



ScholaBox
March Guide





Our mission is to provide educational resources to parents and teachers to help children: read widely and critically, experiment with & express ideas, learn about the world & its people, and discover their capacity to create and engage in civil discourse.



March's Theme: Protecting Our Earth

About the Books

***Earth! My First 4.54 Billion Years* by Stacy McAnulty**

"Hi, I'm Earth! But you can call me Planet Awesome."

Prepare to learn all about Earth from the point-of-view of Earth herself! In this funny yet informative book, filled to the brim with kid-friendly facts, readers will discover key moments in Earth's life, from her childhood more than four billion years ago all the way up to present day. Beloved children's book author Stacy McAnulty helps Earth tell her story, and award-winning illustrator David Litchfield brings the words to life. The book includes back matter with even more interesting tidbits.

—Henry Holt and Co.

***The Water Walker* by Joanne Robertson**

The story of the determined Ojibwe Nokomis (grandmother) Josephine Mandamin and her great love for Nibi (water). Nokomis walks to raise awareness of our need to protect water for future generations and for all life on the planet. She, along with other women, men and youth, have walked the perimeter of the Great Lakes and along the banks of numerous rivers and lakes. The walks are full of challenges, and by her example Josephine invites us all to take up our responsibility to protect our water, the giver of life, and to protect our planet for all generations.

Dual-language edition in English & Anishinaabemowin.

—Second Story Press; Dual Language English & Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe) edition

***Wangari Maathai: The Woman Who Planted Millions of Trees* by Franck Prévot**

This simply told story begins with Green Belt Movement founder Wangari Maathai's childhood at the foot of Mount Kenya where, as the oldest child in her family, her responsibility was to stay home and help her mother. When the chance to go to school presented itself, she seized it with both hands. In the 1960s, she was awarded the opportunity to travel to the US to study, where she saw that even in the land of the free, black people were not welcome.

Returning home, Wangari was determined to help her people and her country. She recognized that deforestation and urbanization was at the root of her country's troubles. Her courage and confidence carried her through adversity to found a movement for peace, reconciliation, and healing.

—Charlesbridge

Big Ideas

It's important to help kids keep the big ideas found in these books foremost in their minds as they read, talk, create and move toward action.

How can we commit to caring for our earth in ways that help to extend its longevity?

- **Kids can be informed about the earth's welfare and take action to protect it.** They can find out more about the environment and protect the earth.
- **Kids can intentionally and thoughtfully care for our earth.** They can find ways to personally take action and keep the earth clean.
- **Kids can nurture emotions that serve themselves and others.** They can find out more and share so others take action.

Imagine how students can grow and achieve when they're clear about what they can do personally to protect the earth and share with others how to do the same.

Earth! My First 4.54 Billion Years by Stacy McAnulty

1

Read

Introduce the book

Explore the front/back flaps, share a concise book blurb from the publisher, or a reader review.

Set the purpose

"Let's read to find out about the history of Earth's existence."

Read the book

Please read the entire book with no interruptions, questions, or talk by the teacher. Just enjoy the book on this first read.

Discuss

Quick, simple sharing from kids about things that caught their attention. Create an anchor chart that you'll go back to on subsequent days.

2

Reread and Revisit

"When we read this book yesterday, we set our purpose to look at the history of the earth. We saw yesterday the place Earth holds in our solar system and just how long the earth has been in existence. As we read today, I want you to think about how the author used personification to tell the story of the earth. Why do you think the author made that choice in writing the book? Can you give an opinion about the effectiveness of that decision? I also want to us to spend a little time talking about why the author, Stacy McAnulty, thought kids might need a book like this."

Once you've finished reading, allow kids to turn and talk to one another about the things they've learned about the earth. Create a chart with a list of information they can gather from the book. Call attention to the page near the end where the author writes, "But sometimes humans forget to share and play nice and clean up after themselves."

Ask students to say more about how humans have acted in ways that harm the earth and what can be done to reverse the effects of neglect.

