

PEACE

24/7

Empowering Youth to Be Ministers of Peace and Justice



3 R's
+ 3

reduce
reuse
recycle

restore
respect
respond



Become Aware

Reduce, reuse, recycle—the 3 *R*'s of environmental salvation. You've been hearing about them since the day you entered school. You have heard the facts about Earth's depleting resources and the many ways humankind is helping to destroy it. You know that unless people learn to reduce, recycle, and reuse, many of the things we take for granted—air, water, land, open space, oil, animals, and trees just to name a few—are at risk of destruction and/or depletion.

Logically, it makes sense. You understand the benefits and needs for society's dedication to the 3 *R*'s. However, you also live in a fast-paced, throw-it-away-and-move-on culture. Personal comfort, gratification, and convenience are often used as the first criteria for choosing what we buy, how we use it, and how we dispose of it. The result? Reduce, reuse, and recycle take a quick back seat along with the future of our environment and resources.

This issue of **PEACE 24/7** adds three more *R*'s to the list: restore, respect, and respond. The 3 *R*'s + 3 provide an even more balanced approach to environmental awareness and response.

REDUCE: to purposely use less, thereby using less of our resources, providing less opportunity for Earth's damage and producing less waste.

REUSE: to find ways to use items more than once, often in new ways, for new purposes.

RECYCLE: to dispose of products in a way that allows them to become part of a new product, in a completely new form.

RESTORE: to research and implement ways of renewing and protecting the resources we have.

RESPECT: to remember the fragility of our resources while recognizing the value they have in sustaining human life. Respect results in choices that protect and sustain all creation.

RESPOND: to accept responsibility individually for the fate of our environment.

Acknowledge Responsibility

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- What are some of the most common causes of environmental destruction?
- What part does greed play in the misuse of the Earth's resources?
- What does it mean to be a steward over the Earth?
- On a scale of one to ten, how and why would you rate yourself as an Earth steward? your family? your church? your community?

bad okay outstanding
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Isaiah 24:5 NRSV

The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants.

Doctrine and Covenants 150:7

The lives of many are being sacrificed unnecessarily to the gods of war, greed, and avarice. The land is being desecrated by the thoughtless waste of vital resources. You must obey my commandments and be in the forefront of those who would mediate this needless destruction while there is yet day.

Psalms 115:16 adapted

The heavens are the LORD's heavens, but the Earth God has given to human beings.

Lessons Buried Away

Make a visit to the local landfill. Watch the trucks as they come in (with a landfill employee escort). Observe the types of things people are throwing away. Make a list of everything you see.

Think of the landfill as a giant time capsule. One hundred years from now, a science class is instructed to dig it up. What “facts” will they conclude from the artifacts they find? How will they describe the lifestyle, habits, and values of this 100-year-old community? Will their deductions from the landfill provide a true picture of life in your community today?

Interview a landfill or city employee.

- What are the rules for dumping?
- What is illegal to leave and why?
- If there are items not allowed in the landfill, how are they required to be disposed of in your community?
- At what rate do the items left in the landfill degrade?
- Are there future plans for this land after the landfill closes? What is the timeframe for this plan? What are the concerns for future use?
- Are there any areas in your community that used to be a landfill? If so, how are those lands being used now?

Acquire More Understanding

Trash to Treasure

Working in small groups, collect items that would normally be thrown away as trash (clothes, boxes, bags, gum wrappers, broken jewelry, containers). Do not use food. Challenge each group to come up with new ways the “trash” can be used.

REDUCE

- turn off lights
- buy recycled items
- avoid disposables

REUSE

- donate magazines to offices
- old towels become cleaning cloths
- reuse containers for storage

RECYCLE

- glass
- aluminum
- create your own compost

RESTORE

- replant vegetation
- stop using harmful chemicals
- correct air-polluting cars

RESPECT

- rethink your habits
- evaluate your priorities
- protect animal habitats

RESPOND

- don't wait . . . start today!

