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Julie T Polaski

I chose these submissions specifically because I believe they are some of the best quality work I have completed. I am also very passionate about these topics.

Project Green Challenge Day 6 Greenest

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My school does not have a blog and not many students read the daily Illini, however EVERYONE does read BuzzFeed! Friends sharing and posting buzzfeed articles are more common than status updates on facebook. So I decided on making a buzzfeed article. It was accepted and here is the link:

<http://www.buzzfeed.com/julietp421e9eff9/how-to-be-green-in-college-1wcds>

How to be green in college

Step 1: Stop buying the bundle packs of water bottles. You're a broke college student do yourself and the environment a favor and get a reuseable water bottle. Preferably something cute that reps your school colors or has your initials monogrammed on it.



Step 2: Buy a bike. It saves carbon emissions on the environment , and bonus you don't have to wait for the bus that is always late anyway.



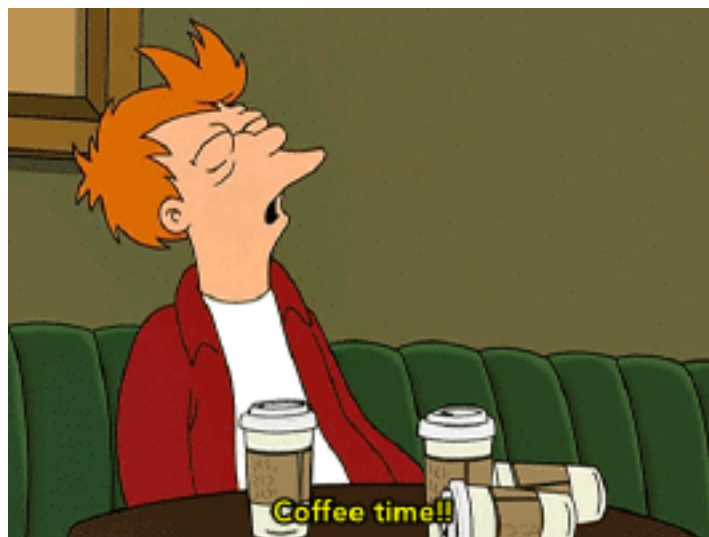
3. It is college you have crazy weeks where you're running from one late-night work session to the next hitting up socials, and heading from one party to the next. You're still spending quality time with the sheets on your bed, at least 30 hours a week, right? Why would you even consider spending so much time sleeping on sheets that were manufactured using chemicals that can be harmful to your body? Switch to 100% Organic bedding.



Step 4: Save electricity and invest in a drying rack. Someone is already using the drier in your dorm anyway.



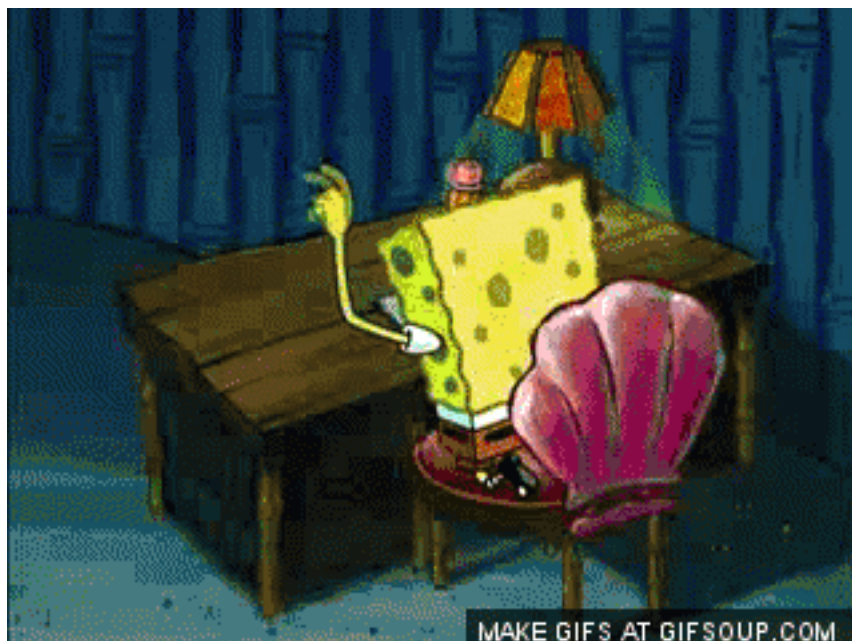
5. Americans throw away 25 billion styrofoam coffee cups every year. We get it you need your pumpkin spice latte. However, next time you get it bring a reusable coffee tumbler. Starbucks gives discounts if you bring your own mug.



