

EcoChallenge - Teachers

Take a look at the EcoChallenge examples listed below. They are separated by three categories: Activity-based Projects, Home-Based Projects, and Deep Dive projects. We know that each classroom, teacher, educator and community has different time, resources and motivation, that is why we want to make it as easy as possible to succeed in these projects. This is to help educators and teachers make informed decisions on how they want to spend their EcoChallenge resources in the year.

- The EcoChallenge can be woven throughout the BR program and offers student-based action projects. These hands-on activities aim to inspire action and model behaviour change.
- The BR program has lots of games, videos and activities but the EcoChallenge is where teachers, students and educators get to 'choose their own adventure' and dive into action projects.
- Generally, educators have time/budget to support one or two EcoChallenge projects (depending on scope) during the program, but teachers are welcome to do more projects!
- Teachers can share their EcoChallenge successes by entering their projects in our EcoChallenge Contest. Each entry will be placed in a draw to win up to \$1200 in cash prizes.
- Teachers and educators can also make up new projects as long as they help to inspire action and model change around BR topics.

ACTIVITY BASED

Activity-based projects are projects that can be scheduled during a normal classroom time, at lunch or as an activity that small groups rotate through while the rest of the class is doing school work. These projects are facilitated by the educator.

Teacher Support Time - Minimal. Project facilitated by educator.

Required Classroom Time - Usually takes place during a 75 min and extra BR lesson.

Snack Bags

Students have a chance to learn some hand sewing skills by making cloth drawstring bags. These snack bags are machine washable and can be used for snacks in their lunches instead of plastic bags.

Granola Bars

Students will improve their cooking skills by making 'Real Food' and also make the link of reducing packaging/waste by making homemade snacks for their lunches. This activity could be expanded or changed to include local foods, or making salad from greens from a school garden.

Planting

Many schools now have school gardens or are near a community garden. In this activity students could plant radishes, spinach, lettuce, kale in April to harvest in June. This links with waste reduction and food EcoFootprint categories.

HOME BASED

Home-based EcoChallenges are activities and investigations that students can do at home. Some students really enjoy sharing these activities with their families. Schools and classrooms have different cultures around home-based activities so the educator and teacher should discuss if these options would work. These require support from the teacher to assign the EcoChallenge as homework so that the information comes back to class and the educator can lead a discussion around the topic. The home-base EcoChallenges can fit into 15 minutes at the end or beginning of a lesson with the educators. Schedule these outside the Lifecycle of Stuff and Energy Debates project times.

Teacher Support Time: Medium. Assign, track and collect homework.

Required Classroom Time: 15-min set up. 15-min to discuss results in a BR lesson time

Screen Free

Kids are to put their families to the test by spending a night at home using no screens. They can pledge to have a t.v., computer and screen-free evening/day/weekend. They should track the number of hours they were screen-free, what wasn't used (that would've been) and record what they did instead. Note: this could also be upgraded from a screen-free to electricity-free challenge.

Short Shower Challenge

Students track how much water their showers use and then challenge their family to reduce the length of their showers over a 5-day period to save water and money on their energy bill. Download the Short Shower EcoChallenge document below.

Phantom Find

Students find the phantom electricity users in their home or school by looking for all the red lights (electronics that continue to use energy when not in use) and map them. Students then identify ways to reduce phantom energy use.

DEEP DIVE PROJECTS

Deep Dive projects require the most time and effort from both the teacher and the educator. They can also be impactful and rewarding. Many schools and teachers have pet projects (that align with BR topics) they want to do or try but maybe don't have enough time/resources for them to fully come to fruition. Educators can collaborate on projects to supply ideas, support activities, and materials to help move the project along. Educators can check in with the progress of these projects and facilitate project discussion for 15 minutes during BR lessons. Educators can also help out during extra lesson or lunch time depending on what is needed to achieve the project goals. However, the teacher will need to take the lead in any deep dive projects to make sure the motivation, consistency, and the momentum continues. The educator and teacher should have discussions on how these project will fit with the rest of the school activities (breaks, other school work, school trips, time of year) so that it will fit into the schedule.

Teacher Support Time: High

Required Classroom Time: Variable depending on project

Track Your Trash

Track how much garbage you make in your class. Designate student 'weighers' to track the amount of waste you create for 5-10 days. As a class, choose to take an action to try and reduce the amount of garbage you create, then track the amount of waste you create for another 5-10 days. Can you reduce the amount of garbage you make as a class?

Compost This

Start collecting compostables in your classroom. Borrow a vermicompost bin (or start one yourself) to start composting OR take it to an existing compost bin. Track how much less waste you make.

Reduce & Reuse

Host a toy swap at for your class or school to encourage students to get rid of their old toys (that are in good working condition) and get new ones that don't cost the planet. Donate all the remaining toys to a second hand store. Track the number of toys (and weight if you would like) that are brought, the number that are taken to the second hand store and number of students that participate.

Lunch Waste Diversion

This could be a waste-free lunch week contest where before the event, the students do a variety of activities to support the contest. Activities could be posters, announcements or newsletter home to share tips and tricks to create less waste. The students could also have a session to make reusable sandwich bags, or show how you can make

homemade snacks. Track numbers of announcements and waste diverted in this activity.

Read below to learn more about some EcoChallenge success stories from other BR classes...

DEEP DIVE PROJECTS

- Students were inspired after taking the **“Track your Trash” EcoChallenge**. They identified the issue of littering around their school and came up with a solution: they felt easier access to garbage and recycling cans would help all the students at the school reduce the playground litter. To resolve this issue, they not only purchased new, metal tins, but also created and performed a play to help explain their solution with the rest of the school.
- Bringing a worm bin into the classroom for the whole year helped one class with their **“Compost This” EcoChallenge**. Students loved feeding the worms the waste food that would normally end up in the garbage. The problem solved when their bin got fruit flies and everyone involved thought the project was a big success.
- Students felt inspired to make a difference after learning about the lack of clean water in other countries in the Our Water lesson. Students hosted a make, bake or reuse sale to fundraise and also went to their local Credit Union to request funds. The Grade 5 class donated a total of \$1500.00 to Me to We to support rural water projects in Tanzania.
- Invermere students got cooking in the classroom to create ‘real’ food together. They made energy bites, sweet potato fries, juice and chocolate avocado pudding. All students helped prepare these tasty dishes, and then went home with a cookbook of recipes.
- Nelson students took the **“Tips and Tricks” EcoChallenge** and made posters and delivered presentations about litterless lunches to all the other classes. Students decided that no more juice boxes or yogurt containers were allowed in the school garbage, so that all had to return home.
- Revelstoke students did a **“Walking” EcoChallenge** in Feb and had 70% of students take part. In May they then did a Bike to School week and had 80% uptake.