

PROTECT OUR PLANET

TEEN ACTIVITY GUIDE



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Protect Our Planet

The air, land, and water around us are changing — and young people are noticing. They're asking questions, making observations, and trying to understand what these changes mean for their world. But knowing what to do with that awareness can be harder. Protect Our Planet, this year's Students Rebuild project, invites young people ages 5–25 to explore the air, land, and water around them and use creativity to share their stories and ideas for a healthier planet.

Through art, writing, performance, photography, digital media, or STEM, students will explore, create, and share. Together, their creativity supports organizations worldwide caring for the air, land, and water we all depend on.

About This Resource

Whether you are participating in Protect Our Planet on your own or as part of a team, this Teen Activity Guide will support your exploration and help you raise your creative voice. Each activity is tagged with at least one element: air, land or water, to facilitate your focus on just one element, or all three. The creative mediums listed for each activity are all optional. Please feel free to express your observations and visions for a thriving world in the medium of your choice!



Nature Scavenger Hunt | Air, Land, Water

Central Question: How can paying closer attention to nature help us protect it?

Options for Materials:

- Nature Scavenger Hunt Printable PDF (found on Page 10)
- Pencils, crayons or markers
- Camera phone or computer
- Journal

Step 1: Explore

Go outside and complete the Nature Scavenger Hunt by finding as many items as you can. You can take photos, sketch what you find, or write down a description of each discovery as you explore. Determine a way to save your findings: in a journal, a digital photo library, on sketch paper, or using the printable worksheet provided.

Step 2: Reflect

Choose 3-5 items found on your scavenger hunt. Think about why each one is important to the environment and how it helps support plants, animals, or people.

Step 3: Create!

Here are some creative project ideas to share your discoveries:

- Create a field guide featuring items from your scavenger hunt. Include a drawing or photo of each item along with a short description explaining why it is important.
- Design a nature collage using your photos or drawings to show the variety of living and nonliving things you discovered.
- Write a nature journal entry describing your experience, highlighting what you most want people to know, and identifying one way people can help protect what you found.

Elements Collage | Air, Land, Water

Central Question: How do air, land and water work together to support life?

Options for Materials:

- Old magazines
- Construction paper
- Glue
- Scissors
- Markers

Step 1: Explore

Learn how land, water, and air work together to create healthy ecosystems. Check out the [Supplemental Learning Resources](#) to help you do this, or find your own! Think about examples where all three elements support living things such as wetlands, coral reefs, forests or mountains.

Step 2: Reflect

Consider what might happen if one of these elements became polluted or damaged. How would it affect people, animals, and plants?

Step 3: Create!

Check out these ideas for creative projects to share your findings:

- Create a collage showing how air, land, and water work together to support life. Label each element and explain its role.
- Build a three-dimensional model that demonstrates how the three elements are connected.
- Design an infographic (digitally or by hand) explaining one environmental issue that affects all three elements and include ideas for protecting them.

Nature Soundtrack | Air, Land, Water

Central Question: How can music inspire people to care for the planet?

Options for Materials:

- Music app
- Journal
- Camera

Step 1: Explore

Spend time outside listening to nature. Notice the sounds around you. Optional: take a short recording of what you hear.

