

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH PRIMARY SCHOOL SESSION

JUNIORS' SESSION (7 to 10 yr olds)

Timing:

40 minutes approx

Summary:

This session comprises five interlinked activities:

1. watching a short DVD
2. a mime/drama
3. elaboration on the mime
4. reading a story
5. summary

Organisation:

At least two educators (or one educator + helper) are needed for this activity.

Introduction:

"We're 'Friends of the earth'. What do you think that means? What do we think of/mean by 'the earth'?"

Any suggestions the kids come up with could be mimed by you and the Classroom Assistants!

Also say that we are here to get you thinking about the state of the world today and that we have several activities to do this.

NEXT! Select the children who will perform in the second activity and take them aside to brief them.

Briefly introduce the DVD by e.g. asking who has heard of climate change and what causes it/what are some of its effects.

Activity 1: Big Ask 2006 DVD

The children watch the Defra climate challenge advert from the DVD and possibly also the Big Ask one too, whilst the performers are being briefed on their roles.

Activity 2: A mime/drama about Nature's/the environment's spokespersons

Introduce by saying what the activity is called and what do we mean by 'spokesperson'? Request from the children and then state that we are going to carry out an activity where aspects of Nature get their own spokespersons.

There are three scenes to the mime and six parts.

Three children take the role of an aspect of Nature and four play the corresponding 'voice' (or spokesperson) of that part of Nature. The couples

take it in turns to perform their mimes and the rest of the children have to watch and (a) guess the aspect of Nature in each scene and (b) provide an explanation for what the beneficial mime was about and suggest reasons why the actions portrayed in this part of the mime are beneficial; *preferably explain this in terms of both the benefit to the human as well as the aspect of Nature!*

Aspect 1: a tree.

Aspect 2: a river.

Aspect 3: an orang-utan.

Aspect 1: a tree

Scene 1: The tree adopts a tree-like pose. The 'spokesperson to be' (STB) mimes chopping down the tree. The tree responds by acting as though in pain before collapsing and dying. The STB mimes cutting up the tree and grins nastily as he goes away with the wood. *Audience now invited to guess the aspect of Nature being mimed.*

Scene 2: The STB returns and mimes realising the extent of his previous behaviour and having a brainwave/good idea. He then 'resurrects' the tree. The tree adopts a tree-like pose. The STB mimes carefully pruning the tree and watering it and mulching it. The tree responds by smiling and acting refreshed and enlivened. Also by enjoying supporting wildlife (e.g. both children could mime greeting and tending to a small bird).

Aspect 2: a river

Scene 1: The river mimes movement of flowing. The STB mimes sneakily (illegally) pouring a bucket of chemicals (a bucket with a paper symbol for dangerous chemicals stuck on it) into the river. The river mimes being in pain, feeling dirty, and watching the fish in him dying etc before dying himself. The STB mimes sneakily creeping away looking crafty and devious and evil.

Scene 2: The STB returns and mimes realising the extent of his previous behaviour and having a brainwave/good idea. He then 'resurrects' the river who begins to flow again. The STB mimes mopping up the chemical spill with a cloth and wringing it out in the bucket (dangerous chemical symbol removed and replaced with a paper sign saying 'The River Care Company'). The river responds by miming happiness and fishes playing around him again etc and then the STB mimes being able to happily wash with the water and paddle in it etc.

Aspect 3: an orang-utan

Scene 1: The ape mimes swinging from trees, eating and enjoying his life etc. The STB comes along and mimes hacking down the jungle and spraying pesticides etc as well as laying a trap which the ape becomes trapped in. The ape is taken away by the evilly grinning STB.

Scene 2: The STB mimes sadness about the rainforest destruction and then mimes having a great idea/revelation. He goes back to the jungle area and plants new trees before inviting the ape to return to his native habitat. They both then act contented.

Finale: The spokesperson verbally summarises both the good and bad mime actions and states that each can only be really healthy and happy when the other is likewise.

Activity 3: Elaborate on the mime activity

The principal educator is asked a few pertinent questions by his/her helper to draw out the point of the activity, and briefly responds.

E.g.: “So what can we learn from that activity?” (That there is a helpful and unhelpful way to treat the world).

“Why did we have spokespersons for Nature?” (Nature does not have a voice of its own like ours. We need to observe it and look after it).

“Why do we need to look after Nature?” (Because we all benefit/the planet’s beings are all interrelated/ interdependent).

“So, because you work for an organisation called Friends of the Earth, are you like a *real* spokesperson?” (Yes! *With some more elaboration!*)

Activity 4: The reading of ‘The Lorax’, by Dr Seuss

Introduce this by saying that we have a fictional story about another spokesperson for Nature.

Read/act story.

Activity 5: Summary

Ask the children if they can see any links between the mime activity and the story and its moral. Endorse the idea of each child being a real ‘Lorax’ (spokesperson) for the planet we live on.