



World Organization of the Scout Movement
Organisation Mondiale du Mouvement Scout



Save the earth!

Peace between man and nature

THEME: The protection of our planet is not only a moral imperative but a practical need for survival if future generations are going to enjoy the earth as we do now! It is a task in which everyone can take part and, of course, Scouts should be at the forefront.

DURATION: 2 hours (up to 2 1/2 hours)

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: up to 40

STAFF REQUIRED: 1 leader and 3 facilitators for the three different project groups.

BACKGROUND

In terms of the eight treasures of the Culture of Peace, this workshop is closely linked to that of "Sustainable Development".

The concept of "sustainable development" was first used in the World Conservation Strategy prepared by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in the 1980s but acquired world-wide popularity when the World Commission on Environment and Development used it to assimilate the conflicting demands of "development" versus "environment protection", sometimes presented as irreconcilable enemies. The report of the Commission, entitled "Our Common Future", defined sustainable development as "...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". A quick look at this concept shows that it is, at the same time, dynamic, global and future-oriented. (For more information on the subject and its relevance to Scouting, refer to the document "Scouting and the Environment", see Sources, below.)





Since its inception, Scouting has been an “ecological” movement, well before the term acquired its present popularity. Indeed, the entire pedagogical approach of Baden-Powell was nature-based and nature-oriented. All the writings of the founder of the Scout Movement are permeated with a profound love of nature and respect for all natural phenomena. When he wrote his famous book “Scouting for Boys”, B-P gave it the sub-title “a handbook for instruction in good citizenship through woodcraft”, and he defined woodcraft as being the “knowledge of animals and nature”. This original inspiration is reflected in the Constitution of the World Scout Movement, which lays down, under the heading of “Duty to Others”, as a fundamental principle, “participation in the development of society, with recognition and respect for the dignity of one’s fellow man and for the integrity of the natural world”.

At the same time, it is clear that – today more than ever environmental problems represent an issue to which young people are particularly sensitive. Protecting the environment represents a significant challenge for young people. It has both a universal and spiritual dimension and it is a determining factor for the future quality of individual and social life. Consequently, actions to protect the environment can and should be used as a priority vehicle for the educational goals of Scouting and, as such, make the Scout Movement more attractive to more young people and, at the same time, more socially committed.

KEY MESSAGES

- Nature is a capital. We are the managers of that capital rather than the outright owners. We must therefore use the interest without damaging the capital.
- We have inherited nature from our ancestors, but, from a dynamic perspective, we have also borrowed it from our children.
- Therefore, the concept of sustainable development – far from being a purely theoretical vision – is very relevant to today’s world.
- These considerations fall into the context of reflection on what is needed to satisfy essential needs and what is superfluous. The judicious use of the earth’s assets should be a fundamental characteristic of Scouting and Scouts!



PURPOSE/AIMS/OBJECTIVES

- To raise young people's awareness of the importance of living with respect for and in harmony with their environment.
- To help the participants become aware of the vast range of activities in favour of the environment that they can undertake in their daily lives.
- To help them realise that every human activity has an impact on the environment and that, consequently, the "environment" dimension should be incorporated into all our projects.
- To help them understand that the Scout Movement when used in accordance with its purpose and principles can be a formidable tool for environmental education and action.

METHOD AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACTIVITY

Preparation

If the implementation of the workshop is going to follow the pattern suggested below, preparations should cover the different stages of the process.

For the initial warm-up exercise, prepare a set of cards with the suggested phrases. (Alternatively, they can be written on overhead projector sheets or on a blackboard or flipchart. In the latter case, they should be unveiled one after the other, not all at the same time!)

For Project 1, "PROTECT OUR LAND", you need to prepare two wooden boxes approximately 50 cm long, 30 cm wide and 10 cm deep (see sketch), two plastic sheets or aluminium foil, and two watering cans.

For Project 2, "EDUCATIONAL GAME", you need to prepare the board (see Annex No. 1), two packets of empty blue and red cards, and two or three dice.

For Project 3, "NATURE TRAIL", the organisers should select a place with the two characteristics indicated below (see Project 3): accessibility and enough variety of flora and fauna to appreciate natural beauty.



Implementation

1. Introduction and warm-up exercise

The leader welcomes the participants and invites them to join in a warm-up exercise to concentrate their minds on the subject matter. He has four cards (of different colours, if possible). Four volunteers are invited to draw one card each. The first one reads his card aloud and the leader puts two questions to the group:

- Who is the author of this quotation?
- What message does it convey in connection with our workshop?

Sample phrases:

"For those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, the forest is at once a laboratory, a club and a temple."

(For information: author: Baden-Powell, in "Rovering to Success", 1922.)

"Reduce your wants and supply your needs."

(For information: author: Mahatma Gandhi.)

"The human mind, the human heart, and the environment are inseparably linked together. In this sense, environmental education helps to generate both the understanding and the love we need to create the best opportunity there has ever been for peace..."

(For information: author: The Dalai Lama, 1991.)

"Think globally, act locally"

(For information: author: the French ecologist René Dubos.)

The leader makes the link between the phrases, the comments made by participants and the objectives of the workshop.

Duration: 15-20 minutes

2. Introduction of projects and selection by participants

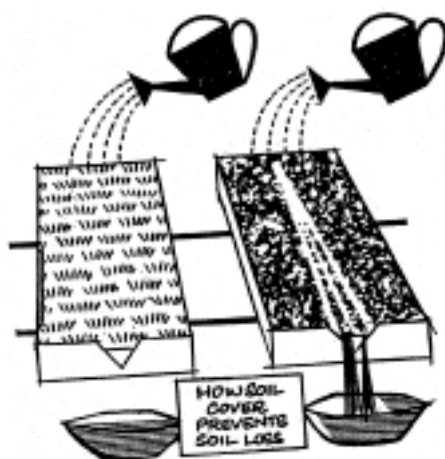
The leader introduces the three possibilities for project work, explaining a few details about each: objectives, modus operandi and practical guidelines.

Then the participants select one of the three project groups to work on. Each project group will be accompanied by a facilitator.

PROJECT 1: PROTECT OUR LAND

The objective of this project is to realise the links between deforestation and soil erosion. Participants from many parts of the world may have experience of heavy flooding producing landslides and affecting local communities.

Participants are invited to prepare a project demonstrating a very basic principle of soil and water conservation: raindrops are broken up by soil that is grass-covered or protected by the leaves of other plants. Grass and other roots open up channels in the soil to let the water penetrate.



Preparation of practical activity

Make two wooden boxes approximately 50 cm long, 30 cm wide and 10 cm deep. At one end of each box, cut a V 3.5 cm deep (see sketch). Line each box with plastic sheet or aluminium foil, to make it watertight.

Place a basin under each V cut. Raise the basins so that they are fairly close to the V cuts. At the back, raise both boxes about 3.5 cm off the table, to get a gentle slope towards the V cuts. You will also need two watering cans.

The object is to show what happens when heavy rains fall on bare soil – and how soil well covered with grass, or pasture, or crops, does not erode. Two demonstrators are required. With cans filled with water, each demonstrator simultaneously pours water from the same height – about 30 cm – and at the same rate, onto the far end of each box.

The water flowing through the sod will take longer to flow into the basin, and will be reasonably clean. But the water flowing over the bare soil will travel faster, and take more soil with it, and the water in the basin will be muddy.

For the demonstration to the workshop participants, your group might add a card reading: HOW SOIL COVER PREVENTS SOIL LOSS.

Attention: If you do this experiment at home, you cannot repeat it too often because the boxes will get waterlogged!

PROJECT 2: EDUCATIONAL GAME

A board game should be prepared in advance to show the participants how it works. (See Annex). It contains 25 squares/boxes and participants go back and forth depending on the luck of the dice! The name of the game could be "Save the world".

Their task is to propose actions which are either beneficial (blue cards) or harmful (red cards) for the environment. The actions will be written on cards. Participants advance according to the dice. If they fall on a blue square, they take a blue card from the pile, read it and advance the number of squares indicated on the card. The same with the red cards. If they fall on a red square, they have to go back a number of squares. The winner is the one who reaches square 25 first.



Here are a few examples:
BENEFICIAL PRACTICES (blue cards):

1. Use rechargeable batteries rather than disposable ones. The mercury given out by disposable batteries pollutes the earth and is extremely harmful. Advance 2 squares.
2. Bugs keep the soil healthy. So next time you come across one, save it rather than killing it. Advance 2 squares.
3. To get somewhere that is not so far away, go on foot or by bike rather than by car – it will save energy and keep you fit. Advance 2 squares.

HARMFUL PRACTICES (red cards):

1. First I open the fridge, then I decide what it is that I want to take out. Result: the door stays open too long. Go back 2 squares.
2. I turn on the tap and let the water run with no thought as to how much water I am wasting. Try to use water in moderation. Go back 1 square.
3. I throw paper away any old how, mixed with aluminium tins, old clothes, etc. Make an effort to recycle! Go back 2 squares.

Following the model, participants should prepare phrases and get the game ready to be played with the other workshop participants.



PROJECT 3: NATURE TRAIL

A nature trail is a path built across a piece of land to guide visitors from one point to another, showing them diverse aspects of nature, help them learn about, understand and value their environment and become committed to conserving it.

Within the framework of this workshop, the leaders will select a place which fulfil two conditions:

- 1) Be accessible to participants during the workshop activities
- 2) Have enough variety to help visitors (in the first place, the other participants) to appreciate natural beauty, geographical features, flora and fauna.

The five steps to building a trail:

Step 1: Identifying the terrain

For practical reasons, the site will have to be selected by the leaders beforehand in this case.

Step 2: List of attractions

Aside from the natural or cultural features of the selected site, the leaders should not forget to identify and suggest a place for the location of the two other group projects: the deforestation/erosion project and the educational game.

Step 3: Planning the trail

Step 4: Designing the trail

Step 5: Building the trail

The only task of the leaders should be to carefully identify any constraints (i.e. Is any part of the path closed to public use, or too overcrowded? Does it interfere with other workshops? Can it cope with the number of visitors anticipated? And so on). Once this has been done, the actual planning, designing and building should be left to the participants, with the help of the facilitators.



Attention: Two important recommendations for the nature trail are:

- In order to create your nature trail, ensure that the group in charge builds it without harming the environment (e.g. using small stones or broken sticks to mark a path).
- At the end of the "exhibition", each member present (in fact, all the workshop participants) will be asked to clear up the site by bringing back as much litter as possible (beer/soft drink cans, cigarette boxes, etc.).

Duration (of each project): 60-70 minutes

3. Demonstration and conclusion

Ideally speaking (depending on local possibilities), the activity should be arranged in such a way that projects 1 and 2 "converge" on the nature trail. In this way, participants will take part in the demonstration on deforestation and soil erosion, and then play the board game as part of the nature trail.

In closing the workshop, the leader will encourage participants to use the tremendous potential of Scout environmental activities back home.

REMARKS TO LEADERS

This workshop is complex, as it involves several parts, each requiring careful attention and preparation. The suggestions given here are general; they will have to be worked out in the context you are going to operate in. You will not always be able to decide on the physical location, the space available, and many other aspects which are preconditions for the workshop to be carried out successfully.

- As we have already indicated, in an ideal situation (but all depends on the physical facilities, the location and the space available) the nature trail could be the "natural environment" for presenting the experiment on deforestation and erosion, and also for playing the "Save the world" game, for instance at the end of the nature trail.

Co-ordination between the three project leaders is essential to the success of the workshop. The facilitators should therefore play their role to ensure that things proceed as efficiently and smoothly as possible.

In any case, early planning and good communication with the organisers of the Global Development Village is recommended.

- Should any of the three projects we present as examples appear to be impracticable, you can always modify it, to adapt it to local constraints. If need be, however, you can always run the workshop with two projects instead of three.
- The phrases presented in the warm-up exercise are just examples. They can be complemented by others from your own cultural and social context. This will make the exercise even more enjoyable.



SUGGESTED FOLLOW-UP

The document "Show and Do Conservation Kit" (see Sources below) offers more than 60 Scout environmental projects described in a very practical and attractive way. It is available from the World Scout Bureau, Geneva.

The board game has many possibilities for adaptation to different social and cultural environments. We would suggest preparing an adaptation, testing it with your local group and then using the revised version for wider circulation in your country.

Perhaps you have one or several varieties of nature trail in your country. If not, why not launch the idea for your Scout district or region?

SOURCES

The reference document "Scouting and the Environment" (see Background, above) offers a historical and conceptual perspective on the subject. It is available from the World Scout Bureau, Geneva, and also from SCORE International at score@world.scout.org

Most of the phrases for the warm-up exercise have been taken from the above document and also from Frank-Opie, "The Global Scout", Maskew Miller Longman and the World Organization of the Scout Movement, Cape Town, South Africa, 1993.

Project 1 has been taken from Vic Clapham, "Show and Do Conservation Kit", World Scout Bureau, Geneva, 1975, Project No.8.

Project 2 has been taken from the UNICEF Game Kit used in the Global Development Village at the 17th World Scout Jamboree, Korea, 1991.

Project 3 has been taken from the "Nature Trails" workshop carried out during the Global Development Village at the 19th World Scout Jamboree, Chile, 1998-99.





Annex

