



Arms Around Atlanta: Earth Day 2007 Ecological Footprint Education Modules

The City of Atlanta, Keep Atlanta Beautiful and the BeltLine Partnership are committed to environmental education as an essential component the Greening of Atlanta. To foster the adoption of environmental education and engagement within the schools and recreation centers in the city of Atlanta, we are providing a central location for access to the following resources and lesson plans. We hope these materials will excite and inspire Atlanta educators and citizens to take action to reduce our ecological footprint.

Eco-Footprint

Eco-footprinting is a way to evaluate and connect our behaviors and actions with the impacts they have on our environment. For instance, footprint calculators generally take into account such things as energy use, water use, food sources, transportation, and other behaviors. It is important to understand the impact of our actions in order to make better decisions and "*Step Lightly in Atlanta.*" Curricula are available for different grade levels and ages, making this appropriate for students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

The Stepping Lightly in Atlanta Contest is a way of discovering how each of us can reduce our eco-footprint. An eco-footprint helps us figure out that how we live our lives impacts the Earth, our home. Every thing we do impacts our planet Earth. Right now, people are using 23% more than what Earth can renew. Did you know it takes more than one year and two months for our planet to regenerate what we use in a single year?

By learning our Eco-footprint we can begin to learn how to Step Lightly in Atlanta and help all the flowers and wildlife, the many life forms in our streams and oceans and all of our other companions on earth from lions, tigers and bears to all the birds in the air and even frogs, turtles and wiggly worms!

If everyone in the world were to live the way Americans live, it would take 4.8 planet Earths to support human life. Since we only have one home, our Earth, it's important to learn to "Step Lightly in Atlanta". Through smart choices about the way we live -- such as walking to school instead of driving, eating fresh instead of processed foods, turning lights off when leaving a room, and recycling -- we can reduce our eco-footprint.

K-12 Lesson Plans From Earth Day Network and Redefining Progress

These lesson plans have been created by **Earth Day Network** and **Redefining Progress** as an additional resource to help you in your classroom on Earth Day or any day! Go to any of the websites below to download the lesson plans in PDF format. Also be sure to check out our **website links** (www.redefiningprogress.org/newprograms/sustIndi/education/k-12lessonplans.shtml#weblinks) for more information! This text and following materials have been posted on the City of Atlanta website with permission from Earth Day Network (www.earthday.net) and Redefining Progress (www.redefiningprogress.org).

For your convenience, we have provided Picture Files as a supplement for **Food and You**, **The Trash We Pass**, and **Have and Have-Not**. The Picture Files can be found at www.redefiningprogress.org/newprograms/sustIndi/education/picturefiles.shtml.



Food and You (<http://redefiningprogress.org/newprograms/sustIndi/education/k-12pdf/foodandyou.pdf>)

Designed to incorporate environmental education into general math and science classes for elementary school (K-5th grade), this lesson encourages students to think about where their food comes from, the food production process, and the byproducts associated with their favorite foods.

The Trash We Pass (<http://redefiningprogress.org/newprograms/sustIndi/education/k-12pdf/thetrashwepass.pdf>)

This lesson brings environmental education to middle school (4–7th grade) social studies, math, and science classes by asking students to have fun analyzing garbage and recycling options.

Have and Have-Not (<http://redefiningprogress.org/newprograms/sustIndi/education/k-12pdf/haveandhavenot.pdf>)

This lesson incorporates environmental education in middle school (7–9th grade) social studies, geography, math, and economics classes by helping students gain a perspective on different consumption habits in developing and developed countries and the effect that mass consumption has on the ecological footprint of a country and an individual.

Sustainable Dining (<http://redefiningprogress.org/newprograms/sustIndi/education/k-12pdf/sustainabledining.pdf>)

Designed for lower high school (7–10th grade) economics, home economics, and general education classes, students will learn about sustainably produced groceries as a valuable and environmentally friendly option for grocery shopping.

Renewable Energy (<http://redefiningprogress.org/newprograms/sustIndi/education/k-12pdf/renewableenergy.pdf>)

In this lesson targeting high school history, science, and math classes, students will analyze the use of energy in their every day lives and consider the advantages and disadvantages of environmentally friendly renewable energy sources.

We hope you find the lessons useful and interesting, as well as engaging for your students. If you enjoy these lessons, please be sure to look for our Ecological Footprint curriculum materials for K-12 education available from Redefining Progress and Earth Day Network this summer.

Ecological Footprint Quiz

An Ecological footprint Quiz is a tool that can be used to estimate the impact each of us has on the planet. The quiz is populated with data such as the impacts of fuel usage and dietary choices so that all you need to provide are answers to a series of basic lifestyle questions to arrive at your ecological footprint and how many planets would be required if everyone lived the way you live.

Redefining Progress & Earthday Network www.myfootprint.org

Other notable Organizations and Resources:

Center for Ecoliteracy <http://www.ecoliteracy.org/index.html>

Cloud Institute for Sustainability Education <http://www.sustainabilityed.org/index.html>

Sustainability Education Handbook – Resource Guide for k-12 teachers

<http://www.urbanoptions.org/SustainEdHandbook/index.htm>

Sustainability Education Guide <http://ceres.ca.gov/tcsf/seg/seg.pdf>