

Pollution and Protecting the Environment

Let's get started...

Write on a piece of paper how to say "Hello, nice to meet you" in your own language and share it with the group.

New words and Idioms:

Recycling, pollution, conserve, environment, restoration, endangered species, organic, extinction, energy source, participate, prevent, active, protect, wild life, quality of life, "what goes around, comes around," "go with the flow," "bent out of shape," etc.

Background:

People want to live in places with healthy *environments*. Businesses want to help keep our environment clean. Every person can make a difference, but not everyone agrees about how to do this. For example, should we stop cutting down trees in big forests to save grizzly bears from *extinction*? How much money and time should we spend trying to save a whale that has ended up on a beach?

In the early 1960's many Americans became more concerned about the environment. April 22nd became known as Earth Day. Every year on Earth Day people organize work-parties. They volunteer to plant trees and do other things to improve the environment.



In pairs for 5 minutes, ask and answer these questions:

What are some of the things you do to save energy? For example, do you turn off the lights in rooms that you are not using? How often do you try to conserve energy?

Share your partner's answers with the group.

Discussion Questions:

What kinds of things do you think people should do to help the environment?

In your native country, how concerned are people with the environment? Do people try to *prevent pollution*? Is the government *active* in trying to *protect* the environment?

Many people work to help clean up streams and bring back *wildlife*. Have you ever *participated* in anything in your community?

Do you think that *quality of life* is affected by the environment where people live? Explain.

People in zoos are trying to help save *endangered species*. Are there any zoos in your country? Are there any endangered species people are trying to save there?

Do you know about organic farming? Do you ever buy *organic* food? How often? Do you know a good place to buy it? If so, where?

Have you ever heard of second hand smoke? Does it bother you when people smoke around you? How is smoking viewed in your culture? (Is it widely accepted, or not?)

Do you think people should be fined for throwing cigarette butts, papers and cans on the street? Why or why not?

A landfill is a place where garbage is buried. Does your country have landfills? If not, how does it get rid of garbage?

What will happen when there is no more space for landfills?

Do you think cruise ships should be allowed to dump their garbage in the ocean?

We need to find ways to reuse our garbage instead of throwing it away. *Recycling* helps decrease the amount of garbage that is dumped or burned. What kinds of things do you recycle? Is recycling different in your country?

How many things can you name that are made of recycled materials?

Do you think overpopulation is an important environmental issue? Why or why not?

What are some of the ways that water can be polluted?

What are some of the ways that air can be polluted?

Do you think some trees should be preserved when land is cleared to build new apartments and businesses? Are there trees in the cities in your country?

Do you usually drink bottled water? Would you drink water from a mountain stream?

What are some things that your community is doing to help the environment?

What are some ways energy is wasted? What *sources* of energy are popular in your native country?

Do you ever use the carpool lanes? Do you ever take the bus? Do you think cars should be banned from city centers?

Do you think people should pay more tax for gas? Do you think that if gas prices get too high some people will stop driving and take the bus to work?

Do you think businesses are more responsible or less responsible now than they were in the past?