

Lesson 9: All Together Now—Air, Water, Food, and Shelter





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Snapshot

In this final lesson, the students will review the key concepts from the program and pledge, both as a class and individually, to take action to create a healthier environment for themselves and their community.

Preparation and Materials:

- Group Pledge Poster 1, Individual Pledge Handout sheet, Take-Home Talk
- Flip chart and markers
- Black or white board
- Paper for group reporting
- Crayons or markers for decorating pledge sheets

Note: This lesson divides students into groups based on the number of total lessons you've done from the entire curriculum; for some, that may be seven groups, for others, it will be fewer.

Note: Please consider sharing your students' pledges/ideas/songs/raps on the EPA Recipes for Healthy Kids and a Healthy Environment Website at www.epa.gov/children/curriculum

Suggested Giveaways: Several organizations piloting this program found great success holding a graduation ceremony at the end of Lesson 9 and having the students present the individual and group pledges to their families or other groups of students.

Objectives—Students will be able to:

- connect the previous lessons to their daily lives;
- commit to taking action as individuals to improve their environment in a tangible way; and
- commit as a group to taking collective action to improve their environment in a tangible way.

Vocabulary: *environment, climate change, pests, greenhouse gases, drainage pollution, sustainable, local, pledge*

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Procedure:

1. Introduction and Pledges *(5 minutes)*
2. Investigate in Groups *(20 minutes)*
3. Present Options to Class *(10 minutes)*
4. Vote on Class Pledge *(5 minutes)*
5. Create Individual Pledges and Class Pledge Poster *(10–15 minutes)*
Optional Activity: Pledge Song or Rap Creation *(15–20 minutes)*
6. Close and Take-Home Talk *(5 minutes)*

Some Activity Possibilities:

- Brainstorming and presenting action ideas
 - Working with a community garden longer term
 - Walking through the building to look for leaks, lights left on, potential pest sites, etc.
 - Walking through the community to pick up trash
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1. Introduction and Pledges

(5 minutes)

Explain
Ask

We've spent the last *[insert the amount of time spent on these lessons]* working together to learn how we can create a safer environment for you and those around you. What have we learned about?

Prompts: What four things do all living beings need? What did we learn about water? What about sustainable living? What did we learn about pests? What about chemical cleaners? How about sun smarts and greenhouse gases?

Explain

One of the big ideas that we've talked about is how interconnected the earth truly is—what happens to our water impacts plants, animals, and us! How we get our energy impacts the atmosphere, which impacts the water and plants and animals and us. The world we all share operates on a delicate balance and if we change only one thing, it impacts many others.

Ask

What is one thing that we can do that will impact the environment positively?

Prompts: What if we pick up trash rather than letting it run into streams and rivers? How about turning off lights when we are not using them? What about walking instead of driving somewhere?

Explain

It's one thing to talk about doing these things; it's another thing to actually do them! We are going to determine which of these things we can do collectively, as a whole group, and which we can do individually. And then we are going to pledge to take specific steps to make our world a safer and healthier place. We're going to make this pledge as a group and see if we can get others to join us.

Ask

What's a pledge?

Prompts: At school when you say the Pledge of Allegiance, what are you doing? A pledge is a promise to do or not do something.



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2. Investigate in Groups

(20 minutes)



[Break up the students into groups based on the number of lessons from this curriculum that you completed. Ideally, the groups will be 3–5 students, but the groups can be larger.]



[Tell the students that each group will review some information from one of the weeks and brainstorm some ideas about what the class might do as a whole and what people could do individually.] We want to think about big actions that we can take and little actions that we can take. Your group should select one person to read the Review Card out loud, one person to record the suggestions, and one person to report on the ideas. The person who reports will need to be persuasive and compelling—they might even want to act out the actions that they are proposing. *[Give each group a sheet of paper.]* The class will vote on which idea is the best one. It will be the one that we will all pledge to do. *[Consider telling students that they cannot vote for their own group—they must vote for another group.]*



Briefly review each of the seven lessons:

- Lesson 2: Pesky Pests and Household Hazards
- Lesson 3: Breathing Easy: Keeping the Inside of Our Homes Healthy and Clean
- Lesson 4: Be Sun Smart!
- Lesson 5: Climate Change and You!
- Lesson 6: Keeping All of Our Waterways Clean
- Lesson 7: Healthy Water Inside
- Lesson 8: Sustainable Eating, Healthy Foods, and Community Gardens

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2. Investigate in Groups *(continued – page 2)*



Give each group one lesson Review Card and ask them to determine what actions the class could take as a whole and what actions individuals could take to make the community safer and healthier for everyone. Each group must recommend only one group activity, but they may recommend up to three individual activities.



Write on the board or flip chart:

- One action that the entire group can take to make the environment healthier
- Three actions that individuals can take to make the environment healthier



Give the class 8–10 minutes to come up with their suggestions. Circulate around the room and help students with their ideas. While students are working on this, write the seven (or how ever many groups developed) group names on the board or flip chart for the tally.



