



# Chalk Talk

Greetings | Feature | News | ECO Contest

**PLEASE SHARE CHALK TALK WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES !!!****Letter from the Editor**

Dear Educators,

**Can the environment save the economy? The future is bleak as long as the environment takes a back seat to the economy and that has to change before any progress can be made. The advent of global warming should be a wake-up call but society continues to hit the snooze button on the alarm clock.” [The Toronto Star, see News, below]**

I think that one of the most troubling outcomes of the economic downturn that began in 2008 is the impact it has had on the environment.

Everyday we hear about another environmental program that has been shelved or postponed due to lack of funding. Now, when deficits are sky-rocketing and jobs have been lost in the tens of thousands, spending money on the environment has been put on the back-burner.

The damaging effect on sea life from the devastating oil spill in the Gulf last year was frightening, followed by the equally disturbing recent reports from Arkansas, then spreading globally, about the thousands of dead birds that have ‘fallen’ out of the sky. Initially blamed on fire-works and storms, there has been no credible theory offered to explain the occurrences. Can we afford to view the need to protect the environment and the need for renewable energy sources as being incompatible?

While it may be that the human beings may fare worst of all life on Earth if the environment worsens, it may be equally true that we stand to gain most by finding sustainable and renewable energy sources that do not harm the environment. Hope for a better future must be rooted in a strong partnership between the economy and protecting the environment.

This week’s issue features classroom resources about reducing our **Ecological Footprint** and an exciting **Eco Contest** for grades K to 5.

CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting the important work of teachers by providing resources on a range of topics for the classroom. We invite you to visit our website at [www.4edu.ca](http://www.4edu.ca) to view the many free teachers’ resources on offer. [Let us know what you think!](#)

Mary Kovack

**Calling all Junior EcoVoyagers!**

Does your classroom take nature walks, recycle, compost, or plant trees? This year, your Kindergarten to Grade 5 students can become Junior EcoVoyagers by taking part in the **EcoVoyagers Junior environmental program**. Visit [www.ecovoyagers.ca](http://www.ecovoyagers.ca) to download free beautifully illustrated ecological footprint lesson plans and tell us about the actions your class is taking to help protect our planet.

There is one unit per grade from Kindergarten to grade 5 and each unit has two parts:

- A series of **Slide Presentations and scripts** to introduce the overarching concept for each lesson’s theme - Introduction to Ecological Footprints, Water, Transportation, Energy, Food and Garbage. These can be downloaded and printed as overhead presentations if a computer and projector are not available.
- A series of **Teacher’s Lesson Plans**, including student activities and worksheets. Each lesson plan provides background information, learning outcomes and how to implement the program in the classroom. The lesson plans expand on the Slide Presentations and are themed as follows - Introduction to Ecological Footprints, Water, Transportation, Energy, Food and Garbage.

**EcoVoyagers Junior lesson plans** provide a foundation with which to explore the concept of our **Ecological Footprint**. The goal of the lesson plans is to create empathy and a knowledge base about the people, flora, and fauna where students live and go to school. Click on the selections below, to download the slides and scripts:

- [Footprint Intro Slides](#) | [Footprint Intro Script](#)
- [Water Slides](#) | [Water Script](#)
- [Transportation Slides](#) | [Transportation Script](#)
- [Energy Slides](#) | [Energy Script](#)
- [Garbage Slides](#) | [Garbage Script](#)
- [Food Slides](#) | [Food Script](#)

Download the lesson plan for your grade, [here](#). See details, below, on how by using the Junior kit in your classroom, you can be eligible for the **EcoVoyagers Environmental Awards Program**.



## EcoVoyageurs Environmental Awards Program - Win \$2000 DEADLINE MARCH 7, 2011!



### HEY TEACHERS!

The **EcoVoyageurs Junior Environmental Awards Program** is back. You could win one of **10 prize packages valued at \$2000** for implementing an environmental class project.

Your class can become Junior EcoVoyageurs and **make our environment a little bit greener.**

Junior EcoVoyageurs learn to...



...and much, much more.

EcoVoyageurs Junior is a free Environmental Literacy program for Kindergarten to Grade 5. This **Ecological Footprint** teaching resource is curriculum-based and contains beautifully illustrated slides and lesson plans developed for Canadian classrooms.

To apply simply download the free grade-specific lesson plans and tell us how your class is taking action to protect the environment. For full details, application forms and lesson plans, visit [EcoVoyageurs.ca](http://EcoVoyageurs.ca) or call 1 800 668 1023

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Deadline for Applications  
March 7th 2011



It's easy to apply for the **EcoVoyageurs Junior Environmental Awards Program**. By using the on-line [EcoVoyageurs Junior teaching resource](#), your K to 5 classes can learn about their Ecological Footprint and become eligible for the EcoVoyageurs Junior Environmental Awards program. The Awards Program is open to all Kindergarten to Grade 5 teachers in Canadian schools.

To be eligible, complete an EcoVoyageurs Junior lesson plan with your class and tell us about the environmental actions your class is taking to benefit their classroom, their school, their community or maybe even the planet! You could win one of 10 Award packages consisting of a \$500.00 prize for the submitting teacher and \$1,500 for the teacher's school.

