Ecology Audit

How environmentally friendly are you?

A questionnaire booklet for primary school students



An initiative of

HOUSEHOLDERS' OPTIONS TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT (HOPE

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This audit booklet is based on the *Household Ecology Audit* created by Janet MacKenzie of HOPE, Victoria, and the revised *Household Ecology Audit* from Martin Chambers, Western Australia.

What is HOPE?

Householders' Options to Protect the Environment (HOPE) is a group committed to the aims expressed in the HOPE Charter.

Most people are aware of the global environmental crisis but feel helpless to act. "What can I do?" is the common response when the issue is raised. The movement called Householders' Options to Protect the Environment (HOPE) attempts to provide some answers to this question and overcome our sense of powerlessness.

HOPE is founded on a vision of a society which is ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable. HOPE members use their creativity and sense of fun to educate and inform people, in an attempt to transform our attitudes to the environment.

HOPE attempts to promote simple rules to live by such as:

- * use as little as possible;
- * create minimal pollution; and
- * prefer renewable, natural and local products.

These rules may not apply in every case, but they are guidelines by which people can assess their daily decisions. HOPE mobilises people by stressing the cumulative effects of individual attitudes and actions. There are simple ways in which we can all reduce our impact on the environment.

For information about HOPE and its activities, contact us at:

Postal address: PO Box 6118

Toowoomba West QLD 4350

Phone: (07) 4639 2135

Email: HOPEqueensland@yahoo.com.au

Website: http://green.net.au/hope

How Environmentally Friendly are You?

Introduction

Ecology is the study of the relationship between living things within the environment or ecosystem. There are very few places on Earth where humans do not play an important role in the ecology of the area. By participating in the Ecology Audit, you can measure your impact on the ecosystem in which you live.

The aim of the Ecology Audit booklet is to challenge you to consider your impact on the environment in your daily life, and think about areas for improvement. (We hope that this will increase your awareness of environmental impacts and improve your knowledge of environmentally friendly alternative behaviour.)

How to do the audit

Read each question carefully and answer all questions according to your current (not preferred) habits. Three responses are possible for each question: **never**, **sometimes**, or **always**.

When you have answered all the questions on the page, add your scores using the rating system in 'Score Yourself'. Compare your total with those for the three categories: **needs improvement**, **could do better**, and **very good**.

Read the 'Tips' to start thinking about what improvements you can make in your life. Share what you have learned with the class, friends and family.

We should all remember we are part of an ecosytem that provides for us. We must all take some responsibility for looking after it and ensuring a clean environment for all.

Above all, always ask yourself —

Am I enjoying life?

Can I enjoy life in a degraded environment?

What more can I do to look after the environment and myself?



A Personal Habits

Tick your answers to these questions. When you have done them all, work out your total.

| | | Never | Sometimes | Always | Score |
|---|--|----------|-----------|--------|-------|
| 1 | I make my own toys and things to play with | | | | |
| 2 | I give and receive home-made gifts | | | | |
| 3 | I am wasteful with paper | | | | |
| 4 | I take my own cloth bag when shopping | | | | |
| 5 | We use travel alternatives to the car | | | | |
| 6 | I clean up after myself and help out with household jobs | s \Box | | | |
| 7 | I love and support my family and friends | | | | |
| 7 | | | | Total | |

- Gifts made with love and a little hard work are more appreciated.
- A Paper is precious; use both sides before recycling it.
- Taking your own cloth bag when shopping makes plastic bags unnecessary.
- ₩hen shopping, choose environmentally friendly products.
- Ride your bike, walk, catch a bus or car-pool with friends to reduce the air pollution caused by using the car.





