



## Green Habits, Brighter Future

### March 2025 Lesson Plan: Middle School

**Theme:** Going Green (St. Patrick's Day & Beginning of Spring)

**Grade Levels:** 6-8

**Duration:** Approximately 60-75 minutes

**Objective:** Students will explore the principles of "going green," including energy conservation, waste reduction, and sustainable living practices. They will analyze their daily habits, evaluate environmental impacts, and propose actionable solutions to promote sustainability.

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#### Materials Needed:

- ☐ Printed *Eco-Footprint Analysis* worksheets
  - ☐ Internet-enabled devices for research (optional)
  - ☐ Markers, poster paper, or presentation tools
  - ☐ Recycling bins and composting materials (if applicable)
  - ☐ Camera or phone to take before-and-after photos
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#### Key Vocabulary:

- **Sustainability** – The ability to maintain ecological balance by avoiding depletion of natural resources.
  - **Carbon Footprint** – The total amount of greenhouse gases produced by an individual, organization, or activity.
  - **Renewable Energy** – Energy derived from natural sources that are replenished, such as wind or solar power.
  - **Upcycling** – The process of transforming waste materials into new, useful products.
  - **Composting** – The natural process of recycling organic matter into nutrient-rich soil.
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#### Lesson Outline

##### 1. Introduction (10-15 min)

- Begin with a class discussion: "What does it mean to go green, and why does it matter?"
- Show real-world examples of sustainable initiatives, such as cities powered by renewable energy or zero-waste lifestyles.



- Ask students to brainstorm environmental challenges their community faces and propose initial ideas to address them.

## 2. Main Lesson (25-30 min)

- Analyzing Environmental Impact: Discuss the concept of a carbon footprint and how personal habits contribute to global environmental issues.
- Sustainable Choices: Introduce strategies for reducing waste, conserving energy, and making responsible consumption choices.
- Activity: Students complete the *Eco-Footprint Analysis* worksheet, calculating their own carbon footprint and identifying areas for improvement.

## 3. Group Activity: Sustainability Challenge (20 min)

- Divide students into small groups. Assign each group a different topic: energy conservation, waste reduction, sustainable transportation, or eco-friendly shopping.
- Each group researches their topic and creates a 1-2 minute presentation on practical ways to adopt greener habits.
- Groups share their findings with the class and discuss potential barriers and solutions.

## 4. Eco-Challenge: Classroom Green Makeover (Ongoing Project)

- The class collaborates to make their learning space more sustainable by:
  - Setting up a recycling or composting system
  - Replacing disposable materials with reusable alternatives
  - Creating a classroom sustainability pledge
- Document changes with before-and-after photos, reflections, and possible school-wide advocacy efforts.
- Send classroom pics to [cjones@planetaid.org](mailto:cjones@planetaid.org) for a chance to win a Science Club Garbage to Gardens Compost Kit & Decomposition Book for the classroom!

## 5. Wrap-Up & Reflection (10 min)

- Students reflect on one key takeaway from the lesson and one change they plan to implement in their daily lives.
- Have a class pledge: "Small actions create big impact! I commit to [student's sustainability goal] to help the planet."
- Optional: Students create posters or digital presentations encouraging their peers to adopt green habits.

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## Extension Activities:

- **Debate:** Should companies be required to use sustainable packaging? Students research and defend different perspectives.



- **Green Engineering Challenge:** Design a product using only upcycled materials.
- **Community Engagement:** Plan an outreach project to educate younger students or family members about sustainability.
- **Nature Walk & Observation Journal:** Document signs of ecological change in the local environment and discuss possible causes.

By the end of this lesson, students will have a deeper understanding of sustainable living and feel empowered to make eco-friendly choices in their daily lives!