6. College is stressful don't add more stress by causing your skin to break out because of your makeup! Switch to 100% organic make up. There are no harsh chemicals in it which irritate your skin. Not to mention most non-organic make up products have petroleum and aluminum in them. Mining these resources is responsible for the destruction of wide swaths of rainforests in South America.



7. Most importantly remember to recycle! Every little bit counts! Get a recycling bin just for your dorm room. Your going to be spending a lot of time rewriting papers anyway.



PGC Day 16 Greenest

These items are all available at my local co-op in Urbana IL



<p>One way that the conventional practice of manufacturing this product negatively impacts people and the planet.</p>	<p>Farmers of conventional almond milk are not paid fair wages.</p>	<p>Some non fair trade sugar cane fields use child labor.</p>	<p>Some non fair trade tea leaf fields use child labor.</p>	<p>Workers make very little money.</p>	<p>Sprayed with hazardous chemicals.</p>	<p>Workers do not work in good conditions.</p>	<p>Workers are not paid fair wages.</p>	<p>Workers are treated very poorly.</p>	<p>Dangerous conditions.</p>	<p>Oranges are sprayed with hazardous chemicals.</p>
<p>How you know the item is Fair Trade certified.</p>	<p>It says on the Bottle.</p>	 <p>FT logo</p>	 <p>FT logo</p>	 <p>FT logo</p>	 <p>FT logo</p>	 <p>FT logo</p>	 <p>FT logo</p>	 <p>FT logo</p>	<p>It says on the Bottle.</p>	 <p>FT logo</p>
<p>One positive impact that purchasing the fair trade version might</p>	<p>Better wagers for farmers</p>	<p>Help putting a stop to child labor</p>	<p>Help putting a stop to child labor</p>	<p>Better wagers for farmers</p>	<p>Taking a stand against non Organic and GMOs</p>	<p>Better working conditions for workers</p>	<p>Better wagers for farmers</p>	<p>Better working conditions for workers</p>	<p>Better working conditions for workers</p>	<p>Taking a stand against non Organic and GMOs</p>

Social Media Post:





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FASHION

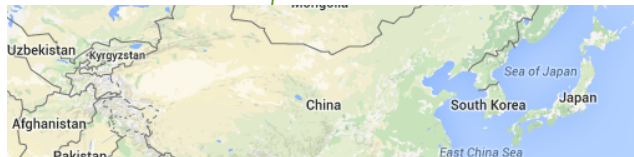
Be curious! Now that you are beginning to understand the impact of conventional cotton and other chemical-laden materials on people and the planet, let's look more closely at your favorite tee! Check the label inside your shirt. What kind of information (if any) does it provide, aside from cleaning instructions?

It has a tag saying made in china.



Record the brand name, materials used and where it was produced.

My Counter Collection
 75% cotton 25% polyester blend
 Made in china



Research the impact this item may have had on the people who produced it and the environment. Write down what you find (maximum 80 words).

I found that the people who produced it live in clothing factories. Often times they are teenagers who came in from farmlands looking to get more money to help support their families. They can work 8-16 hours a day for very little money. The fumes from the ink printed on it are toxic to the environment.

Be bold and wear your t-shirt inside out for the day to give these small print tag details the attention they deserve.



6 am backwards shirt selfie and ready to begin the day!

Whenever anyone tells you that your shirt is inside out, tell them that you're involved in PGC and start up a conversation about the information you have learned about fashion!

Was anyone surprised to hear why you were wearing your shirt inside out? What were their reactions? (maximum 100 words)

The most fulfilling interaction was from a barista at Starbucks. He asked why my shirt was inside out and I began to explain about PGC and what I have learned. He was so interested he said that he would look into signing up even though it would be too late to win it is not too late to learn. I also told him to check out the documentary *The true Cost* and that I heard it was good.



