



## ACTIVITY 3: REAL KIDS, REAL POWER

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### NJ Standards Correlation

#### **SCIENCE:**

##### *5.1 Scientific Process*

A.1 Raise questions about the world around them and be willing to seek answers through making careful observations and experimentation.

B.2 Identify the evidence used in an explanation.

##### *5.10 Environmental Studies*

B.1 Explain how meeting human requirements affect the environment.

#### **SOCIAL STUDIES:**

##### *6.2 Civics*

E.5 Identify current issues that may have a global impact and discuss ways to address them.

##### *6.6 Geography*

B.2 Explain changes in places and regions over time and the consequences of those changes.

E.3 Act on small scale, personalized environmental issues, and explain why such actions are important.

## NY Standards Correlation

### **SCIENCE:**

#### ***6.1 e The Living Environment***

An organism's pattern of behavior is related to the nature of that organism's environment, including kinds and numbers of other organisms present, the availability of food and other resources, and the physical environment

#### ***6.1 f The Living Environment***

When the environment changes, some plants and animals survive and reproduce, and others die or move to new locations.

#### ***7.1 a The Living Environment***

Humans depend on their natural and constructed environments

#### ***7.1 b The Living Environment***

Over time humans have changed their environment by cultivating crops and raising animals, creating shelter, using energy, manufacturing goods, developing means of transportation, changing populations, and carrying out other activities.

#### ***7.2 c The Living Environment***

Humans, as individuals or communities, change environments in ways that can be either helpful or harmful for themselves and other organisms.



To kids and adults alike, our energy problems can seem daunting. After all, climate change, pollution, limited supplies of fossil fuels, and other problems related to energy use are very serious issues. It can seem like too much for a kid to handle.

But, across the country, kids are taking action on the issues surrounding energy use and climate change in important ways. They're coming up with innovative ideas and taking action on every scale, from their own homes to their schools and communities, to affecting people across the globe.

This activity is designed to help students realize that there are many different ways they can take action, and that they can be an important part of the solution to our energy problems. You can use this activity either to help introduce the Junior Energy light bulb campaign, or to help wrap up the experience.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

After participating in this activity, students will be able to:

- Describe at least one example of things kids are doing to help address energy issues

### **TIME:**

One hour

### **MATERIALS:**

- One copy of each of the “Real Kids, Real Power” stories
- Two copies of the “Anchors’ Script”

### **GETTING READY:**

Make one copy of the “Real Kids, Real Power” stories, and cut the pages so that you can give each group one story. Make two copies of the “Anchors’ Script.”

### **THE ACTIVITY:**

Just because kids are young doesn't mean that they can't help solve environmental problems. Around the country, kids are learning about the problems associated with our use of energy, and they're doing something about it. Explain that in this activity, you'll



learn more about things real kids are doing to help fix our energy problems. You're going to put on a news show profiling some of the exciting things kids are doing around the country.

First, select two students to serve as anchors for your news program. Then, divide the remaining students into four groups. (If you're participating in the Junior Energy CFL campaign, you could create a fifth group that will focus on the campaign.)

Explain that each group will receive a short write-up of things that real kids are doing to help address our energy problems. (If you'd like to include a fifth group to represent your school's campaign, be sure to supply this group with some basic information about the campaign. For example, if you've completed the campaign, make sure the students know how many classes participated, how many light bulbs were sold, how much energy this saved, etc. If you haven't begun the campaign, you might share some of the school's goals for participation and be sure the students understand how the campaign will help save energy.)

Each group will prepare a short interview for a news program so that anyone watching the news can understand what the kids in the story they've been assigned have done. The interview should only be a few minutes long, or only consist of three to four questions and answers. The interviews should let viewers know what the kids did and how it helped the environment.

Each group should select one student to be a reporter and one or more students to be the kid or kids being interviewed. Everyone in the group should help create a short interview (including coming up with three or four questions and the answers) to be used on the news program. The kids can be as creative as they like with the interviews, which will be conducted "on the scene."