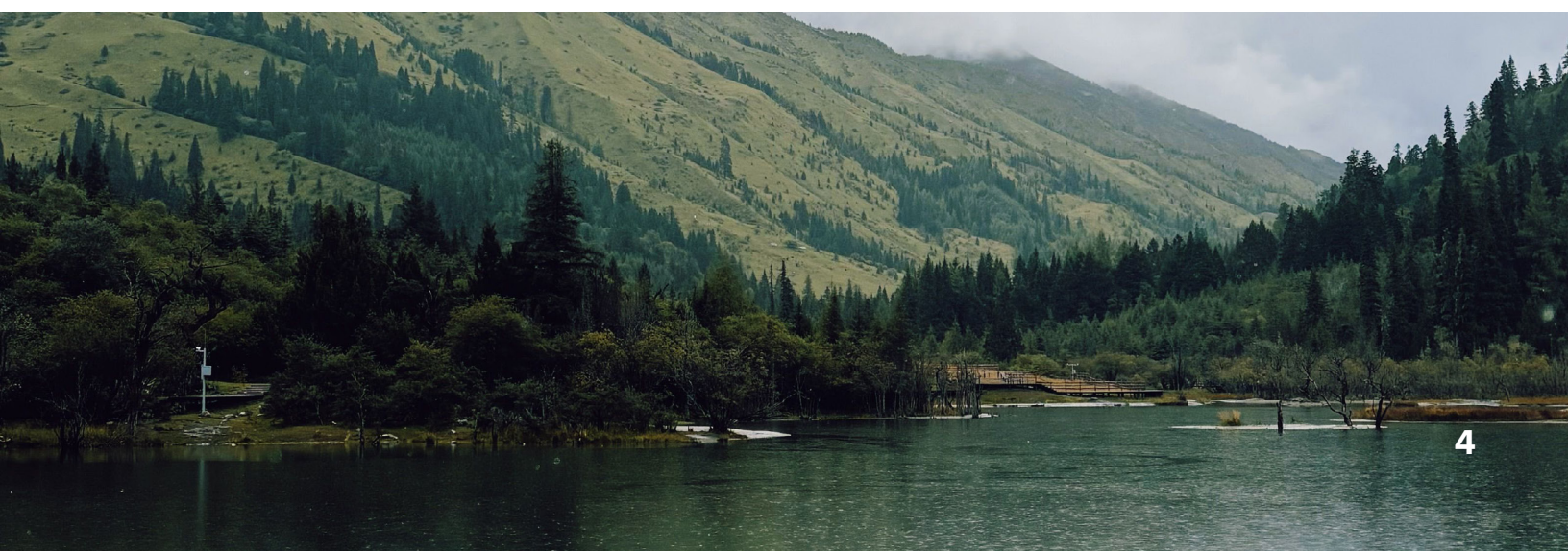
Step 2: Reflect

As you listen to the sounds of nature, notice how they make you feel. Do the sounds have any musical qualities? Think about how music and nature can combine to inspire people to appreciate the natural world.

Step 3: Create!

Here are some ideas for you to creatively combine music and nature:

- Build a playlist of songs inspired by nature and explain the message each song shares.
- Film a short music video with nature as your subject. Your audio can be a song that reminds you of nature, or a sound clip you recorded in nature.
- Write your own song (with or without lyrics) about protecting the planet. Record the song or share the lyrics. Optional: submit a recording of you performing your song for a live audience.



Reuse, Reduce, Recreate | Land

Central Question: How can the creative reuse of materials reduce waste?

Options for Materials:

- Clean, recycled materials
- Glue
- Scissors
- Markers or paint
- Paper

Step 1: Explore

Check out epa.gov/recycle to learn how recycling, reducing waste, and reusing materials help protect natural resources.