Although I did not get a picture with the Starbucks barista I did get a picture with my roommate Shannon who thought I didn't realize I put on my shirt inside out this morning! I explained and she then thought it was pretty cool.

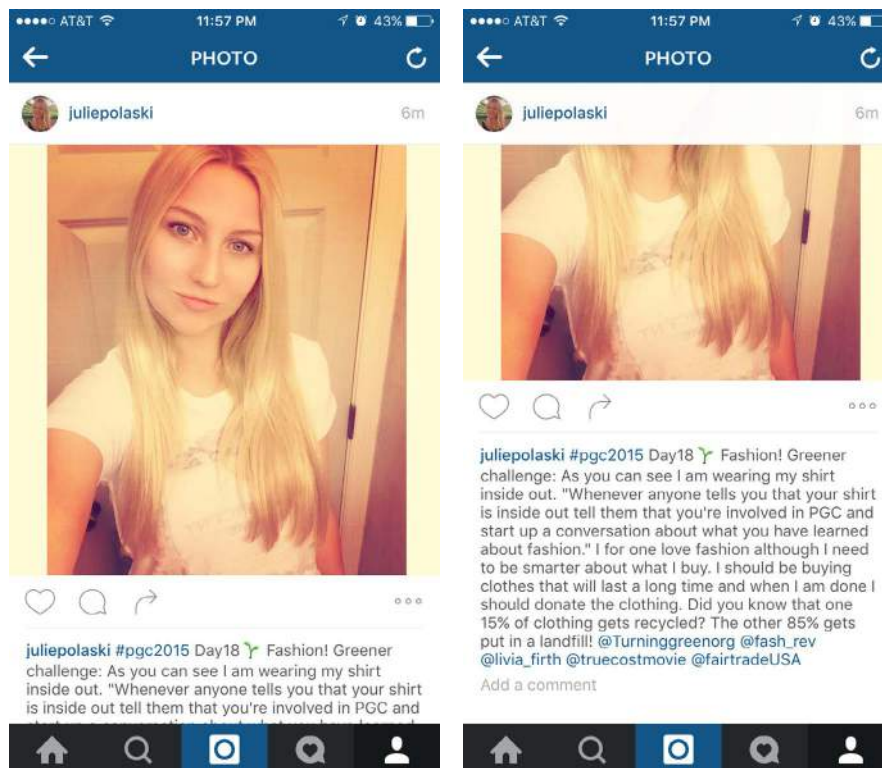


Briefly write about your interactions from the day.

Some people thought it was normal, other people gave strange looks, some people thought I didn't realize my shirt was inside out!

Social Media Challenge

Post a picture of yourself wearing your inside-out shirt to Instagram and caption it with the tag details, its impact on workers and the environment, and why you're wearing it inside out. Use the hashtags #PGC2015 and #insideout and tag @TurningGreenOrg, as well as @Fash_Rev @livia_firth @TrueCost-Movie (forces driving this change and campaign!) and @FairTradeUSA where applicable. Call out the brand of your chosen t-shirt, if possible.



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Water

Choose three items you use every day. Select three very different items, related to food, energy, clothing, transportation, etc.

Take a photo of each item and research its estimated "water footprint."

How much water is required to produce each? Does that amount surprise you?

Explain why those items require the amount of water that they do.

Suggest one alternative to each item that has a smaller water footprint. What changes will you make and why?



Favorite Pair of Blue Jeans

Estimated: 90 Gallons of Water

Actual: 2000 Gallons of Water!

Why? I was shocked to hear the number of 2000 gallons of water. However, now thinking it over it makes sense because the jeans are made of cotton that needs to be watered and there is water used in the manufacturing process.

Swap!: instead of average blue jeans from Target buy jeans made of organic cotton. They use 1/3 less water to grow cotton. They are also most time fair trade!



Morning Cup of Coffee

Estimated: 50 Gallons of Water

Actual: 840 Gallons of Water!

Why? Holy cow! 840 gallons of water just for my morning cup of coffee?!? I found that it is that number because of the growing and cultivating of the coffee bean.