3

Pair this book with**Article**

"Kids make world's biggest postcard to combat climate change"

<https://newsela.com/read/kids-postcards-glacier/id/47600/>

"This article provides information about action kids have taken to combat climate change. Share details about what you learned from the article. What additional problem came up for the environment as a result of all those postcards being sent to the glacier in Switzerland?"

Video

Seven Billion Dreams. One Planet. Consume with Care.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JyL58vlbvgw>

"What simple message did the videographer hope to convey through this short video? Do you agree with the message? How effective was the videographer at getting the message across? What did he do (craft) to communicate in effective ways?"

Poetry

"Earth Day" by Jane Yolen

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/54673/earth-day>

Poem excerpt

"Earth Day" by Jane Yolen

I am the Earth
And the Earth is me.
Each blade of grass,
Each honey tree,
Each bit of mud,
And stick and stone
Is blood and muscle,
Skin and bone.

And just as I
Need every bit
Of me to make
My body fit,
So Earth needs
Grass and stone and tree
And things that grow here
Naturally.

That's why we
Celebrate this day.
That's why across
The world we say:
As long as life,
As dear, as free,
I am the Earth
And the Earth is me.

Picture books:

- *The Watcher: Jane Goodall's Life with the Chimps* by Jeanette Winter
- *Don't Let Them Disappear: 12 Endangered Species Across the Globe* by Chelsea Clinton
- *Bee and Me* by Alison Jay
- *10 Things I Can Do to Help My World* by Melanie Walsh
- *Kenya's Art* by Linda Trice

4

Kids Show Their Thinking

Engage kids through ways they can *show what they know* after reading:

Talking

- Discussion groups
- Recording their spoken response on Flipgrid

Writing

- Poetry
- Reader's Response

Creating

- Art
- Music
- Media

Assessment Ideas**Quick Write**

Kids have already discussed *Earth!* so they'll have some background knowledge to get started writing.

Possible prompts:

"Our earth has been around a long time. Respond to either the book *Earth!*, the video, *Consume With Care*, the article about kids creating a giant postcard to combat climate change, or the poem by Jane Yolen."

Explain examples from our reading selections that might help kids understand the importance of protecting our planet. Give examples from the text and then make a personal connection; tie it to something else you've read or an example from the real world.

Creating a Product:

Allow kids to work in partner groups or alone. With their partner (or on their own), they create a public service announcement, PSA. Encourage students to create on their own or with ideas presented in this YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eywBa0xfQFw>.

5

Kids Grow Their Thinking

Challenge kids to find out more based on something that piqued their curiosity.

Inquiry

Help students get started by creating an anchor chart that shows what questions they still have after reading the book and paired selections.

For example: “What stood out to you as we looked at the different ideas about how to protect our planet in the picture books, video, poem, and article? Do you want to research more about how kids around the world are actively working to keep Earth healthy? Are you thinking you want to know about creating animated videos, infographics, poetry? Think about anything that piqued your interest and let’s work together to get you resources to find out more.”

Capture kids’ ideas about inquiry and provide support for where they can find out more. Collect resources (print and online), and contact your campus or public librarians to assist you in collecting resources for your students.

Presentation

Provide opportunities for students to present their inquiry work. Use a rubric on presentation expectations for kids (and their families) so they are clear on what is required before planning, researching, and presenting.

Call to Action

“You know, good books don’t end when we turn the final page. Readers are always changed in some way after they read any great book. Maybe they have a change in attitude, get a lot of new information, have a change of heart, or want to take action. Maybe they see someone else’s passion and creativity and discover their own passion for something. What are you thinking you’ll do now that you’ve read and discovered more? What action will you take as a result of your new learning?”

“Is there something you want to create to show others how kids can intentionally work to keep Earth clean and protect the environment? Do you have advice you could share with kids after getting more information about your inquiry? After finding out more through your personal research, would you like to create something that expresses your ideas and thoughts—maybe a painting, spoken poetry, or short film? Would you like to create a group in your school or community that meets to talk about (and take action on) keeping our planet safe and healthy?”

