

# START AN ENVIRONMENTAL BOOK CLUB

Reading about an environmental issue or topic is a great way to learn more about the environment. Sharing the ideas from different books with others who are interested in environmental issues through a book club can spark invigorating conversations and inspire new ways to take action.

## Outcomes

- Start an environmental book club with family, friends, coworkers, neighbors and anyone else interested in reading and/or the environment.
- Learn more about an environmental issue or topic by reading books and having a discussion with others.

## Audience

Older teens and adults

## Time

Variable (one 1-2 hour meeting once a month works well)

## Concepts

- Reading and discussing an environmental issue with others through a book club can inspire new ways to take action.

## Supplies

- Books with an environmental focus (see book list at the end of this activity for ideas)



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## Preparation

- Recruit members for your environmental book club through the organization you are working with or talking to friends, family, neighbors, coworkers and others and asking if they want to participate.
- Find environmental books that you can read throughout your book club. Refer to the book list at the end of this activity or search online for more options. Consider choosing a theme for your book club. Ideas for themes include:
  - A specific environmental issue such as waste, water or energy
  - Adventure, outdoor or nature writing
  - Classic environmental authors such as Rachel Carson and Aldo Leopold
- Decide on a meeting place and time for book club discussions.
- Make sure everyone in your book club has access to the books chosen. Hennepin County residents can get a library card for free at [www.hclib.org](http://www.hclib.org).

## Procedure

- Communicate which book needs to be read before each discussion meeting so all book club members are on the same page.
- After selecting a book and discussion meeting time, have each member of the book club take a couple weeks to read the book. Encourage participants to take notes while they read the book and write down any questions that come up so they can be addressed at the discussion meeting.
- Create questions or a discussion guide specific to the book you are reading for the discussion meeting or use the discussion questions below.

## Discussion questions

- What did you like or dislike about the book? Why?
- What did you learn that was new about the environmental topic?
- What actions will you take or what will you do differently after reading this book?
- How did the author convey the environmental topic?
- Did the author suggest any solutions to the environmental issue?
- What more do you want to learn about the topic after reading the book?
- How did the book make you feel about solving environmental issues? Hopeful? Helpless?
- What other environmental topics do you want to learn about in the book club?

# START AN ENVIRONMENTAL BOOK CLUB

## Environmental book list

To get you started, the following environmentally focused books are available through Hennepin County libraries.