Swap!: Instead of coffee in the morning I should switch to tea which has a water foot print of 90 gallons of water.



Leather Boots

Estimated: 500 Gallons of Water

Actual: 16,600 Gallons of Water!

Why? That is a crazy amount of water for just a pair of boots. After researching I found it was because you need to grow the grain to feed the cow and water for the cow to drink as well. Along with water for manufacturing.

Swap!: Instead of leather I will now be on the lookout for pleather (foe leather) boots.

Create a mini water conservation guide for your house or dorm! It should include graphics, facts, alternatives, etc. for the items you have researched. Post it in a bathroom or other water-intensive location that your housemates will see.

**INSTEAD OF COFFEE
DRINK TEA**

Not only is tea better for you but, it takes 840 gallons of water to produce one cup of coffee, while only 90 gallons of water to produce a cup of tea.

I printed and put up the graphic I designed right by the keurig so my roommates and I can see it in the morning and choose to have some tea instead.



I also posted it to instagram:



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Water

In the past decade, more and more personal care products sold in the US and around the world contain micro-plastic particle abrasives called "microbeads." These plastic particles may seem harmless, but just one container of them can pack in more than 350,000 plastic particles, which are then washed down the drain to pollute our lakes, rivers, and oceans. Last year, 5 Gyres discovered polyethylene plastic micro-beads in the Great Lakes.

Watch this video: [How Plastic Microbeads are Causing Big Problems.](#)

Explore the 5 Gyres website and [Story of Stuff's Ban the Bead](#) to learn how to get plastic off of your face and out of our waterways.

In three sentences, share why it's so important to keep microbeads out of waterways.



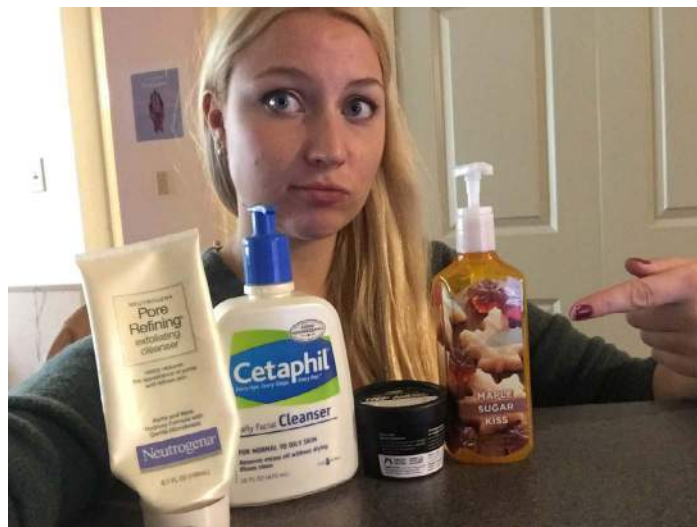
**WHAT GOES
IN THE OCEAN
GOES IN YOU.**

Image from [surfrider.org](#)

These microbead plastics absorb dangerous toxins. It is detrimental to our ecosystems because fish, birds, and whales are consuming it. It then goes back up the food chain to humans.

Do any of your bath or body products contain plastic microbeads? Be on the lookout for labels that use words like "exfoliating" or ingredients such as polyethylene or polypropylene.

Which products did you find microbeads in? Take photos of them.





When looking through by face wash products I found an exfoliator that I used which contains microbeads! After learning how damaging these products are I hear by promise to no longer buy products which contain microbeads.



Instead of the Neutrogena exfoliator I also own an exfoliator from Lush an all nature, fair trade, vegan brand. It works great and contains no micro beads!



Other products I found with microbeads included hand soap from bath and body works. After learning about toxic chemicals in products on PGC day 9 from bath and body works and now the micro beads, I now need to hit up whole foods and buy a greener alternative such as Acure's Tropical Citrus Castile Soap.

Now that you're informed, take action and sign 5 Gyres' petition and Story of Stuff's petition to ban plastic microbeads. (Yes, two petitions!)

Research two other toxins, pollutants, or plastics that could be contaminating waterways.

