

# Lesson Plan: Earth Day Groceries Project

## Note

This activity builds on the March/April **Green Star! Enviro- Activity Newsletter**. It is also part of an international initiative, the *Earth Day Groceries Project*

## Age

All ages

## Subjects

Science, Art, Language Arts, Social Studies

## Skills

Analysis, application, research, art, communication

## Duration

One 45 minute class plus time to bring the bags to and from the grocery store

## Setting

Indoors

## Materials

- Paper grocery bags
- Art supplies

## Objectives:

Students should be able to:

1. Identify some important Earth Day messages.
2. Create their own Earth Day messages.
3. Encourage their friends, family and community to participate in Earth Day celebrations.



[www.earthdaybags.org](http://www.earthdaybags.org)

## Method

This lesson plan builds on an Earth Day activity included in the *March & April Green Star! Newsletter*. Students will decorate grocery bags from a local grocery store with messages conveying Earth Day awareness and action; the decorated bags will be returned to the grocery store for public use. Following Earth Day, the class will submit a report to the international initiative, the *Earth Day Groceries Project*, to have their project included in with thousands of others across the world.

## Background

The *Earth Day Groceries Project* started in the early 1990's with an elementary teacher and class in Seattle, Washington. Students asked for donations of paper grocery bags from local grocery stores, them with Earth Day awareness messages, and returned them to the stores to distribute to the local community. Today, the project is essentially the same, but schools across the globe participate in the annual effort to raise environmental awareness.

Awareness of the project has spread through articles in teacher and environmental magazines, online groups and support from the educational and environmental community. With the development of a website and high interest from teachers, over 1100 schools participated in the project by 1999. Today, countries across North America and the world participate in the project, and keep in touch through an online reporting forum including stories, photos and participation statistics.

## Procedure (from the [www.earthdaybags.org](http://www.earthdaybags.org) website)

1. **Borrow.** Contact a local grocery store that uses large paper grocery bags. See if the manager will let you "borrow" enough

bags so that each student in your class and/or school can decorate one. Let the manager know about the project and its environmental education message, of course! Grocers usually get these bags in bundles of 500.

2. **Decorate.** Have students at school decorate the bags with pictures of the earth, environmental messages, the name of your school, etc. Be creative! Don't allow students to write their last names on any bags.
3. **Deliver.** A couple of days before Earth Day you and/or your students return the decorated bags to the grocery store - with many thanks to the manager! The store then distributes these bags (full of groceries) to happy and amazed shoppers on Earth Day.
4. **Report.** Fill out the Report Form on the project web site with a count of how many bags your school made. Please, only one report per school. All reports will be posted on the Earth Day Groceries www site at [www.earthdaybags.org](http://www.earthdaybags.org).

### **Extensions**

1. Spend a class brainstorming other ways of promoting Earth Day. Have each student identify one way that they can individually promote Earth Day in their home, at school, or in the community.
2. Make a collage of your classroom's Earth Day bags as part of an Earth Day awareness display in a display case or hallway.

### **Evaluation**

1. Ask students to identify what they feel are some of the most important messages about Earth Day.