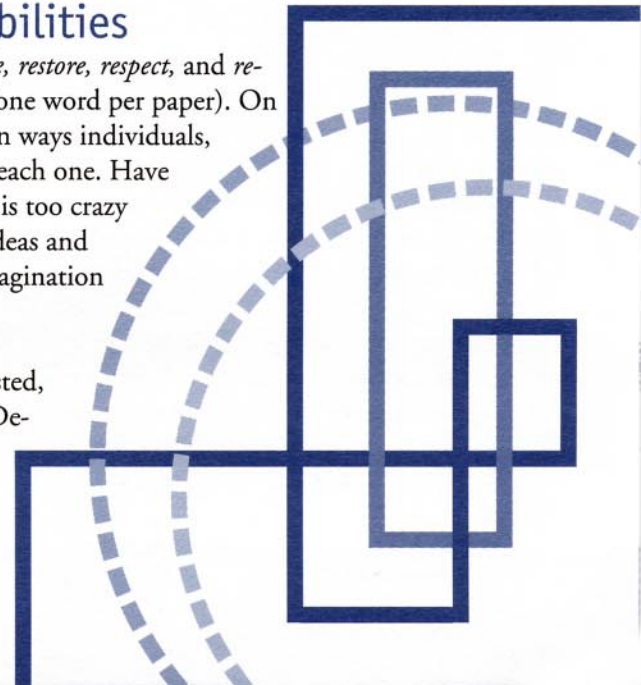
Sharing Your Knowledge

Share facts about environmental stewardship that you have learned from school, media, and other resources. How do these facts apply to your community? If any of the listed facts seem wrong or pique special interests, research further.

Brainstorming Possibilities

Write the words *reduce*, *reuse*, *recycle*, *restore*, *respect*, and *respond* on six large sheets of paper (one word per paper). On the coordinating sheets, write down ways individuals, families, and communities can do each one. Have some fun. For this activity no idea is too crazy or far-fetched. Some of life's best ideas and opportunities emerge when the imagination is stretched.

After your brains have been exhausted, choose three ideas from each list. Determine their benefits and what it would take to make them happen in your community.





Take Action

- Make a personal plan for how you are going to follow the 3 R's + 3.
- Sit down with your family and create a plan for ways the household can follow the 3 R's + 3.
- Spend time in the local library and/or on the Internet to do in-depth research on environmental issues.
- Survey your community. What are the current opportunities for recycling glass, paper products, aluminum, plastics, tires, electronics, textiles, oil/fuels, and wood?
- As a family, take a drive through the backroads of your community. Determine the items that are most often dumped on the sides of the road. Is this because people are irresponsible, or because there are not any better alternatives available?
- Adopt a stretch of highway for trash clean-up.
- How are people in your community encouraged to reuse items like clothes, furniture, old appliances, sports equipment, tires, paint, and books? stores? events? sales? shelters?
- Create gifts for family and friends by reusing items that would otherwise be thrown away.
- Using the lists created while visiting the landfill, come up with ideas for ways to safely reuse some of the most common items disposed of each day.

Become an Advocate

- Create flyers to inform your community how they can follow the 3 R's + 3.
- Attend city meetings that concern your community and its environment.
- Hold a fair for children and families in the community. Create booths to educate people on the 3 R's + 3. Make sure there is at least one interactive booth on each: *reduce*, *reuse*, *recycle*, *restore*, *respect*, and *respond*. Puppet plays, safe and supervised experiments, brief videos, knowledge games, crafts, pictures of nature contests, and letters to the editor/senator are just a few possible ways information can be relayed. Ask local businesses to help financially sponsor the event. Hold a contest for the best environmental ideas and encourage families to enter. To help increase the number of booths, let schools, scouts, and other groups sponsor and create displays and exhibits.
- Set up an exchange system that provides ways for people to share unwanted items that are still in usable condition with others who might need them. Ideally some of these opportunities will provide the exchange of items without the exchange of money.