What are those pollutants? What problems do they cause? How could you reduce or stop the problems?

I signed Gryes petition. I wanted to sign the Story of Stuff's petition to ban microbeads but it was closed. Closed because governor Brown in California signed into law AB 888 which will put a stop to polluting plastic microbeads in California and beyond!!! :D



Other major pollutants in our waterways include fertilizers and pesticides. These make our way in our ocean to algae and other plants which then cause ocean dead zones! I can help stop this problem by buying organic and non gmo produce. Along with signing petitions against gmos.

: dead zones

Social Media Post:



5 facts

-Objects that you may be using every day may contain hazardous chemicals, such as lead, mercury, arsenic, and PCBs, that are endangering you and your family.

-Over the last 50 years, from 70,000 to 100,000 different chemicals have been introduced into the world's markets, with about 1,500 new ones added each year.

-Air fresheners: Anything you breathe in eventually ends up in your bloodstream. Plug-in scents or synthetically scented candles many contain chemicals called phthalates, which have been linked to reproductive problems. Instead, choose candles made with essential oils and fresh flowers to scent your home. Also, try using baking soda and white vinegar as odor absorbers.

-A study released earlier this month found strong evidence that exposure to 11 chemicals, including lead, PCB, arsenic and fluoride, can lead to neurodevelopmental disorders in children.

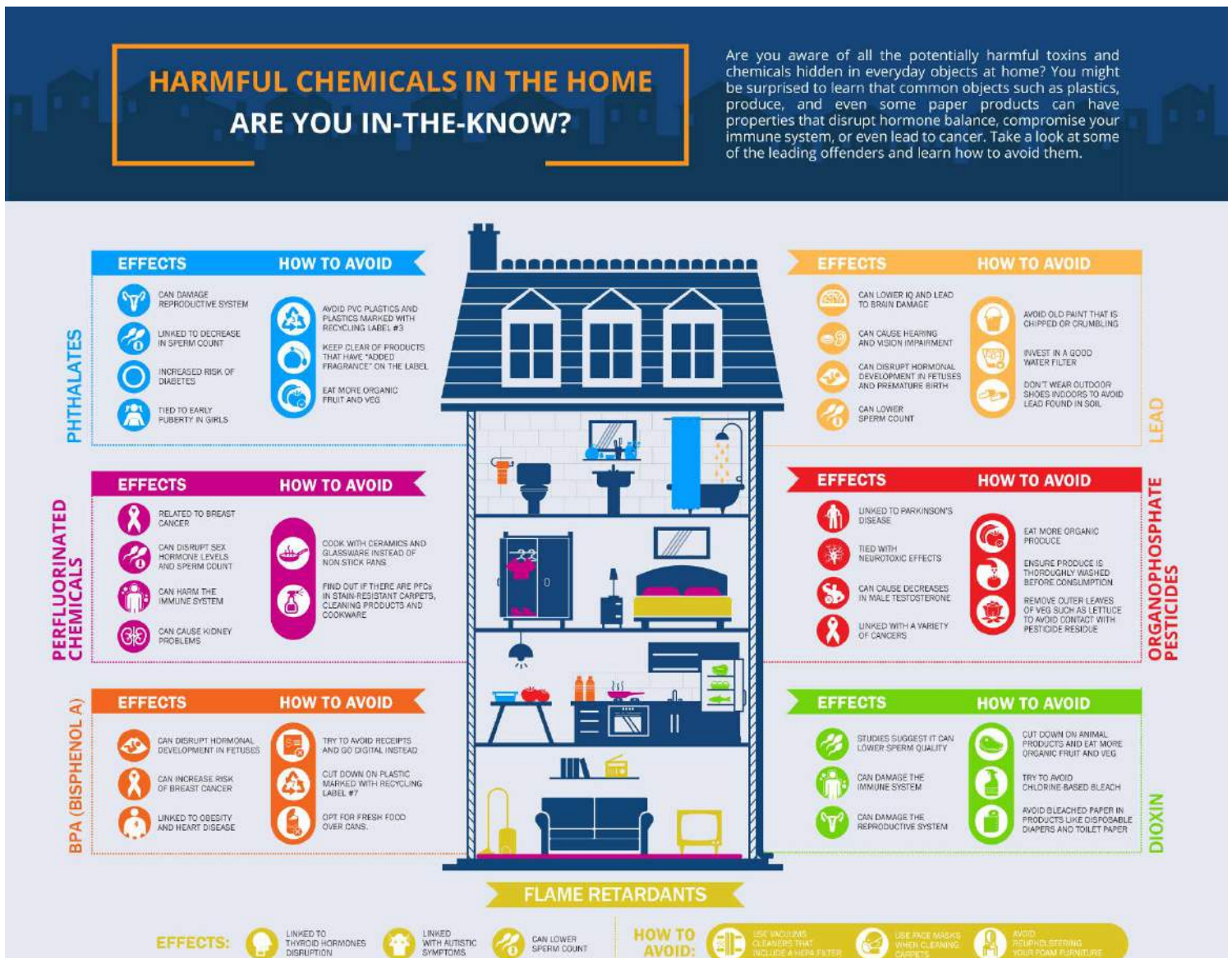
-Over 150 Concerning Chemicals, Like Carcinogens And Parabens, Are Found In The Urine Of The Average American.

