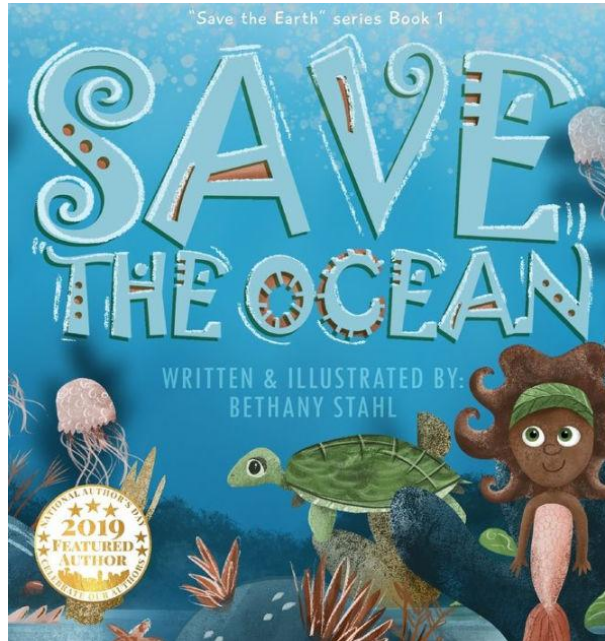


'Save the Ocean' by Bethany Stahl Lesson Plan



Suggested Syllabus Outcomes

GE1-2 identifies ways in which people interact with and care for places

GE2-2 describes the ways people, places and environments interact

Sustainability in Schools Organising Ideas: 2, 3, 7, 9

Suggested Syllabus Content

- develop a design solution for an identified need or opportunity, using a variety of tools and materials that considers factors such as sustainability and time (ACTDEK010)
- consideration of how a place can be cared for eg a park, farm, beach, bushland (ACHGK005)
- discussion of ways waste can be managed sustainably (ACHASSK090)

Goal

Read 'Save the Ocean' by Bethany Stahl and learn about the issue of ocean pollution.

Resources

- 'Save the Ocean' by Bethany Stahl
 - [Watch on Youtube](#)
 - [Buy on Amazon \(Amazon Affiliate Link\)](#)
 - [Visit Bethany Stahl's website](#)

Background information

Plastic is used to make lots of things that we use every day. It can be used to make drink bottles, plates and bowls, our toys and even our clothes. Over 300 million tons of plastic are produced each year and unfortunately lots of plastic things are only used once before they are thrown away. Plastic is not a natural material and therefore it is not **biodegradable**. This means that it can take a very long time to break down.

Material	Estimated Decomposition
Plastic bags	20 years
Plastic-lined coffee cups	30 years
Plastic straws	200 years
Plastic bottles	450 years
Toothbrushes	500 years
Styrofoam	500 years
Fishing line	600 years

At least 8 million tons of plastic end up in our oceans every year. Plastic can be found in every habitat in the ocean, including the beach, coral reefs and deep oceans. It makes up to 80% of all marine debris found in our oceans.

Many different species of animals such as whales, dolphins, turtles and birds accidentally eat this plastic debris, which can cause serious injuries or even death. These animals will often mistake this plastic for their food, such as sea jellies (i.e. jellyfish, e.g. plastic bags) or shiny fish (e.g. foil packets). They will then suffocate them or their stomachs will be so full of plastic that they will be unable to eat. Some animals also become entangled in plastic debris (e.g. fishing line) and they may get serious injuries or may suffocate or drown. In areas where there is lots of plastic pollution, fish can often be full of plastic which makes them unsafe for people to eat. Because the plastic can be so small (microplastics), people may eat plastic in the fish, which can make them very sick.

Fortunately there are things that we can do to help solve the problems of plastic pollution. One of the best ways to solve the problem of plastic pollution in our oceans is to reduce, reuse and recycle. By reducing the amount of single use plastic we buy (e.g. plastic water bottles, disposable plates, disposable coffee cups), we will stop producing as much plastic pollution. Instead of buying these plastic products, we could buy eco-friendly products made from glass or bamboo. When we do buy plastic, we should try to reuse that plastic over and over again (e.g. plastic takeaway containers, refilling plastic water bottles). Once we have finished using our

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plastic items, we should always make sure that we recycle them so that they can be turned into other plastic products.

If we do find plastic pollution in our school, around our home and in our community (even if we don't live near the ocean), we should pick it up so that one day it won't end up in our oceans. 'Take 3 for the Sea' is an initiative that was started in Australia in 2009. They encourage people to "Take 3 pieces of rubbish with you when you leave the beach, waterway or... anywhere, and you have made a difference." See their website (<https://www.take3.org/>) or their About Us video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6jzfvHfvFk>) for more information.

Activities

1. Discuss the problem of plastic pollution in our oceans
 - The uses of plastic
 - What happens to plastic when we throw it out?
 - How long plastic takes to break down
 - Plastic pollution and its effect on the environment
2. Read or watch "Save the Ocean" by Bethany Stahl
3. Brainstorm solutions to the plastic pollution problem
 - Discuss 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle'
 - List ways that students can reduce, reuse and recycle
 - Discuss 'Take 3 for the sea'
4. Answer the questions about "Save the Ocean" below

Literal Questions

1. What was Agwe's favourite thing to eat?
Suggested answer: Agwe favourite thing to eat was jellyfish.
2. How old was Agwe?
Suggested answer: Agwe was almost 100 years old.
3. What was wrong with Agwe?
Suggested answer: Agwe swallowed a plastic bag that he thought was a jellyfish.
4. How did the ocean become clean again?
Suggested answers: The land people worked together to reduce, reuse and recycle or
The land people recycled their trash and protected the oceans.

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Inferential Questions

5. Where did the plastic bags in the ocean come from?

Suggested answer: The plastic in the ocean was pollution from people on land.

6. Why is using reusable bags better than using plastic bags?

Suggested answer: By using reusable bags, people won't need to throw away plastic bags after a single use.

Applied Questions

7. What does reduce, reuse, recycle mean?

Suggested answer: Reduce the amount of rubbish we produce, reuse containers or bags and recycle rubbish thoughtfully so that it can be turned into other useful products.

Extension Activities

* Note: These extension activities can help differentiate the lesson or provide students with additional activities to complete to lengthen this unit.

1. Design a poster for "reduce, reuse, recycle" to encourage people to think about how they can minimise the amount of rubbish they produce.
2. Create a sea jelly (jellyfish) artwork using hand painting.
3. Write a letter to your principal about installing recycling bins in your classrooms or a compost heap in your schools garden.
4. Calculate the amount of rubbish your class produces each week and set a goal to reduce that amount in the coming weeks.
5. Organise and host a plastic free day at your school to encourage other classes to reduce the amount of plastic they bring to school.