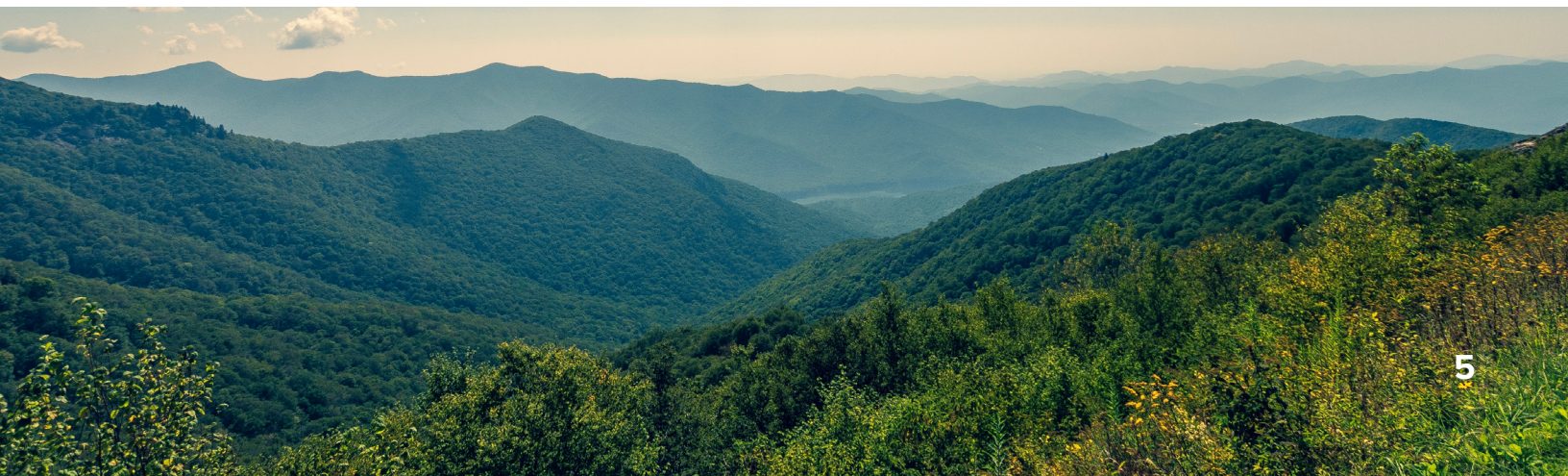
Step 2: Reflect

Look around your school or home. What items usually get thrown away that could be reused in a creative way?

Step 3: Create!

Check out these recycled art project ideas:

- Create an original piece of artwork using only recycled materials and include a list of everything you reused.
- Design and build a useful object from recycled materials, such as a pencil holder, bird feeder, or organizer, and explain how reusing materials reduces waste.
- Invent a new product made from recycled materials by creating a sketch, labeling its features, and writing a short advertisement explaining why people should use it.



Protect Our Planet Poetry | Air, Land, Water

Central Question: How can poetry inspire environmental action?

Options for Materials:

- Paper & pen or pencil
- Computer or notes app
- Camera

Step 1: Explore

Read or listen to examples of nature poetry and notice how poets use descriptive language to inspire readers. Here are some examples to begin your exploration:

- ["Earthrise" by Amanda Gorman](#)
- ["Earth's Downfall" by Jenny Gomez](#)
- ["Letter to Someone Living Fifty Years from Now" by Matthew Olzmann](#)
- ["On the Pulse of Morning" by Maya Angelou](#)
- ["Rise" by Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner and Aka Niviâna](#)

Step 2: Reflect

Consider a place in nature that is meaningful to you, whether or not you have been there yourself. Think about why it deserves protection.

Step 3: Create!

Check out these recycled art project ideas:

- Write an acrostic poem that displays a vertical word honoring our planet, such as *NATURE*, *EARTH*, or *PROTECT*.
- Respond to the prompt, "If the Earth could speak, what message would it share with people?" Consider any of the different emotions the Earth might express.
- Record a live performance of a spoken word poem from the perspective of a plant, animal, or fungi.

Water Warriors | Water

Central Question: How are humans impacting bodies of water?

Options for Materials:

- Paper & markers
- Digital tools
- Beads & string

Step 1: Explore

Choose a well-known or local body of water (pond, river, lake, wetland, coastline, etc.) and research how humans are actively using it. (Consumption, recreation, transportation, etc.)

Step 2: Reflect

Imagine the effects these human activities may cause over time. What actions can we all take to protect the water? What messages will motivate others to do the same?

Step 3: Create!

Consider these options to share your message about protecting the water:

- Create a poster or digital infographic that shares your message about the water.
- Record a video PSA that convinces your community to protect the water.
- Make a bracelet that uses words, colors or textures to express your message.

Changes in the Air | Air

Central Question: How do weather patterns affect living things in nature?

Options for Materials:

- Journal & colored pencils
- Online journal template
- Camera & digital tools

Step 1: Explore

For one week, visit the same outdoor location every day at the same time. Take note of the amount of sunlight, type of weather, air quality level, plant conditions, and wildlife around. Document by taking photos or videos, writing fieldnotes, or drawing your observations.

Step 2: Reflect

After one week of visits, compare your notes from day to day. Consider any changes or differences you observed over time. Contemplate what weather patterns or conditions of the air may have caused those changes and what other effects they may have on the natural world.

Step 3: Create!

Here are some creative ideas for sharing your findings:

- Make a digital collage that displays the changes you noticed with side-by-side photos.
- Edit your photos, videos, or sketches into a short film that reflects on the changes.
- Present the changes you observed throughout the week as a series of sketches or journal entries, and include your reflection on why these changes may have occurred.



Animal Habitat Revival | Land, Water

Central Question: Why is protecting habitats important?