“Think about it. Talk to an adult about your ideas. And then...Just Do It!”

The Water Walker by Joanne Robertson

1 Read

Introduce the book

Explore the front/back flaps, share a concise book blurb from the publisher, or a reader review.

Set the purpose

"Let's read to find out about an Ojibwe woman who works to protect earth's water sources. Be thinking about lessons we could discuss when we revisit the book tomorrow."

Read the book

Please read the entire book with no interruptions, questions, or talk by the teacher. Just enjoy the book on this first read.

Discuss

Quick, simple sharing from kids about things that caught their attention. Create an anchor chart that you'll go back to on subsequent days.

2 Reread and Revisit

"When we read this book yesterday, we set our purpose to pay attention to the work Josephine Mandamin, an Ojibwe tribal member, does to bring awareness to how we must protect Earth's water. As we look at specific pages today, I want you to pay close attention to the way she communicates her passion to care for our natural resource, water. Where do you see opportunities for us to learn from Mandamin? Talk with your discussion partner about what you see that could be stated in the form of a lesson for kids."

Once you've finished reading, allow kids to turn and talk about how they see the specific ways in which Mandamin works herself chose to raise awareness and involve others. Have kids share evidence from the text about what they are thinking about how we can learn from this book about working to protect our planet's resources.

"Let's think for a few minutes about possible reasons the author wrote a book like this. What are some reasons readers might be interested in a book like this one? What did the author/illustrator do to effectively communicate to the reader? (Think about ways you can encourage kids to discover information in this book that they want to share with others in order to raise awareness.)

Can we also talk about the decision by Mandamin to walk to the shores of water sources all over our country? Why do you think she chooses to 'use her feet' to express the importance of clean water?"

3 Pair this book with

Article

"Indigenous youth take global stage in Madrid to voice climate change worries"

<https://newsela.com/read/indigenous-youth-madrid-conference/id/2000003176/>

Think about and be ready to share what you saw in this article about teens from indigenous tribes taking actions against global warming. What message or lesson do you think kids could take away from this article?

News Story

"How Teenage Sisters Pushed Bali to Say 'Bye-Bye' to Plastic Bags" (Listen to this inspiring 3-minute video of teen activists)

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2019/01/26/688168838/how-teenage-sisters-pushed-bali-to-say-bye-bye-to-plastic-bags>

What can kids learn from these two sisters and their actions to clean up their environment? Are there lessons kids can learn from Melati and Isabel Wijsen? Why or why not?

Picture books you may want to pair with *The Water Walker*:

- ***One Plastic Bag: Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of the Gambia*** by Miranda Paul
- ***When Grandma Gives You a Lemon Tree*** by Jamie L.B. Deenihan and Lorraine Rocha
- ***City Green*** by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan
- ***Bloom*** by Doreen Cronin and David Small
- ***We Planted a Tree*** by Diane Muldrow

4

Kids Show Their Thinking

Engage kids through ways they can show what they know after reading:

Talking

- Discussion groups
- Recording their spoken response on Flipgrid

Writing

- Poetry
- Reader's Response

Creating

- Art
- Music
- Media
- PSA (Public Service Announcement)
- Infographics

Assessment Ideas

Quick Write:

Kids have already discussed *The Water Walker* and the other selections, so they'll have some background knowledge to get started writing.

Possible Prompts:

Explain what you can learn from the Water Walker's example. What choices did she make that you learned from? In what ways are the others we read about or listened to in the additional article, news story, and picture books like the Ojibwe grandmother in *The Water Walker*? Remember that as you write, it's important to give examples in your reader response from specific text or media that we read or viewed from our last few days in class.