B Toys

1 I have too many toys in my room

2 I like toys that don't break easily

3 I use battery-powered toys

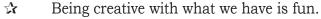
4 I wear second-hand clothes

5 I play with hand-me-down toys

6 I borrow books and tapes from the library

Tick your answers to these questions. When you have done them all, work out your total.

| Never | Sometimes | Always | Score |
|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | Total | |



- Second-hand clothes and toys can be as good as brand new and much less expensive.
- Lending and borrowing toys and books from the library is smart.
- Sharing books and toys with others means we all get to enjoy them.
- Batteries wear out and must be replaced regularly. Recycle used batteries.
- When you outgrow clothes or toys don't throw them in the rubbish, give them to charity so someone else can enjoy using them.





C Pets and Animals

My cat wears a bell and is locked in at night

We serve leftovers and foodscraps to our animals

I treat my pets well

My pet has a cloth flea collar

We clean up after our pets

Tick your answers to these questions. When you have done them all, work out your total.

| Never | Sometimes | Always | Score |
|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | Total | |

- Cats chase and catch native birds, lizards and insects.
- Leftover food can be given to animals to give them a tasty treat.
- Use a flyswatter or sticky-traps, instead of sprays, to get rid of pests inside your house.
- Collect your dog droppings when out on a walk and bury them in your garden.





D Energy Use

Tick your answers to these questions. When you have done them all, work out your total.

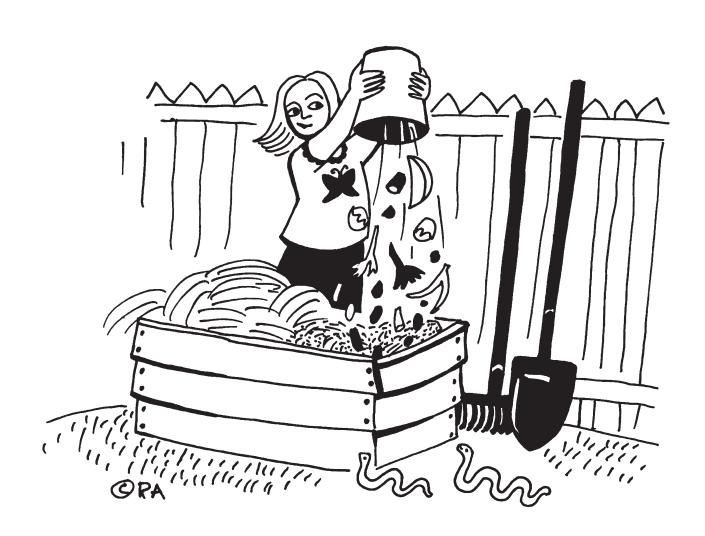
Alwaus

Score

Sometimes

| | | 2.0 | · · · | .555500666 | | .000.0 |
|----|---|---------------------------|--------------|------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | I wear clothes that suit the weather | | | | | |
| 2 | We only heat rooms we are using | |) | | | |
| 3 | In summer I open windows to get a cool breeze | | _ | | | |
| 4 | In winter I close the curtains to keep the heat in | | ב | | | |
| 5 | We have an insulated house | | 1 | | | |
| 6 | We use the heater and air conditioner sparingly | | 1 | | | |
| 7 | We open curtains/blinds to use natural light in our house | se [| 1 | | | |
| 8 | I turn off lights, TV & other electrical items when finishe | d | 1 | | | |
| 9 | I switch off lights in rooms I am not using | | 1 | | | |
| 10 | We keep our lights clean and free from dust | | 1 | | | |
| 11 | We use a solar clothes dryer (clothes line) | | | | | |
| T | ips | | | | Total | |
| 公 | Wear a jumper rather than turning on the heater; heat the person, not the room. | ☆ | Open lights. | = | he daytime ins | tead of putting on the |
| 公 | Close the doors to rooms not in use. | $\stackrel{\wedge}{\sim}$ | Keep v | vindows clean—dirt ab | sorbs light. | |
| 众 | Close the curtains in winter to keep heat in; and in summer, | $\stackrel{\wedge}{\sim}$ | | light globes and shade | | ght. |
| | to keep heat out. | $\stackrel{\sim}{\sim}$ | Find a | cool shady spot, rathe | r than turning o | on the air conditioner. |
| | o detter 18-22 Very good | 11-17 Could do | hoement | 0-10 Needs impro | | |

Never



E Gardens



Tick your answers to these questions. When you have done them all, work out your total.

