1994

Readermaker: Remember Our World

Janet O. Francis

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation
Francis, Janet O. (1994) "Readermaker: Remember Our World," Children's Book and Media Review: Vol. 15 : Iss. 2 , Article 4. Available at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol15/iss2/4

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the All Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Children's Book and Media Review by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.
Introducing READERMAKERS

In each issue of CBPR, the new feature column READERMAKERS will identify outstanding books for young people on a selected topic. Books for toddlers through young adults will appear with annotations and suggestions for use in the home, school, or youth organization. Good books should be part of everyday life and learning. These articles are designed to help busy adults quickly find some of the best informational books and literature to share with the important young people in their lives.

As READERMAKERS continues, you can help in two ways. First, please submit topics you would like to see explored in the READERMAKERS column. Second, if you have books to share, please submit a manuscript for review. Send your suggestions and manuscripts to READERMAKERS Editor, Children’s Book and Play Review, 5042J HBLL, P.O. 26843, Provo, Utah 84602.

READERMAKERS: Remember Our World

by Janet O. Francis
Librarian
Brigham Young University

One of the controversies in today’s world is what’s really good for the environment. Conservationists are desperately trying to preserve all life in all areas, capitalists insist on the right of man to be economically independent, and others insist on comfort as one of the basic human rights. Most of us attempt to walk the tightrope, but end up veering first to one side then to the other. Young people have a vested interest in this fight—they are the ones who will be affected by its outcome.

Unlike children of fifty years ago, the youngsters of this decade are often conservation-savvy—but all information is not created equal. Good books that show ecology’s reasons and results are available for all ages; many lend themselves to action, experiment, and resolve. Others simply prepare the ground by showing what a whole world has to offer.

The books annotated here are exceptional for their imagination, illustrations, tone, or information and suggestions. They are loosely grouped into three sections: Appreciating the World, Wasting the World, and What Can We Do? Estimated reading levels are included but don’t be put off by
something too easy or too hard. Reading levels vary astonishingly (sometimes even become irrelevant) when an interest is shared with a caring adult.

Appreciating the World

Being aware of the infinite variety of life forms, the phenomenal qualities of animal behavior and beauty, and the patterns of nature can help young readers reflect on the great part nature plays in their lives.

Leedy, Loreen. *Tracks in the Sand*. Delacourt, 1993. ISBN 0-385-30658-X. Ages 4-7. Simply written and beautifully illustrated, this description of the life cycle of the Loggerhead sea turtles who come from the water to lay their eggs each year is a satisfying introduction to the world of nature. Ms. Leedy includes a page of detailed information on the turtles as well as suggestions for ways people can help them to survive.


Exchange small signs of affection with them and let them repeat the action with others.
Water a plant.
Put a bug outside instead of killing it.


Lie in the grass for several minutes and see if anything alive approaches. Sit or lie under a tall tree and observe the life going on above you.


Try making a toy from a corn husk or stalk and tempera point. Take turns making up a legend about something that has happened outside.

mother describes and explains the seashore to her son, who has never seen it.

Share memories of happy and beautiful places you have seen. Talk about the sounds of the seashore or other outdoor places.

*The Big Book for Our Planet.* Dutton Children’s Books, 1993. ISBN 0-525-45119-6. Ages 8-12. A collection of well-known children’s authors and illustrators share their belief in the need to live harmoniously with the environment. From an Indian myth to Jonah’s story from the whale’s point of view, these works are imaginative and concerned.

Find other works by these authors and illustrators and see how their concerns for the earth appear.

Have your young reader compose a poem or story or draw a picture about their feelings about the earth.


Plan your own compost and heat and maintain it long enough to make soil for your yard. There are clear directions in this book.


See if there are any kinds of food or other things described in this book in your own market.


Set up a bird watch and document the birds you observe for a given amount of time.
14 Brigham Young University


List of all the animals and birds in this book that you’ve never seen pictures of before. Can you find out more about them?


Somewhere in your neighborhood there is a pond (or puddle). Carefully examine specimens of water and foliage for as many life forms as you can find explained in the book.


Are any of these animals listed in the area where you live? Are there ways you could help in their preservation?


Young readers interested in drawing might make their own illustrations of the inner details of the human body.
Wasting the World

Sometimes ignorance is the real villain when the earth is a victim; sometimes nature itself lends a hand, but in ecology as in all things, knowledge is power.


Reading this one aloud and discussing the animals could help foster awareness in very young readers.


Carefully untangle these mazelike paths while paying attention to the natural enemies that complicate animal survival.


This book is one of a series called "Save Our Earth." Several series deal with these problems and offer good suggestions. Look up some of the other books in the series and share them also.

Did you do anything today that could have polluted some natural area?


Find a map of the United States and note sites of natural disasters. Now mark in a different color potential sites for natural disasters and discuss what kind may occur.
16 Brigham Young University

What Can We Do?

Nothing appeals as much to young people as becoming involved in something real. If books give them a jump-start, so much the better. If their enthusiasm doesn’t last forever who’s to say there isn’t another young Rachel Carson somewhere who will turn another tide!


Gather a few friends and form an Environment Club, then solve a local problem as a project.


Plant a packet of seeds in an egg carton and water half of them with a trickle of water like Drylongso found and leave half of them dry.


Read some of Ms. Carson’s famous book *Silent Spring.*


Visit your community government and see if anyone in your hometown is working to make the earth better.

Write down one thing you can do each week for one month to live a "preservation" life.

Finding more books about ecology

The books listed here are only a few of the good books written on this important subject. If you have decided to be one of the knowers and doers, look in your school or public library for more books to help you. These index terms can help you find the things you want: ECOLOGY, HABITAT (ECOLOGY); ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES, and GREENPEACE. Compare books that were written before 1985 with the ones written in the last four years; sometimes knowledge changes our methods of doing things.

We take many things for granted until suddenly they disappear. Enjoying and appreciating the earth around us is a lifelong process—start now!