



Education for Sustainable Development Activities and Resources For High School Teachers

An effort to create a fairer more just world starts with you.

Electronics: Upgrade and what happens to the old one?

Cell phone, computers, tablets, digital cameras, and hotspots have become a common part of our lives. Upgrading to new technology is an annual or biennial event. Have you stopped to think:

- Where does your old cell phone or computer go when you are done with it? Does it stay on this continent?
- What do your old electronics contain that may be hazardous to the environment or the health of other humans?
- Who are the workers that take apart your old electronics?
- What happens to the plastics, glass, and metals in your old electronics?

If you do not know the answers to these questions watch the video [Buy it, use it, break it, junk it, it's toxic](#) or do research on the Internet.

- What does responsible e-cycling mean?
- The next time you dispose of used electronics, what questions will you ask of the recycler?

Resource: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mLtheejM30>

What is for lunch?

What you choose to eat has a larger or smaller effect on the planet.

- Why does eating meat have a larger effect on the environment than eating other foods?
- How does raising beef cattle affect the land? Water? Atmosphere?
- What is the conversion rate of feed to body weight for cows compared to chickens?
- Are there human health concerns from eating an abundance of beef?

If you do not know the answers to these questions, listen to this segment from National Public Radio, [A Nation Of Meat Eaters: See How It All Adds Up](#)

- How could you change your diet to better protect your own health and the health of the planet?

Resource:

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2012/06/27/155527365/visualizing-a-nation-of-meat-eaters>

Two great threats to sustainability

Globally, the two major threats to sustainability are population growth and overconsumption of natural resources. Southern nations accuse Northern nations of excessive use of resources, which is detrimental to ecosystems and is causing climate change. Northern nations point out that a sustainable world will not be possible with rapid population growth. Using the following data, calculate and think:

- How much energy does the United States use in one year compared to Haiti?
 - Per Capita?
 - Nationally?
- Create a chart that shows U.S. birthrates compared to the birthrates of other countries, and another chart that shows U.S. energy use compared to energy use of other countries.

- Discuss immediate threats and long-term threats to global sustainability.

Country	Births per 1,000 people	Energy use, kg of oil or equivalent (2011)	Population of Country (millions)
Canada	11.2	7303	35.3
China	11.9	2,029	1360
Dem. Rep. Congo	42.5	383	67.5
Haiti	26.0	320	10.4
India	21.8	614	1239
United States	12.7	7164.5	318
Germany	8.1	3,754	80.6

Because there is no commonly used statistic for consumer consumption (i.e., the flow of materials through people's lives), energy consumption is used as an indicator of consumption.

- What can you do in your own life to improve the sustainability of the world in the short-term and in the long term?

Sources of Data:

List of Sovereign States and Dependent Territories by Birthrate (OECD)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_sovereign_states_and_dependent_territories_by_birth_rate

Energy Use (kilograms of oil equivalent per capita)

<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.USE.PCAP.KG.OE>

List of Countries by Population

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_population

Social equity

Social equity is one of the three pillars of sustainability, along with economic and environmental sustainability. Observe your own community for a week. Then discuss:

- In what ways is your community striving to treat all people equally?
- How do you show respect for all people?
- Have you ever shown respect by:
 - Not making ethnic or racist jokes or laughing at other's such jokes.
 - Treating all people with respect no matter their station in life.
 - Acting less self-important.
 - Not feeling entitled to rank or privilege.
 - Walking humbly with others in distress.
 - Going the extra mile to include someone, like inviting her/him to eat lunch with you or to join your study group.
 - Going out of our way or routine to have social contact with persons who are marginalized or ostracized (e.g., working at a soup kitchen).