Sources:

<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2008/12/23/10-dangerous-everyday-things-in-your-home.aspx>

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/03/24/shocking-facts-cleaning-products_n_4688024.html

2 infographics or other visuals



Toxic chemicals are in your home

PFCs (perfluorinated compounds)
Used in:
• clothing
• cookware
• food containers
• carpets

BPA (Bisphenol A)
Used in:
• food can linings
• baby bottles
• receipt paper
• CDs and DVDs

Formaldehyde
Used in:
• carpeting
• soaps and detergents
• cabinetry
• glues and adhesives

Phthalates
Used in:
• air fresheners
• paper
• vinyl tile
• wood varnishes and lacquers

Toluene
Used in:
• paints
• flooring adhesives
• plumbing adhesives
• adhesive removers

PBDEs (polybrominated diphenyl ethers)
Used as flame retardants in:
• furniture
• electrical equipment
• TVs and computers

Toxic chemicals are in your body

BPA is found in 9 out of 10 Americans

PFCs, PBDEs and phthalates are in 99% of pregnant women

232 toxic chemicals were found in umbilical cord blood from U.S. newborns

They're putting your health at risk

Fertility problems are linked to PFCs, PBDEs and phthalates
up **40%** between 1987 & 2002

Asthma is linked to toluene and formaldehyde
2x higher since 1980

Parkinson's disease is linked to trichloroethylene and other chemicals
100% increase expected by 2030

©2012 Environmental Defense Fund

2 Videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBO6rP1Mw2Y>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrfC0ilXh1M>



Toxic Household Products Exposed - Infowars.com



Green Living: How to Create an Eco Chic Living Room | Personal Health & Development | Gaia

Devise a short lesson plan that you could use for this topic.

Your lesson could be a lecture or something more interactive. It should be approximately 10 minutes in length.

I would begin by asking question of what they think their products are made from and how safe they are on a scale from 1-10. I would then say a devastating statistic of how many toxics they deal with daily just in their bedroom. From there I get everyone involved with a game called hazard or non hazard (explained in next question.) After I would talk about a few of the danger toxins and why they are dangerous. After I would show the video "toxic Household Exposed" We would have a group discussion of thought from the video. Following that I would show "Simply Green" which is about how to transform your space into a greener one

Think about how you would engage your audience. Write down your planning process.

Sort and classify 41 product labels according to hazard level and hazard category. Winning team gets a prize. Then explain why the most of the bad ones are hazardous to our health.

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Sustainable Agriculture

Read about this Friends of the Earth project on the environmental impacts of conventional agriculture. Read the Center for Food Safety's FAQs about glyphosate and cancer risk. Share 5 things that you learned or surprised you from both readings. Write a few sentences with your thoughts on conventional agricultural practices and what you would like to see done differently.

- I was surprised to learn that Glyphosate (one of the largest possible carcinogenics to humans) is the most heavily used pesticide in the world. Due to Monsanto.



-Animals are fed a diet of GMO grains, grown with large amounts of toxic pesticides and fertilizers.

