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## Language Activities

### Development of Ecological Thought Through English Pedagogy

*Aruna Parandhama*

**Focus:** Development of ecological thought through English prose and poetry on nature

**Level:** Middle School, Secondary, or Higher Secondary.

**Estimated Time:** 30 minutes

**Size:** 40 students

**Objectives:**

1. To instil the quality of oneness among students, and
2. To realize the ecological truth that the actions of one impact everything and everyone else in the ecosystem.

**Materials**

Print out or write out the names of animals, birds, and various ecosystem parts. One chit should consist of one name/element. The number could be limited to the number of students. Keep a large spool of yarn, one blackboard, and chalk or visual aid like a screen/projector.

**Procedure**

1. Make a list of all the entities that comprise the ecosystem.
2. Include these as compulsory elements—sun, air, water, earth, fire, space, man. Additionally, include a mix of carnivores, herbivores, amphibians, aquatic animals, birds, and insects. The total number of items you have prepared must be enough to accommodate everyone in your class.
3. Write out each item in the list on a separate paper chit and fold

it twice. Shuffle it and distribute it to the students. Every student must pick one paper chit.

4. Display the entire list of elements/creatures on the board so that everyone can view the names.
5. Ask students to look at their chit and assume the role of what is assigned to them, for example, the one with 'Lion' in their chit must think of himself/herself as a lion and establish a connection with other elements/creatures displayed on the board.
6. Every student should pick another item/element/creature on which they are dependent.
7. When the first student makes a connection, the spool of yarn must be wound around the student's index finger and travel to the student with whom the connection/dependence is established. This student has to pick another new element/creature stating their dependence on it, and the yarn will pass to the student with whom the former student has established the connection.
8. The items that have been chosen will be unavailable to students who are yet to speak. Keep erasing the item chosen and pass the spool of yarn from one student to the other as they make connections, and when the last student has spoken, you will see that a web has been created among all those who spoke.
9. (the educator) Create a hypothetical statement which entails man's harmful and unsustainable activities towards animals/nature in general, e.g., Man has a gun with him and shoots down a deer.
10. The person with the chit 'deer' will let go of the yarn around their index finger. Whichever student is connected to 'deer' will also let go of the threaded connection. Like this, everyone will end up letting go of their yarn.
11. Then, ask the students, "What do you say about what just happened? How does one act of man affect you?"
12. Elicit answers from all students turn by turn and get their insights.
13. Moderate their answers around sensitivity towards nature.
14. Reiterate the key takeaways, i.e., to be mindful of your actions.

## Follow Up Activity

Everyday heroes

**Focus:** Recognition of people who incorporate mindful living and identify what mindful behaviours the students can incorporate in their lives.

**Estimated Time:** 40 minutes

**Size:** 40 students

### Procedure

1. Ask the students to talk to at least five individuals, e.g. neighbours, family friends, relatives, and acquaintances and find out what they do daily that incorporates mindfulness towards the planet.
2. Ask them to note down their name, occupation, and mindful practices (in points).
3. Discuss all the points in class.
4. Ask students to write down at least two takeaways (e.g. responsible waste management, not buying harmful fabrics, turning off the lights, judicious water use, preventing food waste, or writing a pledge to be compassionate towards animals) they will incorporate into their daily lives.

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