

ACTIVITY: GLOBAL FOOTPRINTS

Purpose

- To make connections between our lifestyle choices and the effect of those choices on the wider world.
- To begin to measure the impact of your school on the planet.
- To raise awareness of sustainability issues.

Description

Pupils use resources on the internet to calculate their individual ecological footprint. They discuss how their footprint could be reduced. They can go on, with the teacher's help, to calculate (and reduce) the global footprint of their school.

Resources

- Internet access.
- Copies of the calculating footprints worksheet, from www.dep.org.uk/scities/activities.php.

Preparation

Look at the Global Footprints project website www.globalfootprints.org. You should go through the activities suggested in order to help pupils navigate through the site and to check that the site is still the same.

Procedure

- To get them started, ask pupils to work through the questions on the worksheet. Go through their answers with them to check how well they are coping with the site and the concepts.
- Then ask them to go to the 'how big is your global footprint' quiz (click on the quiz footprint on the home page). If you feel the task is too hard for individuals, you could ask pupils to work in groups. Alternatively, if possible, model the activity with the class via an interactive white board.
- Discuss what they have learnt. How could they reduce their global footprint?

Extension activity: School ecological footprints

- From the home page, click on the 'class' footprint and then on 'putting your foot down'. This is a quiz about the school. The language and concepts are difficult, so pupils will probably need help. If you have the interactive whiteboard facility, you could go through it together as a class.
- What conclusions do you all reach about the school?
- Pupils (and teachers plus, later, parents etc) can develop action plans to reduce the footprints.
- Generate ideas to reduce the footprint. The school can develop action plans to achieve these targets.
- Monitor progress on reducing the school's footprint annually.

Further extension activity: Compare your footprints

Compare your footprints with another school in your area, elsewhere in the UK, or overseas. This would be particularly interesting if you have a North – South school link, as it is very likely that your partner school in the South will have a much smaller footprint.

Taken from *What's the Score on Education for Sustainable Development*, DEP/Nelson Thornes, available January 2007.

For more information on Footprints in the North West see www.eco-region.org/index.php.

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