-Animals are raised in cruel conditions and pumped with growth hormones and antibiotics so that they do not get diseased.



-Due to over use of antibiotics we are starting to become resistant to them.



-Raising billions of animals in confined feedlots generates mountains of toxic manure that pollutes our air and water. " Source: <http://www.foe.org/projects/food-and-technology/good-food-healthy-planet#sthash.pzpVMHqJ.dpuf>



Ideally I would want the slaughter of other living creatures so humans can have a snack illegal. However, right now the U.S. is far off from such a future. Right now we can promote more meatless options to be available in restaurants. I gave a friend of mine a part of panera's meditaranian veggie sandwich and now it is her favorite sandwich at panera. Being vegan and going into restaurants there are not as many options. If restaurants started to incorporate more meatless options into their menu and the demand for meat went down it would dramatically help the health of our planet.



"American consumers are drinking almond milk in record numbers. Sales of the non-dairy product are now more than \$700 million a year— up 40 percent in 2014 from 2013." This is great! America is starting to make a shift. It would be smart for farmers to switch to the more sustainable non-dairy market.



"The time will come when men will look upon the murder of animals as they now look upon the murder of men." ~ Leonardo da Vinci



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Sustainable Agriculture

Research the environmental impacts of Big Ag (conventional farming), not limited to only meat and dairy production. Pick three terms that you feel encapsulate the impact of Big Ag on the environment. Write a short definition of each term and link to one news article, blog, published journal, etc. that speaks to it. Select three terms that you feel define sustainable farming and provide a short definition for each and link to one news article, blog, published journal piece, video etc.

Damaging



Big Ag is one of the number one cause in damaging our environment. (Air Pollution, Deforestation, water pollution)

Damaging- having a detrimental effect on something.

Article: http://www.ucsus.org/food_and_agriculture/our-failing-food-system/industrial-agriculture/hidden-costs-of-industrial.html#.VisBKM5B9w4

Cruelty

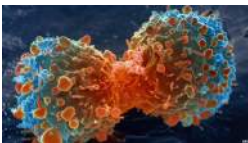


Largest contributor in animal cruelty. Some pigs live their entire lives in cages so small they can not turn around.

Cruelty-behavior that causes pain or suffering.

Article: <https://www.asPCA.org/fight-cruelty/farm-animal-cruelty>

Cancerous



Pesticides such as Glphoste (one of the largest possible carcinogenics to humans) is the most heavily used pesticide in the world.

Cancerous- cause or trigger of cancer.

Article: <http://www.panna.org/human-health-harms/cancer>

Sustainable Farming



Organic

organic- a method of crop and livestock production that involves much more than choosing not to use pesticides, fertilizers, genetically modified organisms, antibiotics and growth hormones.

Article: <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=organic-agriculture.html>



non-GMO

non-gmo- non using genetically modified organisms.

<http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/01/20/378361539/how-your-food-gets-the-non-gmo-label>



Fair Trade

Fair Trade-is a social movement whose stated goal is to help producers in developing countries achieve better trading conditions and to promote sustainability. Members of the movement advocate the payment of higher prices to exporters, as well as higher social and environmental standards.

Article: http://fairtradeusa.org/press-room/in_the_news/marketwatch-fair-trade-labeling-extends-beyond-coffee-and-chocolate-and-world



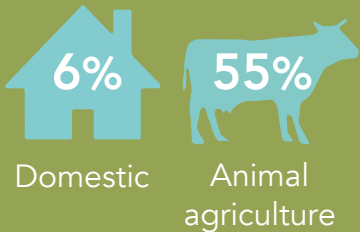
Environment

Raising livestock is the leading cause of:

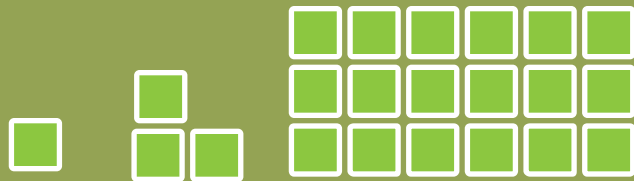


Global Warming Deforestation Ocean Dead Zones Water Shortages

USA
WATER
USE:



Land usage to feed 1 person for a year:



For more information, check out the documentary *Cowspiracy*



Health

On average, people who eat a plant-based diet live 6-10 years

Meat produces carcinogenic compounds when cooked. Called heterocyclic amines, they're produced when animal flesh is heated to high temperatures. HCAs form when amino acids and creatine react at high temperatures. There has been 17 identified different HCAs resulting from the cooking of meats such as beef, pork, fowl, and fish. These carcinogens are responsible for low energy levels, extra fat stored, along with causing many more health problems.