Toddler to preschool	Preschool to 2nd Grade
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big Earth, Little Me by Thom Wiley</li> <li>• Choose to Reuse by Miriam Latimer</li> <li>• Don't Throw That Away! by Laura Bergen</li> <li>• Is There Really a Human Race? by Jamie Lee Curtis</li> <li>• Joseph Had a Little Overcoat by Simms Taback</li> <li>• My Bag and Me! by Karen Farmer</li> <li>• The Berenstain Bears Don't Pollute (Anymore) by Stan and Jan Berenstain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Recycle by Earthworks Group</li> <li>• A Warmer World: From Polar Bears to Butterflies, How Climate Change Affects Wildlife</li> <li>• Crafting with Recycleables by Dana Meachen Rau</li> <li>• Crunch by Leslie Connor</li> <li>• E is for Environment: Stories to Help Children Care for Their World at Home, at School and at Play</li> <li>• Eillen Green The Recycling Queen by Penelope Dyan</li> <li>• Human Footprint: Everything you will Eat, Use, Wear, Buy, and Throw Out in Your Lifetime</li> <li>• Judy Moody Saves the World by Megan McDonald</li> <li>• Just Grace Goes Green (Fiction) by Charise Mericle Harper</li> <li>• Recycle This Book by Dan Gutman</li> <li>• What's It Like Living Green?: Kids Teaching Kids, by the Way They Live by Jill Ammon Vanderwood</li> </ul>
3rd grade to 6th grade	7th grade to 12th grade
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Recycle by Earthworks Group</li> <li>• A Warmer World: From Polar Bears to Butterflies, How Climate Change Affects Wildlife</li> <li>• Crafting with Recycleables by Dana Meachen Rau</li> <li>• Crunch by Leslie Connor</li> <li>• E is for Environment: Stories to Help Children Care for Their World at Home, at School and at Play</li> <li>• Eillen Green The Recycling Queen by Penelope Dyan</li> <li>• Human Footprint: Everything you will Eat, Use, Wear, Buy, and Throw Out in Your Lifetime</li> <li>• Judy Moody Saves the World by Megan McDonald</li> <li>• Just Grace Goes Green (Fiction) by Charise Mericle Harper</li> <li>• Recycle This Book by Dan Gutman</li> <li>• What's It Like Living Green?: Kids Teaching Kids, by the Way They Live by Jill Ammon Vanderwood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 47 Things You Can Do for the Environment by Lisa Petronis</li> <li>• A Kids' Guide to Climate Change &amp; Global Warming: How to Take Action! by Cathryn Berger Kate</li> <li>• Generation Green: The Ultimate Teen Guide to Living an Eco-Friendly Life by Linda Sivertsen</li> <li>• Green Careers: Environment and Natural Resources by Pamela Fehl</li> <li>• Harbinger by Sara Wilson Etienne</li> <li>• Heroes of the Environment: True Stories of People Who Are Helping to Protect Our Planet by Harriet Rohmer</li> <li>• Just for Fins by Tera Lynn Childs</li> <li>• Katarina Brieditis, Katarina Evans</li> <li>• Lost Code by Kevin Emerson</li> <li>• Making Good Choices About Recycling and Reuse by Stephanie Watson</li> <li>• My Summer of Pink and Green by Lisa Greenwald</li> <li>• Not Your Typical Book About the Environment by Elin Kelsey</li> <li>• Second-Time Cool: The Art of Chopping Up a Sweater by Anna-Stina Linden Ivarsson,</li> <li>• The Green Teen: The Eco-Friendly Teen's Guide to Saving the Planet by Jenn Savedge</li> <li>• Teens Go Green!: Tips, Techniques, Tools, and Themes for YA Programming (Libraries Unlimited Professional Guides for Young Adult Librarians Series) by Valerie Colston</li> <li>• Recycling by Viqi Wagner</li> <li>• Wear No Evil: How to Change the World With Your Wardrobe by Greta Eagan</li> </ul>

# START AN ENVIRONMENTAL BOOK CLUB

*Book list continued*

## Adults

- *Affluenza: The All-Consuming Epidemic* by John de Graaf
- *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver
- *An Inconvenient Truth: The Planetary Emergency of Global Warming and What We Can Do About It* by Al Gore
- *Beyond Ecophobia* by David Sobel
- *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things* by William McDonough
- *Future: Six Drivers of Global Change*
- *Good Life Lab: Radical Experiments in Hands-on Living* by Wendy Jehanara Tremayne
- *Junkyard Planet: Travels in the Billion-Dollar Trash Trade* by Adam Minter
- *Last Child in the Woods* by Richard Louv
- *Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution* by Paul Hawken
- *New Art of Living Green* by Erica Harris
- *Stuff: The Secret Lives of Everyday Things* by Alan Thein Durning and John C. Ryan
- *The Consumer's Guide to Effective Environmental Choices: Practical Advice from the Union of Concerned Scientists* by Michael Brower
- *The Naturally Clean Home* by Karyn Siegel-Mayer
- *The Story of Stuff* by Annie Leonard
- *Triple Bottom Line: How Today's Best-Run Companies Are Achieving Economic, Social and Environmental Success – And How You Can Too* by Andrew W. Savitz'
- *Wear No Evil: How to Change the World With Your Wardrobe* by Greta Eagan
- *Zero Waste Home: The Ultimate Guide to Simplifying Your Life by Reducing Your Waste* by Bea Johnson