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3. Present Options to Class

(10 minutes)

Explain
Ask

You want to persuade the rest of us to go along with your idea for how we can collectively and individually take action. So, you need to be confident and convincing when you present your ideas. Present them with some flourish; stand tall and speak loudly. Explain why your ideas are the best. Which brave person is going to go first?

Do

As students present their ideas, ask them prompting questions such as the following: Is this hard to do? Can everyone do this? Do you need any special tools or knowledge to do this? Can you do this every day or is this a once in a little while action?

4. Vote on Class Pledge

(5 minutes)

Do

After all of the groups have given their presentations, summarize each group's proposed action. Ask students to vote only once for the action that the whole group will take. Tally the votes and declare a winner or do a combination of all the actions.

Note: You can also decide to have more than one pledge.



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5. Create Individual Pledges and Class Pledge Poster *(10–15 minutes)*

Explain
Do

*[Give each student an **Individual Pledge Handout** sheet.]* We just heard some wonderful ideas for individual actions that we could each take to make the community a little safer and healthier.

Ask

Which of these actions are you going to pledge to do today? Why did you pick this one?

Do

Give the students time to fill out their Individual Pledge sheets. Consider displaying the pledge sheets around the room or somewhere else in the building.

Do

While the students are completing their individual pledge sheets, write the class pledge on **Poster #1** (*class pledge*). As the students finish their individual sheets, invite them to sign the pledge poster.

Optional Activity: Pledge Song or Rap Creation *(15–20 minutes)*

Explain

Now that the class has decided on a group pledge, let's find a way to spread the word about what we're going to do. While in your groups, I want you to work together to create a song or a rap that explains the action we are taking as a group and why it's so important.

Do

Have each group present their song or rap.



Recipes for Healthy Kids and a Healthy Environment
Kids Building a Safer and Healthier Community



Individual Pledge

Name: _____

The world we share is interconnected and we all have to take action to make sure that the environment is safe, clean, and healthy for everyone. In order to create a healthier community, I pledge to:

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Poster #1



*Recipes for Healthy Kids and a Healthy Environment
Kids Building a Safer and Healthier Community*



Group Pledge

The world we share is interconnected and we all have to take action to make sure that the environment is safe, clean, and healthy for everyone. If we join together, our actions will have a greater and more lasting impact. In order to create a healthier community, we pledge to:

Signatures:



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7. Close and Take-Home Talk

(5 minutes)

Explain
Do

Close your eyes and take a nice deep breath. We've covered a lot today. We reviewed all that we have learned in the last several weeks about creating a healthy environment. We thought about and brainstormed actions that we could take to make our community safer and healthier. We created individual and group pledges to do our part to ensure that the world we share stays in balance for generations to come.

Explain

The difficult part now is keeping the pledges that we've made. We're going to hang this poster up and keep the pledge sheets that you made around us so that we can be reminded of the everyday actions that we have promised to take.

Take-Home
Talk

The coolest part about learning something new is sharing the knowledge. Tonight, when you get home, I want you to talk with your family about the pledge that we created today. What will you tell them? Which of the topics that we've learned about was most interesting to you? What actions can your family take together? What actions would be easiest for you to do at home? What do you already do? Do you recycle? Do you conserve water by taking quick showers? Does your family keep chemical cleaners out of reach? Do you all wear sunscreen and practice sun smarts? What are you already doing that you can do more of?

Explain
Do

*[Pass out **Take-Home Talk.**]* This Take-Home Talk sheet has some things that you can share with your family and some activities that you can do at home. It also has a family pledge. What can your family promise to do together to help make our world a little safer and healthier?

Explain

We've spent the last few weeks learning about ways we can take small steps to create a safer and healthier community and world for ourselves and others. Thank you for pledging to keep doing your part!



Take Home Talk

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To Share:

- All living things need four things to stay alive and thrive: air, water, food, and shelter.
- Our world is interconnected—what happens to our water impacts plants, animals, and us! How we get our energy impacts the atmosphere, which impacts the water and plants and animals and us. The world we all share operates on a delicate balance and if we change only one thing, it impacts many others.
- We can all take small, simple actions to positively impact the environment and our health.

To Do:

- **We Pledge To...** Think about all that we've shared with our families about environmental health, and talk with our families about some simple actions that we can pledge, or promise, to take altogether.
- Think about big actions that we can take and little actions that we can take.
- Ask for ideas from everyone and then vote on the one or two ideas that will be best for your family. You can all sign the pledge on the next page.

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Family Pledge

Names: _____

The world we share is interconnected and we all have to take action to make sure that the environment is safe, clean, and healthy for everyone. If we join together, our actions will have a greater and more lasting impact. In order to create a healthier community, we pledge to:
