

A GREEN REPORT CARD

Students conduct an audit of environmental practices at school to identify new opportunities to protect the environment with simple changes.

Grade Level
6-12

Theme:
Conservation

Curriculum Connections:
S

As students learn about the environment, they can understand how important it is for people to be responsible for their own actions that affect the use of the Earth’s natural resources. Every school is a small community of its own. There are many opportunities for conservation practices at your school.

To find out how “green” your school is, conduct an audit (investigation) to see how well the following actions are practiced. Talk to as many students and staff members as possible to determine other items to add to the list, if necessary. Plan to conduct the audit twice, once early in the school year and again later; then compare ratings. Your school can make a difference towards saving the Earth’s precious natural resources.

CLASSROOM	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
1. Recycled paper is used	A	S	N
2. Both sides of paper are used	A	S	N
3. Scrap paper is used for notes	A	S	N
4. Used paper is placed in a recycling container, rather than a trash can	A	S	N
5. Recyclable materials are used for arts and crafts projects	A	S	N
6. The use of disposable pens, markers and other supplies is discouraged	A	S	N
7. Students share supplies and do not use supplies wastefully	A	S	N
8. Water-based paints, glue and markers are used rather than oil-based supplies made from petroleum	A	S	N
9. Lights are turned off when not in use	A	S	N
10. A vermicompost is used for lunch scraps	A	S	N
11. The students and teacher work together to reduce the amount of waste produced by the class	A	S	N
12. The classroom has plants to improve air quality	A	S	N
13. Students and teachers treat all living things with respect	A	S	N

Materials:
Green Report Card Score Sheet

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	1. Water is turned off when not being used	A	S	N
	2. Leaky faucets and toilets are reported and repaired	A	S	N
	3. Students and staff limit the amount of time water runs when washing hands	A	S	N
	4. Cloth rolls, air dryers or recycled paper towels are used	A	S	N
	5. If paper towels are used, students and staff use only the amount necessary	A	S	N
	6. Toilet paper made from recycled paper is used	A	S	N
	7. Lights are turned off when not in use	A	S	N
	<p>CAFETERIA</p>	<p>ALWAYS</p>	<p>SOMETIMES</p>	<p>NEVER</p>
	1. Food wastes are composted	A	S	N
	2. Aluminum, paper, glass and plastic are placed in recycling containers rather than trash cans	A	S	N
	3. Students and staff who bring their lunch carry it in reusable containers	A	S	N
	4. Plastic and paper bags are reused when possible	A	S	N
	5. Vegetarian food choices are offered	A	S	N
	<p>KITCHEN</p>	<p>ALWAYS</p>	<p>SOMETIMES</p>	<p>NEVER</p>
1. Cans, bottles and plastic food containers are recycled	A	S	N	
2. Food and other products are bought in bulk rather than in small containers	A	S	N	
3. Cloth or recycled paper towels are used	A	S	N	
4. Nontoxic cleaning and dishwashing products are used	A	S	N	
5. Electric appliances and lights are turned off when not in use	A	S	N	
6. Water is not left running unnecessarily	A	S	N	
7. Refrigerator/freezer door is not left standing open unnecessarily	A	S	N	

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	OFFICE	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
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	2. Both sides of paper are used	A	S	N
	3. Announcements are posted rather than duplicated for all staff	A	S	N
	4. Scrap paper is used for notes	A	S	N
	5. Used paper is placed in a recycling container rather than in a trash can	A	S	N
	6. Staff does not run off more copies of materials than necessary	A	S	N
	7. Double-sided copies are made	A	S	N
	TEACHERS LOUNGE	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
	1. Aluminum cans are placed in recycling containers	A	S	N
	2. Coffee grounds are composted	A	S	N
	3. Coffee mugs are used rather than disposable cups	A	S	N
	4. Sugar bowl is used rather than individual packets	A	S	N
	5. Coffee cream is available in a large container rather than individual packets	A	S	N
	6. Snacks are brought in reusable containers	A	S	N
	SCHOOL GROUNDS	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
Materials: Green Report Card Score Sheet	1. Native plants are growing to provide habitat and food for wildlife	A	S	N
	2. Bird houses and feeders are located around the grounds	A	S	N
	3. Pesticides, fertilizers and other chemicals are used sparingly or not at all	A	S	N
	4. Grounds are kept free of litter	A	S	N
	5. All wildlife is respected	A	S	N

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			1. Hazardous wastes are disposed of properly	A	S	N
			2. Nontoxic cleaning supplies are used	A	S	N
			3. Supplies are purchased in bulk rather than in small containers	A	S	N
			4. Yard wastes are composted	A	S	N
			5. Cardboard boxes are recycled	A	S	N
			GENERAL	ALWAYS	SOMETIMES	NEVER
			1. Students and staff limit the time water runs at water fountains	A	S	N
			2. Air conditioning and heating units are set at conservative settings and filters are kept clean	A	S	N
			3. Paper is not wasted for unnecessary purposes	A	S	N
			4. Staff members car pool when possible	A	S	N
			5. Students who do not ride a school bus - car pool, ride a bicycle, or walk to school	A	S	N
			6. Leaks around windows and doors are reported and repaired	A	S	N
			7. Plastic six-pack rings are recycled	A	S	N
			8. There is an active environmental club to which interested students can belong	A	S	N
			9. Earth Day is recognized and celebrated school-wide	A	S	N

Materials:
Green Report
Card Score
Sheet

SCORING - Always = 3 pts Sometimes = 1 pt Never = 0 pts
Always = _____ Sometimes = _____ Never = _____ Total Points = _____

150+ points - You're a green machine!
 Keep up the good work and encourage others to be green.

75 - 149 points - You're on the right track!
 Why not adopt several more green practices?

0 - 74 points - You need to work on being more environmentally friendly.
 Start by selecting at least one area that needs improvement. Develop a plan and ask others for their support. See how much improvement can be made in one month, one semester or one school year.

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@ the Zoo

Now that you've learned more about all the items to consider when thinking about conservation and environmental stewardship, do a bit of research about the North Carolina Zoo's conservation practices before your next visit.

Go to www.nczoo.org, click on the "Conservation" tab and then "At the Zoo." Learn about ways the Zoo is committed to reducing its impact and conserving the planet. Pay close attention to the Zoo's work to reduce energy and water usage, manage pollution, and encourage recycling. Can you find ideas that you might be able to implement at your school?

Then, take a trip to the Zoo to discover some of its conservation practices in action. Consider the following :

- Visit the Dragonfly Pointe constructed wetland to learn about the Zoo's efforts to reduce parking lot run-off pollution (North America parking lot).
- Check out the Solar Pointe picnic area to see alternative energy in action (North America parking lot).
- If you see a horticulturalist working in the gardens, be sure to ask about the Zoo's water recycling project.
- While riding the tram, ask the driver about the type of fuel used in the transportation systems and where it comes from.
- Notice the many ways the Zoo encourages visitors to recycle throughout the park.
- Visit one of the Zoo's gift shops to look for some of "green" goods available for purchase.
- Read display cases at many of the animal exhibits to learn more about international wildlife conservation projects.

And much more! See what else can be discovered about conservation at the NC Zoo!