



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2008 Volume VII: Urban Environmental Quality and Human Health: Conceiving a Sustainable Future

Our Environment: A World Away?

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by Michell Carter

I want my fourth grade gifted students to be more aware of what they are throwing away, how their trash is affecting the environment and their health, and to see an overall reduction in the amount of food packaging in the wastebasket. I will assess this by having the students collect data on the amount of food wrappers being thrown away in the fourth grade and to draw conclusions via researching the most common plastic found in our trash and discovery lessons about the implications for the environment and human health. Next, they will design a new recycling labeling system for plastic and create a campaign to encourage the use of reusable food containers (hopefully an easy to conclude solution). Finally, they will continue to collect and analyze data on food wrappers to see if there is indeed a reduction due to campaign efforts by asking the questions: Did I make a difference? How can I find out? If not, how could my campaign be more effective? If so, how can I get more people to make the switch to reusable packaging?

(Developed for Gifted, grade 4; recommended for Gifted and Regular Elementary Education, Reading, and Science, grades 4-5)

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