



By: Bill Van Horn

## Show Synopsis

Meet Ellen Mackleby, a fifth grader with the Earth on her mind. She is worried about air and water pollution, climate change, energy conservation, and an excess of garbage that is littering the planet. How can she change the world? How will she get the attention of her school and family? Enter a group of visiting aliens from planet Viridis. Fwerk, Zorg and Noot help Ellen understand that even one person can make a difference. Through song, a game show and an interactive history of fossil fuels and industrialism, Ellen and the aliens discover why Earth is suffering. At school, Ellen presents ways to make the Earth a better place to live, such as picking up litter, using less energy, starting a community garden and recycling at home and school. Ellen teaches her school and family that everything is connected, and it's up to Earthlings to Go Green and save the world.

# WALNUT STREET THEATRE

Touring Outreach Company  
Study Guide



## Discussion Questions

### Before the Show

1. Brainstorm as a class about environmental issues. Is it important to take care of the Earth? Why?
2. What are ways that you can help preserve the environment?
3. Review the following words with your class:

*Ecology*

*Greenhouse Gases*

*Ozone Layer*

*Climate Change*

*Global Warming*

*Polar Ice Caps*

*Fossil Fuels*

*Pollution*

*Reduce, Reuse, Recycle*

4. What images do these words bring to mind?
5. Discuss theatre etiquette. For example:
  - Try your best to remain in your seat once the performance has begun and try to save any comments or questions for after the performance.



- Remember, at the end of the show when the actors take their bows, give them a round of applause to say thank you for their performance.

### After the Show

1. What are things that your family or school does to help save the environment?
2. The aliens visit from the planet Viridis. Viridis is a Latin word. Can you research its meaning? Try looking up words in other languages with the same definition.
3. How is live theatre different than watching television or movies? Discuss the differences in characters, setting, plot, and audiences. What are some things that live theatre can accomplish that movies and television cannot? What are some of its limitations?



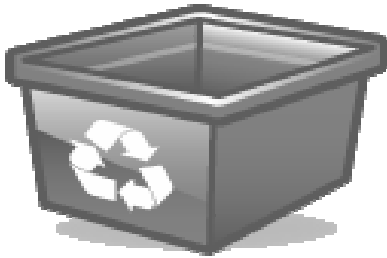


# Classroom Activities



## **REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE!**

In your classroom, designate different bins for paper, plastic, and glass. Remember that young people learn best by example. Show them that you recycle, and that they should too!



### DID YOU KNOW?

If just 25% of U.S. families used 10 fewer plastic bags a month, we would save over 2.5 billion bags a year.

## ***Grow Green in your Classroom!***

1. Have students collect milk or juice cartons from their house. Rinse, and cut off the top, leaving a square container.
2. Decorate the sides of the container with pebbles, twigs, and other Earth-friendly materials. Attach these using craft glue.
3. Fill the container with potting soil and plant seeds or fit with a potted plant.
4. Place in a sunny spot and water regularly.
5. Enjoy the *greening* of your room!



## *What can one person Do?*

Have a Trash-free-lunch day at your school. As a class encourage everyone at school to bring a trash-free-lunch. Instead of lunch bags bring a reusable lunch box, Tupperware instead of plastic bags, a thermos to replace a juice box, and silverware instead of plastic utensils. Weigh the trash the day before, and then at the end of your Trash-free-lunch weigh it again. Explain to the class that because, as individuals, everyone decided to make a change there were big changes to the amount of trash the school threw away. Using reusable items for lunch is one way they can continue to make a difference every day!

*Even one person can make a difference!*

## ***Dream Big!***

One of the reasons we take care of the Earth today is to provide a healthy environment for the future. What are your dreams for the future? Create dream clouds that help you plan for the future and get to know your classmates better!

- Brainstorm a list of your interests. What are you good at? What appeals to you? Take a poll to see how many classmates share the same interests.
- Choose three items from the list that are your favorites. Write them on paper. Use these interests to help you imagine some dreams for your future. For example some of these dreams could be for the next school year. Write several dream statements beginning with "My dream is..."
- Cut a large cloud on white paper. Write one of your dream statements on the cloud.
- With classmates, hang your clouds on the wall. Consider creating a backdrop using blue paper or paint.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

An acrostic poem is one where you choose a word or phrase and use each letter in the phrase as the beginning of a word or line that tells something about that topic. Here is an example of an acrostic poem using the word Sun:

Sometimes when we go to the beach, I will get sun burn  
Usually if I put sunscreen on my skin, I will not burn  
Noon is when I'm really prone to burning.

Create an acrostic poem for *Go Green*.

