

## Earth Day Every Day



As global climate change becomes more apparent, so does the need for environmental lessons that go beyond standards to show students how they contribute to the problem and how they can help solve it. Sean Miller, director of education at Earth Day Network ([www.earthday.net](http://www.earthday.net)), gives tips on getting students interested and continuing nature lessons beyond those requisite days in April.

- **Get creative to integrate environmental education into subjects other than science.** “Every topic is adaptable,” says Miller. He suggests calculating ecological footprints and energy costs in math class, looking at different societies’ interactions with nature in social studies, examining how people have dealt with past ecological issues in history, and studying works that highlight interaction with nature, such as essays by Emerson and Thoreau, in language arts.

- **Be topic specific when looking for effective online resources.** “The Web’s resources on this are incredible,” Miller says. “But different groups are going to be better at certain topics. People looking for environmental education should visit Earth Day Network’s Teacher’s Corner.”

- **Take hints from students’ everyday lives.** Bring in an energy-efficient light bulb to show students that they can affect the environment in some very simple ways. “If every household in the U.S. replaced one light bulb with a compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL), it would prevent enough pollution to equal removing one million cars from the road,” says Miller.

## Eco Education

by Lauren Capolupo

Websites are naturals when it comes to environmental education.

Earth Day, Arbor Day, and the blossoming of spring make April an ideal month to introduce nature and conservation into the classroom. The sites below can bring a forest to a city school, make conservation concepts real, encourage students to take action against fuel shortages, and more.

### Carly’s Kids Corner

[www.arborday.org/kids/carly](http://www.arborday.org/kids/carly)

On this site from the National Arbor Day Foundation (pictured at right), students in fourth grade and above can investigate trees through interactive lessons and games, see what kids around the country are doing to preserve forests, and learn how to identify, plant, and care for trees in their own yards. Teachers can find ideas for classroom activities and lesson plans that correlate with the National Science Standards.

### Earth Day Network

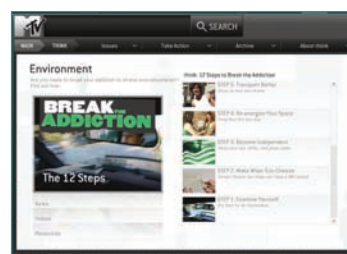
[www.earthday.net](http://www.earthday.net)

After answering questions about their modes of transportation, energy consumption, and eating habits, students can find out how much of an impact they make on the environment each day with this site’s Ecological Footprint calculator. The environmental-awareness organization’s website also offers free teaching materials, video and radio broadcasts, and related news.

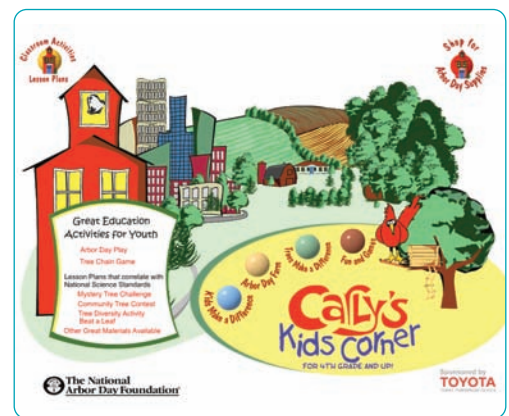
### ThinkMTV: Environment

[www.mtv.com/thinkmtv/#/thinkmtv/environment/](http://www.mtv.com/thinkmtv/#/thinkmtv/environment/)

MTV presents the Break the Addiction Challenge, a 12-step program to help America’s youth recognize their dependence on nonrenewable energy sources and find ways to overcome the



habit, as well as surveys, quizzes, videos, environmental news, and ways to get involved.



### Recycle City

[www.epa.gov/recyclecity](http://www.epa.gov/recyclecity)

Students can explore the residential and industrial sections of the Environmental Protection Agency’s virtual town to learn ways to reduce, reuse, and safely dispose of waste at home, at school, and at work. They also can explore the city’s landfill, community warehouse, and recycling center to find out what happens to their garbage after they throw it away.

### Dr. Arbor Talks Trees

[www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/trees3](http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/trees3)

Younger students can learn the basics of tree anatomy, life cycle, and identification—and even see a simplified version of photosynthesis—in this interactive lesson from the University of Illinois Extension’s Urban Programs Resource Network.

### BIOdiversity

[school.discovery.com/teachers/biodiversity](http://school.discovery.com/teachers/biodiversity)

This interactive Discovery School theme page features a discussion guide, lesson plans, classroom activities, and video clips about the importance of Earth’s biodiversity and the threats it faces.



Lauren Capolupo is associate editor of Cable in the Classroom Magazine.