Options for Materials:

- Paper & colored pencils
- Clay and/or a shoebox
- Scissors & glue
- Additional craft supplies

Step 1: Explore

Research an animal and learn about its habitat, adaptations, and the challenges it faces.

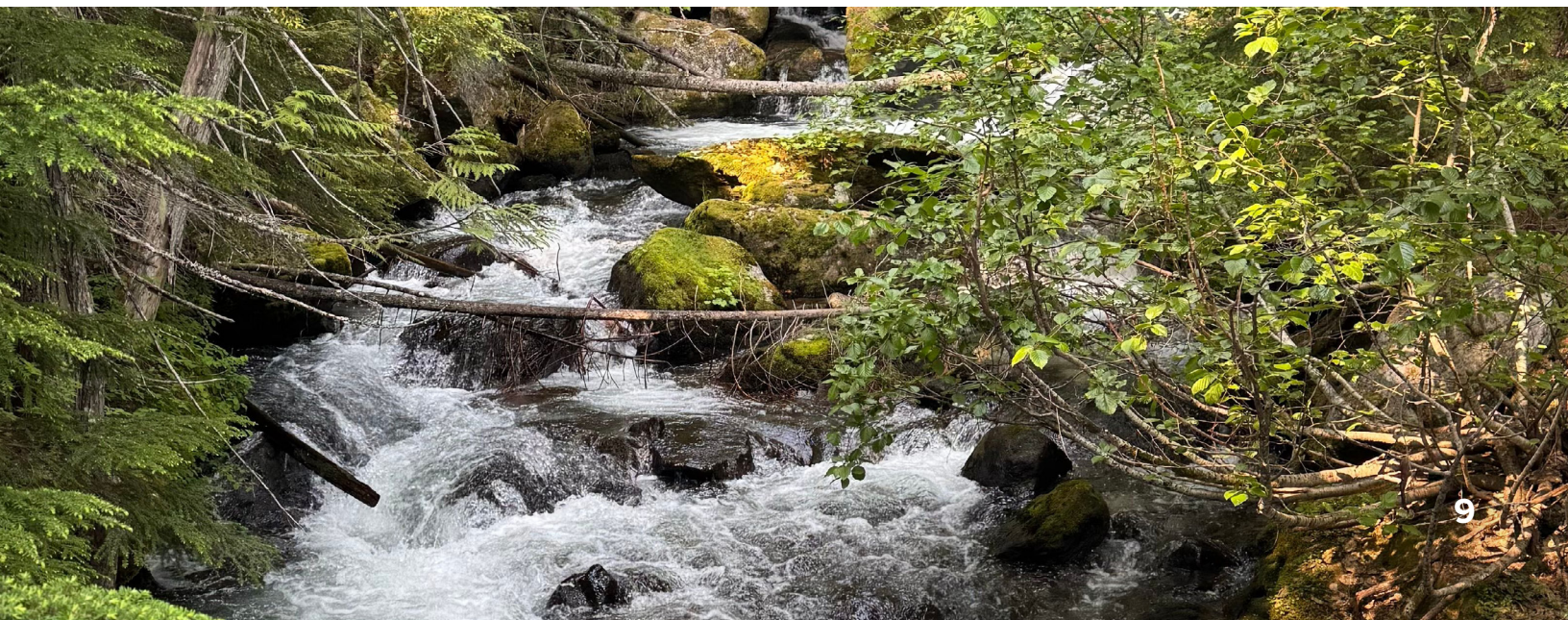
Step 2: Reflect

Think about how people can help protect this habitat and why healthy ecosystems matter.

Step 3: Create!

Use your creativity to show the habitat and how people can help protect it. Use one of these ways, or choose another:

- Sketch the habitat, depicting the role that humans play in protecting it.
- Build a 3-D model of the habitat using a cardboard box, clay, and/or other craft materials.
- Write and record a skit or short film featuring the animal you researched and at least one challenge it faces.



Nature Scavenger Hunt



As you explore outdoors, locate and observe as many of these items as you can. Use this page to keep track of your findings by drawing a picture or writing a description of each discovery in its corresponding box.



Tree



Flower



Leaf



Bird



Rock



Water



Cloud



Insect



Animal



Feather



Something
Green



Something
Colorful



Something
Rough



Something
Smooth



Something
Tiny



Something
in Motion



students
REBUILD

powered by



CREATIVE
VISIONS