Thinking Deeply about Theme

It's important for kids to look closely at some nonfiction books to identify possible themes. Help kids to understand theme by sharing that readers pay attention to things the author/illustrator repeats in the text (or media), and think about lessons (universal truths) to identify possible themes. Themes are stated as a sentence, not a single word, and they are not time or culture-bound. In other words, universal truths—themes—will be applicable to a boy in ancient Egypt and my elderly next-door neighbor. In *The Water Walker* and "Two Teenage Sisters Pushed Bali to say 'Bye-Bye' to Plastic Bags" (the news story from NPR), there are several possible themes. One theme might be "Keep on trying even if it's hard" or "Nothing worthwhile comes easily." These two pieces offer several possible themes for personal application. How can we help students identify emerging themes even in expository selections? Kids can begin to practice identifying theme when we ask, "What lessons can we see even in this text, article, video that provide information about important lessons for us? What are some universal truths we can identify?"

5

Kids Grow Their Thinking

Challenge kids to find out more based on something that piqued their curiosity.

Inquiry

Help students get started by creating an anchor chart that shows what questions they still have after reading the book and paired selections.

For example: "What kinds of information are we learning about choosing to protect Earth? Do you want to focus your inquiry on finding out more about how we can be growing our knowledge about how to be active in saving our environment? Would you like to read more about how to find ways to be active locally in protecting the environment? Are you interested in more stories about how kids can be environmental activists? As a result of your further inquiry/research, what will you create to show what you're learning through more study of the topic you're interested in?"

Capture kids' ideas about inquiry and provide support for where they can find out more.

Presentation

Provide opportunities for students to present their inquiry work. Use a rubric on presentation expectations for kids (and their families) so they are clear on what is required before planning, researching, and presenting. Presentation rubrics can be found at New Tech Network.

Call to Action

"Good books don't end when we turn the final page. Readers are always changed in some way after they read any great book. Maybe they have a change in attitude, get a lot of new information, have a change of heart, or they want to take action. What are you thinking you'll do now that you've read and discovered more? What action will you take as a result of your new learning?"

"Is there something you want to create to get information out to kids about how to become active in protecting our planet? Some kids might want to create something to show how kids are finding new ways to protect planet Earth in their school or community. Are you interested in creating a poster or forming a club to actively care for our environment?"

"Is there another way you want to express your ideas about environmental activism? What have you learned that prompts you to take action or educate others?"

Think about it. Talk to an adult about your ideas. And then...Just Do It!"

Wangari Maathai: The Woman Who Planted Millions of Trees by Franck Prévot

1

Read

Introduce the book

Explore the front/back flaps, share a concise book blurb from the publisher, or a reader review.

Set the purpose

"Let's read to find out about Wangari Maathai and what she did to actively save her environment."

Read the book

Please read the entire book with no interruptions, questions, or talk by the teacher. Just enjoy the book on this first read.

Discuss

Quick, simple sharing from kids about things that caught their attention. Create an anchor chart that you'll go back to on subsequent days.

2

Reread and Revisit

"When we read this book yesterday, we set our purpose to pay attention to the things Wangari Maathai did to save her local environment. As we look at specific pages today, I want you to pay close attention to what might have motivated her to begin her work and what she did to involve others. What are some ways that you observed Wangari begin her activism, and what prompted her actions? Where do you see opportunities for the reader to learn from this book about Wangari Maathai? Talk with your discussion partner about what you see from the book that intrigued or interested you."

Once you've finished reading, allow kids to turn and talk about the way the people and events that led to Wangari's ability to affect positive change and to lead others toward being proactive in saving the earth. Have kids share what they are thinking about the author's decision to share the events and people included in this picture book.

"Let's think for a few minutes about possible reasons the author wrote a book like this. What are some reasons readers might be interested in a book like this one? What did the author/illustrator do to effectively communicate to the reader?" (Think about ways you can encourage kids to discover the concept for this book—the experiences we have and the people who influence us often drive our passions.)

3

Pair this book with

Article

"40 Save the Environment Posters Competition Ideas"

<https://www.boredart.com/2017/05/save-environment-posters-competition-ideas.html>

What inspired or intrigued you as you viewed these posters created for Earth Day? What information is presented in these posters that you believe could have a positive impact? What do you want to create now as a result of seeing this collection of Earth Day posters?