**G** \_\_\_\_\_  
**O** \_\_\_\_\_  
**G** \_\_\_\_\_  
**R** \_\_\_\_\_  
**E** \_\_\_\_\_  
**E** \_\_\_\_\_  
**N** \_\_\_\_\_

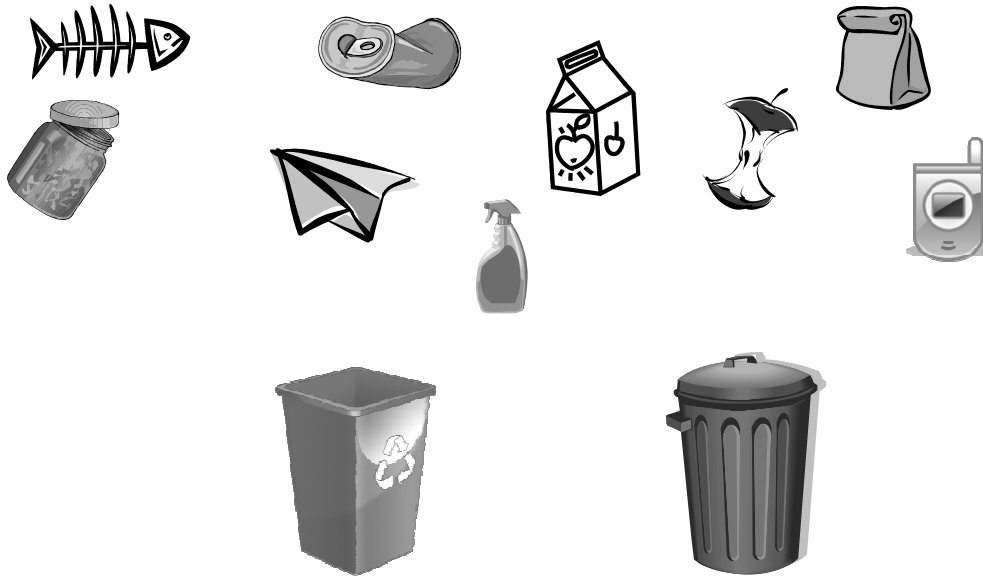


Hang your poem up in the classroom to display how you will help take care of the earth. Also color in this picture of the earth to display with your poem.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Recycling is a great way to help keep the environment clean, but some things cannot be recycled. Match the waste to the best bin to dispose of it.

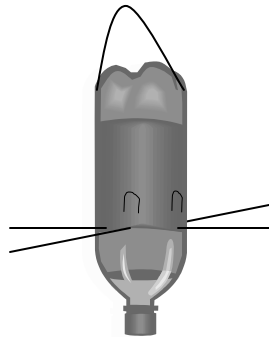


## FEED THE BIRDS

Get the class excited about recycling unwanted items at home by creating a bird feeder from an old soda bottle.

What you will need:

- \* Soda or large water bottle
- \* Two sticks for perches
- \* Wire
- \* Bird Seed
- \* Scissors
- \* Coloring and painting supplies

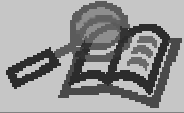


Using the scissors cut two holes directly across from each other towards the top of the bottle for one of your perches. Repeat this on the other side of the bottle so that the two sticks create an X in the bottle. Cut two holes on the bottom of the bottle on opposite sides and string the wire through, twist the wire on the top to close. About an inch above each perch slice a half circle leaving flaps, so that the birds can eat the bird seed. Decorate the bottle however you may like. Lastly fill the bottle with bird seed. Have the class take their bird feeders home, or hang them up around the school yard.

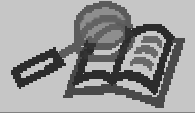
DID YOU KNOW?

25 billion plastic bottles are used in America every year





# Classroom Activities



## SCIENCE

### It's melting!

If global climates become much warmer because of pollution, the ice at the poles could begin to melt. It is unlikely that this will happen on a large scale, but if it did sea levels would rise as they did at the end of the ice ages. This experiment will allow you to see what the result would be for low-lying islands and coasts.

#### Materials Needed

- Baking Dish
- Water
- Ice
- Modeling clay



1. Use some modeling clay to make a "continent" at one end of the dish, almost to the rim. Then make an "island" in the middle of the dish, about half as high as the dish.
2. Pour water into the dish to make a sea. It should be high enough to leave only the top of the island above water. The continent remains dry, well above water.
3. Pack as many ice cubes as you can on top of the continent, out of the water. Leave them to melt. The ice represents landlocked ice sheets, such as those over Antarctica. What happens to the sea level when the ice melts? What happens to the island as the water level rises?



## DID YOU KNOW?

On average, one person will use enough paper in a year to make a 100 foot tall tree, including all the branches!