Plant based diets are used to treat and cure:

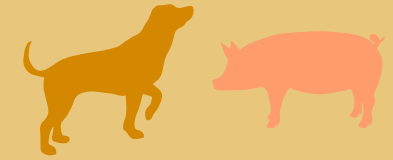
- Heart Burn
- Acid Reflux
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Irritable Bowl Syndrome
- Acne

For more information, check out the documentary *Forks over Knives*



Ethics

Why love one but eat the other?



Pigs, chickens, cows, and fish feel pain and want to live.

Beating, boiling and dismembering animals alive is common-place in today's slaughter houses. To kill the animals slaughter houses hang pigs and cows by the leg, slice their neck and let them bleed till death. The process takes 2-5 hours.



"The time will come when men will look upon the murder of animals as they now look upon the murder of men." ~ Leonardo da Vinci

The idea that some lives matter less is the root of all that is wrong with the world ~Dr Paul Farmer

For more information, check out the documentary *Earthlings*

^I originally have been working on the leaflet above for UIUC vegan club. However todays challenge motivated me to get it done because it fit well with todays theme!

Social Media Post



Ripple Effect

Name one particular challenge from this month where you actually created a ripple effect by influencing your school, family or friends to make a concrete change.
What did it feel like to have a tangible, positive impact?
Did you use a particular tactic or strategy to influence that person? Do you think the strategy worked well or would you try a different approach in the future?
Create a flow chart that depicts the ripple effects of this one action.

The most influential thing I have done this month was that I influenced my roommate Alicia to become vegetarian.



Over the past month I have been cooking more and going out for food less. (as a result of trying to have zero waste) She saw the food I was eating and wanted to learn how to make it. On meatless Monday challenge I showed her facts on why it is important. She then continued to research more herself about the issue by watching documentaries such as "Cowspiracy" and "Earthlings."



It felt great knowing I have influenced someones life for the better. Since she has been eating a more plant based diet she claims to have more energy! I do think this strategy worked well. In fact next Wednesday I am headed out on the quad with my vegan club to pass out free vegan desserts and had out informative fliers. As the old saying goes "You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar." Every college student loves free food.



The Ripple Effect



Friends and family take notice and ask about vegetarianism. They learn and tell others.



She feels more energized and healthier.

Alicia goes vegetarian



Buys & supports more vegetarian food items.



Demand for meat goes down. Less animals are slaughtered.



More water is saved.

It takes more than 2,400 gallons of water to produce 1 pound of meat.



VS.

1 pound of wheat takes 25 gallons.



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Ripple Effect

*This challenge is all about inspiring others to 'DOT' (Do One Thing)!
Get at least 5 people in your community to commit to Doing One Thing to live more sustainably today (choosing reusables, buying FLOSN food, conserving water or energy, etc.)*



Sandra Franco

She committed to unplugging charging cords when not in use. Sandra also said she would start buying more organic produce.



Julie T Polaski

Today I bought a clean air plant instead of an air purifier.



Phill Baziac

Today Phill switched his light bulbs to more eco-friendly alternatives, to be green and save more money on electric.



Eric Bussean

Today Eric invested in a reusable Starbucks tumbler.



Alicia Verhgese

We use to put recyclables on the floor next to the garbage can. Alicia did not like to recycle because she did not like how it looked. So today she made her own recycling box that we can throw our recycling into.

How did watching others D.O.T. impact you? What was your favorite action taken by someone else?

It was great seeing my friends start to change their lives for the greener! Some were very interested in what I have been doing with PGC and have been very supportive! It is great to have friends that want to learn and better themselves with you.