Video:

"I Will Be a Hummingbird"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=115&v=IGMW6YWjMxw&feature=emb_title

What is the important truth that "I Will Be a Hummingbird" communicated to viewers? How does this short two-minute video communicate its powerful message?

Infographic:

The Importance of Trees

<https://www.davey.com/media/1250495/environmental-benefits.jpg?width=489px&height=366px>

Picture books:

- *Wangari's Trees of Peace* by Jeanette Winter
- *The Tree Lady* by H. Joseph Hopkins
- *Compost Stew: An A to Z Recipe for the Earth* by Mary McKenna Siddals
- *Love the Earth* by Julian Lennon
- *Rhino in the House* by Daniel Kirk
- *The Lonely Giant* by Sophie Ambrose

4

Kids Show Their Thinking

Engage kids through ways they can show what they know after reading:

Talking

- Discussion groups
- Recording their spoken response on Flipgrid

Writing

- Poetry
- Reader's Response

Creating

- Art
- Music
- Media
- PSA (Public Service Announcement)

Assessment Ideas**Quick Write**

Kids have already discussed parts of *Wangari Maathai*, the additional article, the video, and the infographic, so they'll have some background knowledge to get started writing.

Possible prompts

Some new thoughts I have about how people can actively protect the environment are _____. I realized _____ and _____. (Give students parameters about their reader response piece and remind them to include evidence from text, media, or other selections as they write.)

Thinking Deeply About Connections Across Texts

"Let's think about all the picture books, articles, videos, and infographics we've learned from. What are some similarities you noticed coming from all these sources when we think about caring for the earth?"

Help kids think about, discuss, and write about the ideas they learned about the intentional steps we can take to protect our planet.

5

Kids Grow Their Thinking

Challenge kids to find out more based on something that piqued their curiosity.

Inquiry

Help students get started by creating an anchor chart that shows what questions they still have after reading the book and paired selections.

For example: "What other ideas are you thinking about after we read *Wangari Maathai* and the article, viewed the infographic, looked at the Earth Day posters, and explored the other picture books? Do you want to focus your inquiry on finding out more about how kids can study their local environment issues and get actively involved? Do you want to investigate what other environmental projects are available for kids to get involved in by searching the internet with an adult? What will you create to show what you're learning through more research on the topic you're interested in?"

Capture kids' ideas about inquiry and provide support for where they can find out more.

Presentation

Provide opportunities for students to present their inquiry work. Use a rubric on presentation expectations for kids (and their families) so they are clear on what is required before planning, researching, and presenting. Presentation rubrics can be found at New Tech Network.

<https://newtechnetwork.org/>

Call to Action

"Good books don't end when we turn the final page. Neither does the power of information in an infographic end when we finish viewing it. Readers (and viewers) are always changed in some way after they read any great book or view important information. Maybe they have a change in attitude, get a lot of new information, have a change of heart, or want to take action. What are you thinking you'll do now that you've read and discovered more? What action will you take as a result of your new learning?"

"Is there something you want to create to get information out to people about the important ideas you've learned? What would you like to share about being active in saving the environment?"

"Think about it. Talk to an adult about your ideas. And then...Just Do It!"

The heart of ScholaBox is to provide resources for educators so they can foster great discussions, provide opportunities for students to write and create in response to great texts, media, interviews, articles and art in order to bring deep understanding of our world and its people. We desire for kids to engage in authentic ways to learn and show their thinking. We won't ever provide worksheets or "busy work" and we hope that educators who subscribe to ScholaBox won't rely on those artificial, low-level thinking activities in concert with our subscription service resources.

If students are consistently free to read critically and widely, consider multiple perspectives, discuss and write about important ideas and issues, then they are in a better position to read critically and answer wisely when assessed on standardized tests. Kids must have choice, time, access to great texts and intentional mentoring from their "proficient reader-teacher" to become powerful readers and thinkers themselves.





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