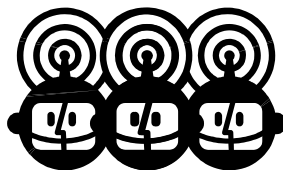
## MATHEMATICS

Using paper is a traditional part of classroom life. Have you ever thought about how much paper you use in a day? For each day of a week (at least five school days), predict how many sheets of paper you will use, and then record the actual number of pieces of paper used. Create a line graph of your data. Be sure to use the actual number of pieces of paper used, and not the predicted number. What does the graph tell you about your paper usage? What did you learn about paper and the environment by doing this project? What is your plan for saving paper at school?



## EARTH IN 1,000 YEARS

The Aliens from Viridis understood the importance of taking care of Earth because they almost destroyed their own planet thousands of years ago. Break the class up into groups of three. Tell them to imagine it is 3011 (1,000 years from now) and they are Zorg, Fwerk and Noot sent back to chart earth's environmental progress from 2011-3011. What things have people done to preserve the environment? What effects have the actions of people today made on the future? Have them write out their thoughts and create a presentation as Zorg, Fwerk, and Noot to share with the class.



# WEB RESOURCES



## **Earth Week ideas for the Classroom**

<http://www.greenteacher.com/articles/earthweek.html>

## **Kids and the Environment**

<http://www.epa.gov/kids/>

## **Environmental Craft Projects**

<http://www.crayola.com/crafts/>

## **Educational and support resources for parents, teachers and students**

[http://www.earthskids.com/ek\\_environment.aspx](http://www.earthskids.com/ek_environment.aspx)

## **About the Playwright**

*Bill Van Horn* has previously directed *A Christmas Carol* and *The Odd Couple* for WST, and has also appeared in *Man of La Mancha*, *Carousel* and Studio 3's *The Dishwashers* (also as Director). A proud member of Actors' Equity, Bill spends his summers at the Theatre at Monmouth in Maine where he is a member of the acting company and Associate Artistic Director. Bill is the writer of the films *Caruso - Voice of the Century*, *Khatchaturian*, and *Workshop for Peace*. With Bruce Lumpkin, he co-wrote the book for *La Vie En Bleu*, a world premiere Mainstage production here at the Walnut. In 2010, he presented the world premiere (co-written with Armen Pandola) of *The Prince*. Next, he will be appearing in *Proof* for the Independence Studio on 3.

## **Walnut Street Theatre Education Department Staff**

Director of Education .....	<i>Thomas Quinn</i>
Outreach Coordinator .....	<i>Caroline Leipf</i>
Theatre School Coordinator .....	<i>José Avilés</i>
Residency Coordinator .....	<i>Ashley Kerns</i>
Education Apprentice.....	<i>Luraine Armandt</i>
Dorothy Haas Acting Apprentices.....	<i>Lauren Fitzgerald</i>
.....	<i>Nate Golden</i>
.....	<i>Samantha Joy Pearlman</i>
.....	<i>Dominic Santos</i>



# WALNUT STREET THEATRE



Walnut Street Theatre has the unique distinction of being the oldest, continuously operating theatre in the English-speaking world, having served Philadelphia audiences for over 200 years! It is also the Official State Theatre of Pennsylvania, and a National Historic Landmark.

Today, under the direction of Producing Artistic Director Bernard Havard, Walnut Street Theatre is in its 30th season as a self-producing, non-profit theatre. Walnut Street Theatre continues to entertain and enlighten diverse audiences with high quality theatrical programming. With more than 56,000 subscribers, the Walnut is also the most subscribed theatre company in the world!

The Walnut Street Theatre is celebrating over 25 years of bringing high-quality professional theatre to schools across the Delaware Valley. Our multi-cultural Touring Outreach Company introduces students to the world of theatre through age-appropriate, curriculum-based pieces, that are socially relevant, entertaining, and exciting. Last season, 111,464 children and adults were impacted by the Walnut's Education Programs.

## **Touring Actors**

Each season, Walnut Street Theatre holds a nation-wide search to recruit accomplished young professionals for Dorothy Haas Acting Apprenticeships. These actors form our Touring Outreach Company. Nearly 350 candidates are considered each year for these four positions.

## **The Walnut Street Theatre Educational Programs gratefully acknowledge support from the following:**

*Aqua America \* The Barra Foundation \* Bazelon, Less and Feldman, P.C. \* Connelly Foundation \*  
The Peter & Audrey Denton Fund \* Gelman & Pelesh, P.C.*

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tion \* Lincoln Financial Group Foundation \**

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LLP \* Target \* Truist \* United Way of Bucks County, Burlington County, Delaware, Capital Region,  
Cumberland County, Delaware, Greater Portland, Southeastern PA, and Tri-State \**