Use the [Contest Details and Application Form \(PDF\)](#) to enter your school and classroom information and attach your files and pictures that show your students' environmental activities. You may enter by mail or email. [Click here to see last year's the winning projects.](#)

The application deadline for the Awards Program is **March 7, 2011** at 11:59.59 pm Eastern Time. Winners will be announced on April 22nd, 2011. **Apply Today!**

## Website of the week



Every time we take a sip of water, enjoy a hearty lunch or hop into the car to visit a friend we have an impact on the Earth's natural resources. That impact is a kind of footprint, an **Ecological Footprint**, a metaphor for human impact on the Earth. The Ecological Footprint is a tool to measure how much nature we use and to help us live sustainability with the nature we have.

Almost 11 years ago, the [EcoVoyageurs](#) school program was launched to help students understand their Eco-Footprint. In 2009, a revitalized **EcoVoyageurs** program and website — [EcoVoyageurs.ca](#) — were introduced, which encourages young Canadians to take an even bigger step toward reducing their impact. The Ecological Footprint is made up of five categories — WATER, TRANSPORTATION, ENERGY, FOOD AND GARBAGE.

The up-dated version of the **EcoVoyageurs** curriculum-based educational resource is now available. Designed for intermediate grades 6-9, the kit includes a four-panel giant poster — 6' by 4' total size — teachers' guide, answer sheets, extensions, and student book. Free copies of this kit are available at [www.4edu.ca](http://www.4edu.ca). For additional environmental classroom activities, teachers are invited to visit the new [EcoVoyageurs.ca](#) today!



[Can the environment save the economy? – Brian McAndrew, TheStar.com, November 22, 2010](#)

Researchers believe the environment will be one of the big industries in the future... Can the environment sector grow quickly enough to become a major component of the Canadian economy? That question will be at the forefront of the upcoming Thinking Ahead For a Strong Future conference, Thursday and Friday at the downtown Metro Toronto Convention Centre, where a select group of research chair holders at Ontario universities will gather to debate what the country will look like by 2050. Barry Smit, who holds the research chair in global environmental change at the University of Guelph, will play the role of skeptic on the five-member panel on Economy and the environment: Can the environment save the economy? Smit says the future is bleak as long as the environment takes a back seat to the economy and that has to change before any progress can be made. The advent of global warming should be a wake-up call but society continues to hit the snooze button on the alarm clock. As one example, Smit cites the increased temperatures causing diminishing ice cover in the Arctic and threatening the polar bear population, which is finding it increasingly difficult to reach food sources. Survival of the polar bear means nothing to the larger economic picture and for that reason alone the species may be doomed. Only a shift in society's values — wanting to protect the polar bear solely in the interest of the polar bear — will bring a sign that environmental concerns can become a major factor as a part of the economy, Smit says. That moment won't be reached until society realizes that global warming is not threatening the planet, just its occupants. "The Earth will adapt just fine," Smit says. "But what about us? We have to transform the way we live on this Earth. We'll need a change of attitude in that when we want something, we just can't take it." Society has ignored the threats of global warming the same way it once held a lack of concern about cigarette smoking despite the medical evidence that it caused deadly lung cancer, Smit says. The oil and gas industries are working just as hard to persuade people and governments that global warming is not a looming man-made disaster as the tobacco companies tried to downplay cancer decades ago, he adds. Last week's stunning setback to global warming concerns in Canada when the Senate, acting at the behest of the Conservative government, killed climate change policy legislation passed by the united opposition parties in the House of Commons. That underscores the pessimism that pervades much of the environmental movement. [\[Read the entire article\]](#)

[Cool It: A documentary challenging global warming fears, starring "skeptical environmentalist" Bjorn Lomborg; Cool thoughts about global warming - Peter Howell, Film Critic, TheStar.com, November 25, 2010](#)

Four short years ago, Al Gore and Davis Guggenheim titled their environmental warning film *An Inconvenient Truth*, because they believed it contained ideas too radical for mass acceptance. How quickly radical thoughts become convention wisdom in our digital-dizzy age. One Nobel prize, one Oscar and untold other huzzahs later, *An Inconvenient Truth* has become conventional wisdom, with only crazy people daring to challenge its assertions about planetary overheating. And how ferociously the Chicken Littles rise to defend their squawks, despite more recent evidence that suggest Gore and Guggenheim weren't necessarily telling the whole truth and nothing but. Enter Bjorn Lomborg, the Danish professor, researcher and environmental firebrand who is the subject of *Cool It*, a doc by Ondi Timoner ... that seeks to chill global-warming fearmongering. Lomborg doesn't deny that rising planetary temperatures are a serious issue. But he refuses to buy into the argument that only complete lifestyle overhauls can solve the problem. In Lomborg's view, you can have your car and drive it too, by making smaller changes that are easier and less expensive to achieve... "This is not a doomed planet," he says, in one of his many public speaking events chronicled by the film. He's also the author of *The Skeptical Environmentalist*, a book published in 2001, around the time Gore began preaching the anti-global-warming gospel. Why, Lomborg asks, are governments so willing to expend scarce public funds and resources seeking to satisfy "the people who shout the loudest"? [\[Read the entire article\]](#)

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