When the students understand their roles, pass out the stories to each group, and give the anchors their script to review. Assign the anchors a part (anchor one or anchor two), and have the anchors ask each of the groups the name of the person who'll be serving as the reporter so they can fill the names in to their script.

Help the anchors arrange the room so that they have a desk at the front of the room where they can sit to lead the news program. When the students are ready, ask the students who'll be participating in the interviews to stand ready in different locations



around the room. Any students not participating in the interviews will form the audience and should be seated facing the anchors.

When everyone's ready, let the anchors lead the news program.

After the program concludes, ask the students what they thought of the program. What did they think of the things the kids were doing? Do they think the kids are making a difference? Do they think any of the kids' ideas could work in your community or in your school?

Ask the students if there are things they've done themselves to help save energy. If you've already participated in the light bulb campaign, ask the students how they feel about what they've done. Are they proud of what they've accomplished? Do they feel like they've made a real difference? If you haven't started the campaign yet, ask the students how they feel about it, and what their goals are. Do they think they can make a difference?

Conclude the activity by reminding students that they have a lot of power. They can use their talents in many different ways. They can help save energy in ways that go beyond the light bulb campaign, and they can tackle other environmental issues too. And they don't just have to work on environmental issues. They can take action on almost any issue that interests them in their homes, school, or community.

If you like, you can extend the activity by building on the news theme. You can have your students put together a mock newspaper that, like the news program they created, profiles real things kids are doing. You can send your students out into the community or onto the internet to research things kids are doing, and ask them to write up short news articles that describe what kids are doing.

Finally, you can also extend the news theme in this activity by submitting a press release about the Junior Energy light bulb campaign to your local news outlets.



## Real Kids, Real Power Anchors' Script

### Anchor One:

Welcome to Real Kids, Real Power News. I'm your host \_\_\_\_\_ (insert your name).

### Anchor Two:

And I'm your host \_\_\_\_\_ (insert your name). Today we're talking energy. Kids have lots of it, and they're using it to change the world.

### Anchor One:

That's right, \_\_\_\_\_ (insert anchor two's name). Energy makes electricity, which makes it possible to do a lot of fun things. Without electricity, we couldn't watch TV, use a computer, or have lights in our house.

### Anchor Two:

But creating electricity also causes environmental problems like pollution and global warming. They're big problems, but not too big for the kids we'll meet today. These kids have big ideas, and they're putting their energy into action.

### Anchor One:

Our first story today takes us to California, where one kid is harnessing the power of the internet to help fight global warming. We go now to our reporter \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of reporter for the "Kids vs. Global Warming" group) who's on the scene.

*[Listen to "Kids vs. Global Warming" interview.]*

### Anchor Two:

Thanks, \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of reporter for the "Kids vs. Global Warming" group). Great reporting! But that's not the only way kids are using the power of the internet to help make a difference. We go now to our reporter \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of reporter for the "A Blog for Bears" group), who is all the way on the other side of the country in Virginia. She's with a young girl who is speaking out for polar bears.



*[Listen to “A Blog for Bears” interview.]*

**Anchor One:**

Thanks, \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of reporter for the “A Blog for Bears” group). Great work! We move now to the story of another young person with a really bright idea. Our reporter \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of reporter for “Science in Action” group) is on the scene at a school science fair where a young boy is really heating things up with his project on global warming.

*[Listen to “Science in Action” interview.]*

**Anchor Two:**

Great reporting, \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of reporter for “Science in Action” group)! Who would’ve thought that even something like a science fair project could help make a difference?

**Anchor One:**

You know, \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of Anchor Two), he’s not the only kid making a difference at school. We go now to our reporter \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of reporter for “The Green Team” group), who is with a group of students that are teaming up for Planet Earth.

*[Listen to “Green Team” interview.]*

**Anchor Two:**

Thanks, \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of reporter for “The Green Team” group), for a great report. It’s amazing that those kids are only in second and third grade, but they’re getting everyone in their school to go green.

*[Add optional script here]*

**Anchor One:**

Thanks for joining us today at Real Kids, Real Power News. We hope you’ve enjoyed these stories of real kids making a real difference for the planet.