Almans

Sometimes

| | | 1.000. | 2011100111100 | 11000 0090 | 200.0 |
|----|--|--------|---------------|------------|-------|
| 1 | Our garden produces lots of food | | | | |
| 2 | Our garden provides shade and shelter | | | | |
| 3 | We choose plants that need lots of water | | | | |
| 4 | Our garden attracts native birds and wildlife | | | | |
| 5 | We give our plants only the water they need | | | | |
| 6 | We compost leaves and prunings | | | | |
| 7 | I plant trees in my garden | | | | |
| 8 | We clean our paths with the hose, not with a broom | | | | |
| 9 | We use mulch around new trees | | | | |
| 10 | We compost food scraps | | | | |
| 7 | ine | | | Total | |

Never

Tips

- Native trees attract native wildlife and require less water.
- Mulch holds water in the soil and reduces weed growth, giving new trees and plants a good start.
- Compost is a natural fertiliser for plants and feeds earthworms that improve your soil.
- ★ Eating fruits and vegetables in season costs less money and uses fewer resources.
- ☆ Composting adds lots of nutrients to the soil in the garden.
- ☆ Grow your own fruit and vegetables and save money.



Score

| | | Very good | 17-20 Tetr | Could do be | 91-11 tna | ds improvem | 0-10 Nee | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Δ,1,0 :019 | ζ,1,0 : 69 | 0, 1,2 : 89 | 2, 1,0 : 79 | 2 . 1,0 : 99 | Հ,1,0 : Շջ | ζ ,1,0 : ÞQ | 03 : 2,1,0 | δ5 : 0'1'5 | 2,1,0 : 19 |
| | | | | Jourself | Score J | | | | |



Score yourself
Q1: 0,1,2 Q2: 0,1,2 Q3: 0,1,2 Q4: 2,1,0 Q5: 0,1,2 Q6: 2,1,0 Q7: 0,1,2 Q8: 2,1,0 Q9: 0,1,2 Q10: 2,1,0 Q1: 0,1,2

O-10 Needs improvement 11-17 Could do better 18-22 Very good

F Water

Tick your answers to these questions. When you have done them all, work out your total.

| | | Never | Sometimes | Always | Score |
|----|---|-------|-----------|--------|-----------------|
| 1 | We re-use rinse water from the washing machine to water the gard | den 🔲 | | | |
| 2 | We are careful with the use of water in the garden | | | | |
| 3 | I drink lots of water | | | | |
| 4 | I take really long showers | | | | |
| 5 | We have a dual-flush toilet | | | | |
| 6 | We put rubbish in the toilet | | | | |
| 7 | We wash our car on the lawn to also water the grass | | | | |
| 8 | We pour chemicals and oils down the drain | | | | |
| 9 | We run the dish-washer, only when it is <u>full</u> of dirty dishes | | | | |
| 10 | I rinse dishes in the sink, using running water | | | | |
| 11 | We use environmentally friendly cleaners | | | | |
| | | | | Total | (scored on p16) |

- Save water wherever and however you can.
- \Rightarrow Re-use water from the bath to water pot plants and gardens.
- ☆ Flush the toilet only when necessary.
- ☆ Wash the car on the lawn.
- Install a dual-flush toilet to reduce water being flushed.
- Rinsing dishes under running water is wasteful.

- If they are still clean, wear clothes several times before washing them.
- In wet weather, use a drying rack inside or under the house.
- Pure soap powder or flakes are better for the environment than washing powders.
- Use environmentally-friendly, phosphate-free detergents.



