bacon from carbon dioxide—that's right, sustainable nutrition from thin air! Readers hear from inventors turning mushrooms into leather (bye-bye cows farting heat-trapping methane), plastic bottles into board shorts, and eucalyptus leaves into glitter. They go inside the Lilian Augusta labs to see invasive weeds being turned into biodegradable hair extensions for Black women and travel with coal country native Mary Anne Hitt who in a decade shut down 339 coal plants. They meet the architect of the Green New Deal, the doctor who discovered lead poisoning in Flint's water, and the founder of the Sunrise Movement. Through these women's stories, author Diana Kapp explores critical current topics including environmental justice, circular economies, green-washing, and the sharing economy. The pages, too, are stuffed with actionable ideas, like a how-to for writing a persuasive Op-Ed sure to jolt policy makers to action, throw a clothes swap with friends, or pester Panera on social media to stop passing out plastic utensils. Early praise for the book has come from Bill McKibben, Megan Rapinoe, Jane Fonda, Al Gore, and National Geographic Society head Jill Tiefenthaler.

