

Green by Design

This lesson was created as a supplement to the *Green by Design* program at the National Building Museum. It is designed to be used in your classroom independently, or as an activity before or after a school program at the Museum. For more information about and to register for the National Building Museum's school programs, visit <http://www.nbm.org/schools-educators/school-visit/>.

The *Green by Design* program helps fourth through ninth grade students understand the issues associated with making environmentally friendly living decisions and the effects of these decisions on their surroundings. It encourages young people to explore how design decisions are made and how they impact the natural and built environment.

National Building Museum

Created by an act of Congress in 1980, the National Building Museum explores, celebrates, and illuminates achievements in architecture, design, engineering, construction, and planning. Since opening its doors in 1985, the Museum has become a vital forum for exchanging ideas and information about such topical issues as managing suburban growth, designing and building sustainable communities, and revitalizing urban centers. A private, nonprofit institution, the Museum creates and presents engaging exhibitions and education programs, including innovative curricula for school children.

Over the past two decades, the Museum has created and refined an extensive array of youth programming. Each year, approximately 50,000 young people and their families participate in hands-on learning experiences at the Museum: 2-hour-long school programs for grades K–9; major daylong festivals; drop-in family workshops; programs helping Cub and Girl Scouts earn activity badges; and three innovative outreach programs, lasting between 30 and 60 hours, for secondary school students. The Museum's youth programming has won the Washington, D.C., Mayor's Arts Award for Outstanding Contributions to Arts Education and garnered recognition from the National Endowment for the Arts.



NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM
401 F Street, NW Washington, DC 20001
202.272.2448/www.NBM.org
Red Line Metro, Judiciary Square

It's Easy Being Green!

As environmental concerns continue to mount worldwide, thinking about how sustainable practices and products affect our lives becomes increasingly important. There is growing popular interest in green living, and the possibilities for achieving it in our personal lives are rapidly expanding. This activity introduces students to the basic ideas behind being “green” or living in a sustainable way. Students discuss the concept, brainstorm ways to practice it in their own lives, and then market the idea to their peers.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- understand the basic concept of sustainability
- recognize and identify various ways they can practice being green
- become active citizens by encouraging other students to be green

NATIONAL STANDARDS OF LEARNING

English 8
Social Studies 3, 4, 10
Visual Arts 1, 3, 5

DURATION

45 minutes-2 hours

MATERIALS

- paper
- pencils
- markers and/or colored pencils
- computers
- poster board

TEACHER PREP

- Prepare various supplies for students to use to create posters, newsletters or flyers

LESSON PROCEDURE

1. What is green?
2. How can we be green?
3. Share the message

GREEN VOCABULARY

Green, Sustainable Design, Conserve

LESSON PLAN

1. What is green?

Ask the students to think about what it means to be green? What comes into their minds when they hear that word?

Ask the students to discuss why we need to protect the environment? (Lead the discussion to the idea that if we protect and take care of the environment then it will be there for future generations to enjoy and use).

2. How can we be green?

With the students brainstorm ways to “protect” or “conserve” the environment. What are things they can do at home? What are things they can do at school? Keep a running list on the blackboard or whiteboard. Challenge the students to think about how valuable it is for even one person to recycle their soda bottle. Is this worth it? Why? Some students may argue that they have little say in how environmentally friendly their home or school is. Encourage them to think of helpful things they can do without their parent's or school administration's permission.

- Turn off the water when brushing youth teeth
- Turn off the lights/TV/stereo when leaving the room
- Recycle their bottles, paper, etc
- Reuse scrap paper for notes
- Put their lunch in a reusable bag and not a plastic bag
- Take shorter showers

Lead students toward the idea that one person can effect change and it could be them!

3. Share the message

Assign students to share their new knowledge by creating a poster, newsletter, comic strip, or flyer suggesting ways other students in the school can go green at home or at school. Students may use computers to design these marketing pieces or construct them out of available craft materials. See suggestion page in resource section for other easy ways to go green.

NOTES: