



## Unit 6 Lesson 1: The Choice is Yours

Handout 1



### What can you do to reduce your Ecological Footprint?

#### Food

- Buy organic if you can, or locally-grown produce.
- Plant a garden (by doing this you cut down on pollution from shipping, fertilizers, packaging, etc and your food is fresher!).
- Bring your own bags to the store (canvas or reuse plastic/paper).
- Buy and eat fewer processed foods \*:
  - Instead of drinking a juice box, eat a piece of fruit
  - Make a salad
  - Pop your own popcorn instead of microwave popcorn
  - Eat a baked potato instead of potatoes in a box (au gratin, potato flakes, etc.)
  - Eat less meat and dairy – you can get protein from other sources, too
  - Eat at home instead of ordering out

\* Processed foods have been frozen, canned, or packaged before coming to your table

#### Energy/Electricity

- Make sure all lights are off when not in use.
- Turn the air conditioner and heater off at night.
- Get outside! Outside activities are fun and take less energy.
- Keep doors and windows shut when heating or cooling the house/car.

#### Transportation

- Walk or ride your bike to school.
- Carpool when where you are going is too far to walk.
- Take public transportation.

#### Creating less waste

- Buy products with the least amount of packaging possible (buy in bulk or in big boxes rather than in individually wrapped containers).
- Ask for no bag when you buy something you can carry without one.
- Recycle as much as possible (and purchase recycled products when you can).





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### What can you do to reduce your Ecological Footprint?

- Mend things that are broken (don't throw them away).
- Donate old items to someone who can use them.
- Buy items that can be used over and over (not disposable).
- Reuse lunch sacks and baggies (or use a lunch box and Tupperware).
- Reuse water bottles (and recycle them too!).

#### Water

- Turn off the faucet while brushing your teeth.
- Don't pour toxics down storm drains.
- Put a brick in your toilet tank. It saves thousands of gallons of water a year.
- Run only full loads in your dishwasher or washing machine.

#### Community

- Help a group the works to make local rivers and streams healthier.
- Get involved with a recycling program.
- Educate people in the community about their Ecological Footprint and what they can do to make it smaller – a longer quiz is available at [www.myfootprint.org](http://www.myfootprint.org).

#### School

- Do an energy audit of your school and see how it can save money and electricity.
- Have the other classes in your school take the quiz and share their results.
- Try calculating your school's Ecological Footprint and get classes to work together to make it smaller.



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