Score yourself
Q1: 2,1,0 Q2: 0,1,2 Q3: 0,1,2 Q4: 0,1,2 Q5: 0,1,2 Q6: 0,1,2 Q7: 0,1,2 Q8: 0,1,2 Q9: 0,1,2 Q10: 0,1,2 Q11: 0,1,2 Q13: 0,1,2 Q13:

G Waste Minimisation

Tick your answers to these questions. When you have done them all, work out your total.

| 1 We use disposable products 2 We re-use plastic bags 3 I take my lunch box to school or on trips 4 I use a hankie rather than tissues 5 I take my own food and drink when I go out 6 We sort our rubbish 7 Our recyclables go to the recycling bins/bags 8 We re-use items where possible 9 We pass unwanted items, clothes and toys on to others 10 We buy durable products that last longer 11 We repair things instead of replacing them 12 We buy recycled products when available 13 I save odds and ends for art and craft Tips | | | rvever | Sometimes | Aiways | Score |
|---|----|---|--------|-----------|--------|-----------------|
| 3 I take my lunch box to school or on trips 4 I use a hankie rather than tissues 5 I take my own food and drink when I go out 6 We sort our rubbish 7 Our recyclables go to the recycling bins/bags 8 We re-use items where possible 9 We pass unwanted items, clothes and toys on to others 10 We buy durable products that last longer 11 We repair things instead of replacing them 12 We buy recycled products when available 13 I save odds and ends for art and craft | 1 | We use disposable products | | | | |
| 4 I use a hankie rather than tissues 5 I take my own food and drink when I go out 6 We sort our rubbish 7 Our recyclables go to the recycling bins/bags 8 We re-use items where possible 9 We pass unwanted items, clothes and toys on to others 10 We buy durable products that last longer 11 We repair things instead of replacing them 12 We buy recycled products when available 13 I save odds and ends for art and craft | 2 | We re-use plastic bags | | | | |
| 5 I take my own food and drink when I go out 6 We sort our rubbish 7 Our recyclables go to the recycling bins/bags 8 We re-use items where possible 9 We pass unwanted items, clothes and toys on to others 10 We buy durable products that last longer 11 We repair things instead of replacing them 12 We buy recycled products when available 13 I save odds and ends for art and craft | 3 | I take my lunch box to school or on trips | | | | |
| 6 We sort our rubbish 7 Our recyclables go to the recycling bins/bags 8 We re-use items where possible 9 We pass unwanted items, clothes and toys on to others 10 We buy durable products that last longer 11 We repair things instead of replacing them 12 We buy recycled products when available 13 I save odds and ends for art and craft | 4 | I use a hankie rather than tissues | | | | |
| 7 Our recyclables go to the recycling bins/bags | 5 | I take my own food and drink when I go out | | | | |
| 8 We re-use items where possible 9 We pass unwanted items, clothes and toys on to others 10 We buy durable products that last longer 11 We repair things instead of replacing them 12 We buy recycled products when available 13 I save odds and ends for art and craft | 6 | We sort our rubbish | | | | |
| 9 We pass unwanted items, clothes and toys on to others | 7 | Our recyclables go to the recycling bins/bags | | | | |
| 10 We buy durable products that last longer | 8 | We re-use items where possible | | | | |
| 11 We repair things instead of replacing them 12 We buy recycled products when available 13 I save odds and ends for art and craft 1 | 9 | We pass unwanted items, clothes and toys on to others | | | | |
| 12 We buy recycled products when available 13 I save odds and ends for art and craft | 10 | We buy durable products that last longer | | | | |
| 13 I save odds and ends for art and craft | 11 | We repair things instead of replacing them | | | | |
| | 12 | We buy recycled products when available | | | | |
| Tips Total (scored on p18) | 13 | I save odds and ends for art and craft | | | | |
| | T | ips | | | Total | (scored on p18) |

- Bring your own crockey, etc, instead of using disposables.
- ☆ Plastic bags can be washed and re-used many times.
- Cloth towels can be re-used; paper towels can't.
- Lunches from home are healthier than fast food and create less rubbish.
- ☆ Long lasting products and clothing can be passed on to others.

- ↑ Trash to one person is treasure to another.
- ⇒ Be careful with what you throw away; much is re-usable or recyclable.
- Bits of cardboard, wrappers, boxes, egg cartons and other bits and pieces are great for art and craft.
- Have an area at home for boxes to collect re-usables and recyclables.

How environmentally UNFRIENDLY is this house?



Count the wayscheck yourself against our score

What would you do to make this house a better place to live in?

5 Some of them are broken **9** The shopping is in plastic bags

3 The TV is on but no one is watching 4 There are toys everywhere 8 The roller board is upside down and could hurt anyone who trod on it

I The sun is shining but a heater is on a Also a light
 The cat has caught a bird
 Someone is hosing a pathway

Conclusion

You have now completed the Ecology Audit — Congratulations!

How did you score? Are there ways you can improve your habits to use fewer resources and protect the environment? Use your findings to stimulate discussion on what you are doing well and where you can improve.

Student evaluation

| Use this evaluation questionnaire to rate the use In the space for comments, write down somether | | ssues or about yourself in each section. | |
|--|----------------------------|--|-----------|
| How many people are in your household? | in your class? | in your group? | |
| Circle your ratings using these categories: 1 = not useful, 2 = a bit useful, 3 = useful, 4 = | very useful, 5 = excellent | | |
| Introduction Comments: | 1 2 3 4 5 | D Energy Use Comments: | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| A Personal Habits Comments: | 1 2 3 4 5 | E Garden Comments: | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| B Toys Comments: | 1 2 3 4 5 | F Water Comments: | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| C Pets and Animals Comments: | 1 2 3 4 5 | G Waste Minimisation Comments: | 1 2 3 4 5 |

Teacher evaluation

| In the space for comments, write down something you learned about the issues or about yourself in each section. | | | | |
|---|---|--------|-------------------------------|--|
| | Were the instructions easy to follow? nments: | Yes/No | | |
| | Were the questions relevant? nments: | Yes/No | | |
| | Were the tips useful? nments: | Yes/No | | |
| | Would you recommend this resource to others? nments: | Yes/No | | |
| | Were the students actively involved in discussions on each topic? nments: | Yes/No | | |
| Ger | neral Comments: | | School: Teacher: Class Level: | |

Please return the evaluation forms to:

HOPE, PO Box 6118, TOOWOOMBA WEST QLD 4350

Further Information

Government Departments

Commonwealth

Department of Environment and Heritage - http://www.deh.gov.au/

Intergovernmental

Murray Darling Basin Commission (MDBC) - http://www.mdbc.gov.au/ National Environment Protection Council - www.ephc.gov.au

States and Territories

ACT

Environment ACT - http://www.environment.act.gov.au/

New South Wales

Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources - http://www.dlwc.nsw.gov.au/NSW Government Environment - http://www.nsw.gov.au/Environment.asp
NSW Environment Protection Authority - http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/index.htm

Northern Territory

Department of Industry, Technology & Resources - http://www.nt.gov.au/ntg/environ.shtml

Victoria

Department of Sustainability and Environment - http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/index.htm VIC Environment Protection Authority - http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/

Queensland

Environmental Protection Agency / Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service - www.epa.qld.gov.au/

South Australia

Department for Environment and Heritage - http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/ Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation - http://www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/ Environmental Protection Authority - http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/epa/

Tasmania

Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment - http://www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/Home/1?Open

Western Australia

Department of Conservation and Land Management - http://www.calm.wa.gov.au/ Department of Environmental Protection - http://www.environ.wa.gov.au/

Local Government

Environs Australia (Australian Local Government Environment Network) - http://www.environs.org.au/

