



How sustainable are our grounds?

Investigation

- How are our school grounds looked after? Walk round the whole site and make a list of all the jobs that need to be done to keep the grounds looking good.
- Find out how each job is carried out. For example, is the grass cut with a powered mower?
- Think of another way of carrying out that job.

Jobs in the grounds	How they are done now	Other ways
Cutting the grass		

Research

For **one** of the jobs, find out what's good and bad about how the job is done now.

Find out what would be good and bad about the other way of doing the job.

Different ways of doing the job	Good things	Bad things
Using a powered mower	Fast	Uses petrol - pollution
Having goats in the grounds	Fun	Goat droppings! Goats eat flowers and shrubs!

Recommendation

How do you think this job **should** be done?

How to use this worksheet

School grounds focus:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be?
- How can we get there?
- Making the changes

Curriculum focus:

- Sustainable schools
- Science
- Geography
- Environmental studies

Purpose of this activity:

- To investigate how the grounds are maintained.
- To understand that different types of maintenance have different levels of sustainability.
- To make suggestions for increasing the sustainability of the grounds.

Equipment/materials needed:

- Research resources - internet or library.
- Worksheets for each pupil.

Preparation:

- Talk to your grounds maintenance contractor to gain their agreement to help your pupils on this project. Contractors who want their contracts renewed should be extra helpful!

What to do:

- For their initial investigation, pupils should walk round the whole site and make a list of different grounds maintenance activities which they think might take place, e.g. grass cutting, weed killing, fertilising flower beds.
- Write a letter to your grounds maintenance contractor asking how each of these activities is carried out - e.g. how the grass mower is powered, how weeds are killed. This could be in the form of a questionnaire agreed by all the pupils.
- For the research phase of this project, pupils should take one aspect of the grounds maintenance each and use internet or library resources to find out about the sustainability issues involved. They should also find out about an alternative method - if the current method is not very sustainable then the alternative should be more so.
- Invite your grounds maintenance contractor in to hear the pupils' recommendations about how the grounds maintenance could be made more sustainable. Encourage debate between your contractor and the pupils about different ways forward.

Extension:

- This activity can be made more or less challenging as required by changing the depth of information that pupils are expected to gather, or by providing more prompts or structure for their research.

Follow-up:

- If change is made as a result of this project, make sure you tell everyone about how the pupils were responsible! Put stories in your newsletter, on your website, on display boards - and write to LTL!