**Anchor Two:**

Be sure to tune in next time, when we talk to a group of kids who have found a smart way to save their energy—they're not doing any homework!

**Anchor One:**

And remember, if you're a real kid, you have real power!



## Real Kids, Real Power Stories

### Kids vs. Global Warming

“We are a group of kids that educate other kids about the science of global warming, train them on what they can do, and empower them with specific ways of taking action.” These are the words that greet visitors to the Kids vs. Global Warming website.

The site was created by a twelve-year-old boy who was concerned about global warming. He says, “I realized that I had to let other kids know about the problems we are facing.”

Not only does the group have a website that educates kids, but they also have started many projects in their community. The group gives presentations to other students and creates booths at Earth Day events.

Recently, the group completed a project they called SLAP, which stands for “Sea Level Awareness Project.” They learned that global warming could make sea levels rise. Since the kids live near the ocean, a lot of their community could be underwater if we don’t do something to stop global warming.

The kids placed markers around their city showing people where the water would be if sea levels rise because of global warming. On the day they put up the polls, they organized a big event with music and speakers. The kids hope that now that people see how much they could lose, people will want to take action to stop global warming.

You can visit the site at [www.kids-vs-global-warming.com](http://www.kids-vs-global-warming.com) to learn more about what they’re doing.



## Science in Action

He might only be in middle school, but Matan Bostick is already a scientist working to save the world. He used his school's science fair as a way to study his school's energy use.

Matan learned about global warming and the problems that global warming will cause for plants, animals, and people. He learned that the problems are caused when we burn certain fuels to create electricity or drive cars. These fuels create a gas called carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is causing the Earth's temperature to rise.

But he also learned that there is something we can do about it. By using less energy, we can help slow down global warming.

Matan's project measured how much energy his school was using, and how much carbon dioxide they were creating. Then he suggested ways that they can help reduce their energy use. He got an A on his project. Can you get extra credit for saving the planet?

Source: [globalwarmingkids.net/science\\_fair\\_projects/matan.html](http://globalwarmingkids.net/science_fair_projects/matan.html)



## A Blog for Bears

Mollie Passacantando might live in Virginia, but she thinks a lot about the animals in the Arctic. She read a magazine article about how global warming is causing ice to melt in the Arctic. The article explained that polar bears depend on the ice to survive, and scientists are worried about what will happen to the bears as the ice melts.

Mollie asked her parents to help her start a kind of website called a blog to help polar bears. Her site asked people to write to the US Fish and Wildlife Service to ask the Service to put polar bears on the endangered species list. She thought that if the bears were on the list, they would get special protection that could help them survive.

Her site helped her collect over 200 letters. She and her mom delivered the letters to the Fish and Wildlife Service. Because of the work she did for polar bears, she was asked to speak at the Climate Crisis Day of Action, a large rally in Washington, D.C. She gave her speech to over one thousand people. She had to stand on a stool because she was so much smaller than the other speakers, who were all adults!

Although she's only eight years old, Mollie has already won an award for her work save polar bears. She was an Action for Nature International Young Eco-Hero in 2007.

Source:

<http://www.actionfornature.org/eco-hero/EcoHeroAwardsWinners2007.html>



## The Green Team

At Vallecito Elementary School, members of the school's Green Team make regular patrols of the school to monitor energy use. Think of it as a safety patrol for the planet.

The school's Green Team is made up of second and third graders. They perform skits at school assemblies, plan energy lessons for the school, and go on energy patrols. All the classes at the school agreed to several energy-saving responsibilities, and the Green Team makes sure everyone is still doing their part.

Team members wear official badges and carry clipboards as they walk around the school checking to make sure that classrooms are saving energy. The class that's doing the best job wins an award that they can display outside their classroom.

The Green Team keeps things fun with music and games, and the competition between classrooms makes kids excited to help. Saving the world is serious, but kids in this Green Team are having fun while they do it.

Source: Alliance to Save Energy's Green Schools Gazette  
<http://www.fypower.org/pdf/gazettesummer2005.pdf>