Non-Government Organisations

National

Alternative Technologies Association - http://www.ata.org.au/ Australia and New Zealand Solar Energy Society - http://www.anzses.org/ Australian Bush Heritage Fund - http://www1.bushheritage.asn.au/ Australian Conservation Foundation – http://www.acfonline.org.au/ Australian Koala Foundation – http://www.savethekoala.com/ Australian Marine Conservation Society – http://www.amcs.org.au/ Australian Platypus Conservancy – http://www.platypus.asn.au/ Australian Rainforest Foundation – http://www.arf.net.au/ Australian Wildlife Protection Council - http://www.awpc.org.au/ Bird Observers Club of Australia – www.birdoberservers.org.au Birds Australia - http://www.birdsaustralia.com.au/ Clean Up Australia http://www.cleanup.com.au/ Conservation Volunteers Australia - http://www.conservationvolunteers. com.au/ Environmental Defenders Office - http://www.edo.org.au/ Friends of the Earth Australia - http://www.melbourne.foe.org.au/ Friends of the Koala - http://www.nor.com.au/community/koala/ GREEN (Global Rivers Environmental Education Network) - http://www. ozgreen.org.au/ Greening Australia - http://www.greeningaustralia.org.au/GA/NAT/ Humane Society International - http://www.hsi.org.au/ Marine and Coastal Community Network - http://www.mccn.org.au/ National Toxics Network - http://www.oztoxics.org/ ORRCA (a volunteer organisation caring for whales, dolphins, seals and dugongs in Australian waters) - http://www.orrca.org.au/ Planet Ark - http://www.planetark.com/index.cfm Surfrider Foundation - http://www.surfrider.org.au/ Sustainable Population Australia - http://www.population.org.au/ Urban Ecology Australia – http://www.urbanecology.org.au/ Wetland Care Australia - http://www.wetlandcare.com.au/ Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society - http://www.wdcs.org.au/ The Wilderness Society - http://www.wilderness.org.au/ Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia Inc - http://www.wpsa.org.au/ World Wide Fund for Nature - http://www.wwf.org.au/

State/Territory

ACT

Conservation Council of the South-East Region and Canberra - http://www.ecoaction.net.au/ccserac.php

New South Wales

Nature Conservation Council of New South Wales - http://www.nccnsw.org.au/

Total Environment Centre - http://www.tec.org/

Northern Territory

Environment Centre of the Northern Territory - http://www.ecnt.org.au/

Queensland

Queensland Conservation Council - http://www.qccqld.org.au/

South Australia

Conservation Council of South Australia - http://www.ccsa.asn.au/

Tasmania

Tasmanian Conservation Trust - http://www.tct.org.au/
Tasmanian Environment Centre - http://www.tasmanianenvironmentcentre.org.au/

Victoria

Centre for Education, Research and Environmental Strategies (CERES)

- http://www.ceres.org.au/ Environment Victoria - http://www.envict.org.au/

Trust for Nature (Victoria) - http://www.tfn.org.au/

Western Australia

Conservation Council of Western Australia - http://www.conservationwa.asn.au/

Wildflower Society of Western Australia - http://members.ozemail.com. au/~wildflowers/

The HePE Charter

The HOPE Charter encourages people to take responsibility for their relationship with the environment in their daily lives.

HOPE members have the following aims:

- * to use as little as possible of energy and resources;
- * to create minimal pollution, both directly and indirectly;
- * to prefer, in general, renewable to non-renewable, natural to manufactured, and local to imported.

HOPE encourages people:

- * to view environmental problems in their social, economic and global contexts;
- * to use what is already there, making the most of existing resources, technology and community networks;
- * to create, communicate, and celebrate life styles which reduce consumption and improve quality of life.

While HOPE endorses individual action, it also encourages people to act together in their local community and in society as a whole, to further these aims.

HOPE is a non-profit organisation and is not affiliated with any political party.