



Make a Good Choice: Choose No Idling!

By: The Clean Air Campaign, Inc. and Earth Day Network

INTRODUCTION

Students will read the book, The Lorax (written by Dr. Seuss), to gain understanding on how one person can impact the environment. Students will explore how making good choices can help the environment while bad choices do the opposite. Students will gain an understanding of idling and how it can negatively affect our air quality. Students will create posters to illustrate good choice (no idling) vs. bad choice (idling) and T-Shirts that communicate the message of no idling. Students will display posters and T-Shirts in the hallways of the school to promote no-idling. [Teacher commentary and examples of the poster activity are available at the end of this document].

LESSON OVERVIEW

Recommended Grade Level and Subject: Grade 2 Science

Length: Two class periods

Objectives:

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify what idling is and why it is a bad choice for the environment.
- Create Posters and “T-Shirts” to persuade people to stop idling.
- Encourage No-Idling to others.

National Standards Addressed:

This lesson addresses the following National Science Education Standards.¹

- **Content Standard: [NS.K-4.1 SCIENCE AS INQUIRY](#)**
As a result of activities in grades K-4, all students should develop understanding of
 - Abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry
 - Understandings about scientific inquiry
- **Content Standard: [NS.K-4.6 PERSONAL AND SOCIAL PERSPECTIVES](#)**
As a result of activities in grades K-4, all students should develop understanding of
 - Personal health
 - Characteristics and changes in populations
 - Changes in environments

¹ Education World (2008) *U.S. National Education Standards*. Retrieved February 5, 2009, from <http://www.education-world.com/standards/national/index.shtml>.

- **Content Standard:** [NSS-G.K-12.5 ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY](#)
As a result of activities in grades K-12, all students should
 - Understand how human actions modify the physical environment.
 - Understand how physical systems affect human systems.

Materials Needed:

- **The Lorax** by Dr. Seuss
- Computer access or printed information from website
- **Reproducible #1: Graphic Organizer: The Lorax: Good Choices vs. Bad Choices**
- **Reproducible #2: Poster Directions** (Also, examples of completed posters are provided under “Teacher Commentary: 2nd Grade)
- **Reproducible #3: T-Shirt Directions and Template**
- Clean Air Campaign Website Idling Facts
- Poster or butcher paper
- Cardstock or cardboard for T-Shirts (or, real T-Shirts)

Assessment:

- Participation in class discussion and group work
- Completion of **Reproducible #1: The Lorax: Good Choices vs. Bad Choices**
- Completion of **Reproducible #3: Student T-Shirts**
- Completion of Posters

LESSON BACKGROUND

Relevant Vocabulary:

- **Air pollution:** Substances in the air that have harmful or unpleasant effects.
- **Idle or Idling:** Inactive, not in use, not moving or in operation.
- **Smog:** A discolored haze that is a combination of airborne particles, gases, and chemicals (ground-level ozone) that together affect our health and our natural environment.

Information:

http://pbskids.org/eekoworld/index.html?load=air_water

A short video clip for students to watch that discusses air and air pollution.

This will build background knowledge for students on air pollution. Also, the following website contains Idling Myths to share for The Clean Air Campaign:

<http://www.cleanaircampaign.com/Air-We-Breathe/The-Truth-About-Idling>

Resources:

<http://www.epa.gov/air/urbanair>

<http://www.epa.gov/airnow/aqikids/index.html>

http://pbskids.org/eekoworld/index.html?load=air_water

<http://www.idlefreevt.org>

<http://www.mass.gov/dep/air/community/schbusir.htm>
<http://www.cleanaircampaign.com/Air-We-Breathe/The-Truth-About-Idling>

LESSON STEPS

Warm-up: *The Lorax*

1. Read **The Lorax** by Dr. Seuss.
2. Ask students:
 1. Why is the Lorax so upset?
 2. What was the Lorax trying to protect? Why?
 3. Why were the animals so happy in the beginning of the story and so sad at the end?
 4. How was the Once-ler harming the air?
 5. What is smog? What did the smog do to the birds? The other animals?
 6. What could this town have done differently to stop the pollution?
 7. Do you think we have smog in our city?
 8. What things cause air pollution in our city? Around our school? List on the board.
 9. Is there anything we can do to be like the Lorax and teach others how to reduce air pollution around our school and make the air healthier for us to breathe?
 10. Ask students how they came to school today? How will they ride home?
 11. Ask students if they notice pollution going into the air from these vehicles?
 12. Did you notice that the vehicles were ever stopped and still running (not turned off)? Give some examples: Vehicles running in the car rider line when they are not moving.
 13. Introduce and explain the term idling using examples of pictures from **The Lorax**
 14. Why is idling unhealthy for the air? Us? How can we stop vehicles from idling in the car rider line? Brainstorm ideas on the board.
3. Complete **Reproducible #1 Graphic Organizer: The Lorax: Good Choices vs. Bad Choices** with your students to help them compare and contrast the good decisions of the Lorax versus the bad decisions of Once-ler.

Activity One: *Good Choice (No Idling) vs. Bad Choice (Idling) Posters*

1. Introduce the concept of air pollution by having students watch the video clip here:
http://pbskids.org/eekoworld/index.html?load=air_water
2. Define “Air Pollution,” “Idling,” and “Smog” on the board (see vocabulary definitions above.)
3. Discuss what it means to “idle” and why this is bad for our health. See the following website for more information: <http://www.epa.gov/airnow/aqkids/index.html>
4. Break students into groups of 4. Explain that their team should create a poster encouraging people to make a good choice and stop idling. The poster will be divided in half. One half will

show a vehicle idling and include a statement about why this is a bad choice. The other half will show a vehicle not idling and include a statement about why this is a good choice. You may have each group list their statements about the Good Choice/Bad Choice as a “Did you Know..” fact.

5. You may pass out **Reproducible #2: Poster Directions** as a reminder to students.
6. Have students write about or discuss whether they think their poster will encourage No Idling? Why or Why Not?” (Question included on **Reproducible #2: Poster Directions**).
7. Hang posters in the hallways of the school or the car rider lane to encourage no idling.

Activity Two: T-Shirts

1. Bring in several T-Shirts to share with students. Discuss how information can be communicated on a T-Shirt. Look at graphics and words that send a message.
2. Provide each student with **Reproducible #3: Student T-Shirts** or actual T-Shirts.
3. Share with students that they will be creating a T-shirt to encourage No Idling in the car rider line. They may include pictures and words. After the T-shirts have been designed, they may share them with the class. Hang T-Shirts in the hallways to encourage No Idling.

Wrap Up: Discussion

Ask students the following questions:

1. What is air pollution?
2. How does Idling contribute to air pollution?
3. How do you think your posters and T-Shirts will help people make good choices and not idle?
4. What else can we do to promote No Idling at our school?

Extensions:

1. Clean Air No Idling Campaign Toolkit

Teacher and Students can extend the No Idling Campaign by obtaining a toolkit available from Earth Day Network. This toolkit includes signage and pledge cards that promote responsible “no idling” practices on school grounds: <http://www.earthday.net/noidling>

2. You may use the following site to look up air quality in your state with your students: <http://www.epa.gov/airnow/aqikids/index.html>

3. Students could perform “Readers’ Theatre” using book, **The Lorax**.

CONCLUSION

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to communicate information about idling at your school and the impact of idling on air pollution and will begin a campaign of education and awareness at your school.

The Lorax: Good Choices vs. Bad Choices

Lorax Good Choices	Once-Ler Bad Choices

Poster Directions

Student Directions:

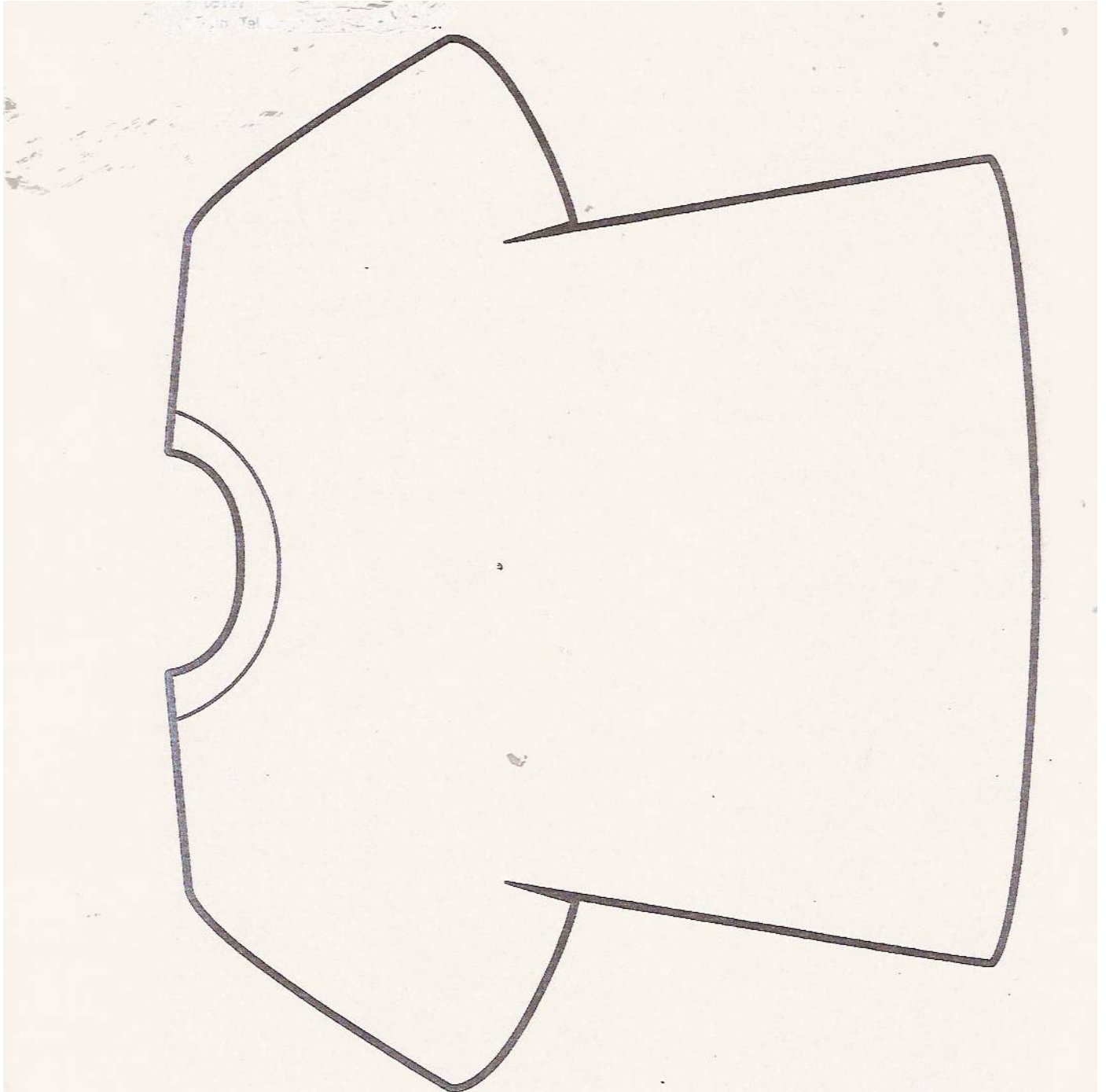
1. Your team should create a poster encouraging people to make a good choice and stop idling.
2. Each poster should be divided in half. One half will show a vehicle idling and why this is a bad choice. The other half will show a vehicle not idling and why this is a good choice.
3. Your poster should encourage no idling.
4. You will share your poster with the class.

Answer the following question:

Do you think your poster will encourage No Idling? Why or Why Not?

T-Shirt Directions and Template

Use words and/or pictures on your T-shirt to encourage No Idling.



Teacher Commentary: 2nd Grade

The students were engaged by the book and could easily see that people can make choices which harm or help the air. They made the connection that idling pollutes the air and people should not idle. They were excited that their posters encouraging no idling would be displayed in the hall. They realized that, even as second graders, they have the power to help keep the air clean. The video clip was great to have them view for background.

Sample Student Work:

