

Locul I – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Vladimir Stefan Pechi, Colegiul National Grigore Moisil

Bucuresti

“

There are too many people on our planet that do not want and will not ever care about how The Earth will be for the future generations. This is the hardest thing that ecology has to do: to convince everybody about its huge importance.

Each person should use less water, always turn off the light when not needed and save our planet.

Globally, we should create more solar energy, hydropower and wind power. We should find renewable substitutes to all non-renewable resources. There should be given international laws to make us use less non-renewable resources.

I have some ideas about creating more renewable electricity I would like to share with you : In each desert there should be placed solar panels, on each river there should be many hydropower plants and where the wind blows a lot, there should be placed many windmills.

We should recycle as much as possible! If we do not find an effective non-polluting substitute for petrol we should start using bikes, at least for small distances.

Green is the colour of nature, honour and victory. Keep our planet green, as God gave it to us. Be honorable and our planet will be victorious against pollution.

”

Locul II – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Julia Romocea, Colegiul National de Arta Ion Vidu

Dumbravita, jud. Timis

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Eco warriors

Warriors do not grow over night. Like any warrior, it takes time and effort to become one. If someone wants to become a warrior, they should start training when still a child. School plays a key role in a warrior's training.

Schools should organize ECO squads made out of ECO warriors who are meant to be examples of how to keep the school ECO. Their responsibilities include: going around the school checking that lights are switched off when people are not in the room; checking that electricity is not wasted, for example, windows are not to be kept open while the heating is on; to make sure that in each classroom there are recycling bins. The warriors can organize competitions between classes to give them a motivation to become ECO.

It is essential for the future generations of children to use a renewable source of energy. For this reason, solar power is the most accessible resource for education institutions. Therefore, campaigning and fundraising for solar panels is a key stage in getting your school super ECO.

A passion for ECO living as a child becomes a way of life as an adult.

”

Locul III – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Estera Beatrice Stefanuti, Scoala Gimnaziala Ion

Creanga

Braila, jud. Braila

“

Cherishing Nature

Since the beginning of time, Mother Nature has provided for us the best environment. One might say that, we should be very thankful. Instead, we have given her nothing back, but destruction. It's time to realize that without a healthy environment, we can't exist. Therefore, we must change our ways of living.

Currently, the Earth's health condition is deteriorating because of the irrational use of natural resources and heavy pollution. Consequently, the improvement of it means that we have to change the way we use the resources and reduce pollution. We ought to work on the environmental sustainability. We must conduct our lives and actions so they are not harmful to the environment, not compromise the resources for future generations while trying to meet our own needs.

That is why we have to stimulate the research upon the environment issues, promote volunteer involvement in projects in the damaged areas, increase the financial support from the economic systems, focus on keeping the waters, the soil and the air clean. Our main concern regarding the environment is to pass it on to the next generations, if not in a better condition, at least in the same one we received it.

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Premiul Juriului – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Teodora Elena Argintaru, Colegiul National

Gheorghe Lazar

Bucuresti

“

Less is more

"Earth provides enough to satisfy everyone's needs, but not everyone's greed." said Mahatma Gandhi. It is generally accepted that people tend to neglect the ecological equilibrium of the Earth. In my opinion, humankind should commence to become aware and act against harmful phenomena, such as pollution.

An advantageous idea would be using more renewable and less finite resources. Ecohouses are an alternative to ordinary lodgings, inasmuch as they use sustainable energy. These houses use solely natural materials. Recent studies show that finite resources can be replaced with ecological ones. An example

I also endorse the idea of implementing environmental educational programmes in schools. This autumn, I participated in a tree-planting activity. It helped me comprehend the frail equilibrium of nature. Furthermore, I began to actually treasure it. Hence, I consider that more students, as well as teachers should embrace this sort of projects.

These methods can be compared to the Butterfly Effect (the flap of butterflies' wings change the air around them, so a tornado can break out continents away), insofar as even if initially they seem insignificant, they could play a crucial role in aiding our planet.

”

Premiul Juriului – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Matei Tanase, Scoala Gimnaziala Pia Bratianu

Bucuresti

“

Will Earth be a green planet where the future generations can live on?

Well, at fourteen, I don't think I can come up with an original solution for a green planet, but I can share a way of living, which might lead to less pollution and a good relationship between the people and the environment.

To start with, my parents decided to make use of our countryside soil. They began with a small garden which had everything we needed. Apart from eating totally ecological food, we also have a peaceful place with fresh air. Everything there works with the solar energy obtained by the solar panels, which generate enough power for the house.

Moreover, I think that at school we should be taught that resources like coal, petroleum, natural gas or metal are limited and we can't have more than we already do. Also, children have to be taught ways of protecting the natural environment such as using less paper, thus saving the trees or using the cars less in order to have fresh air.

All in all, if the suggestions mentioned are developed at a national level and even internationally, we will have a green planet again.

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Premiul Juriului – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Ioan Andrei Pavel, Scoala Gimnaziala Nr. 149

Bucuresti

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There was a very poor peasant. The little son came and asked him why he grew young instead of growing old. Then the father advised him to plant a tree each day and perhaps the same thing would happen to him too. The older boy, who did not understand anything, went to the father and asked him how come he grew young. The father answered to him the same as to the younger.

He tried to plant, but after a few days, seeing that nothing happened, he started chasing his father to see for himself what was happening. He saw that, at dawn, the peasant grabbed his bag and set off towards the forest. The older son chased him, desiring to discover his father's secret. Suddenly, he saw the peasant sitting down under a tree, talking to it and he suddenly began to grow young.

The older son ran into the forest, seeing that the tree did not reward him as he rewarded the peasant, he started breaking the branches, and, as he did so, instead of growing younger, he became older.

Do not cut down the trees! Only this way we will be able to stay young forever.

”

Premiu de Originalitate – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Maria Cristina Tănase, Scoala Nr. 49

Bucuresti

“

“Earth is not a platform for human life. It is a living being and we are not on it – we are part of it”, Thomas Moore said. It gives us food, water and air. It is the most precious thing we have and we need to respect it.

We live on this planet as if we have another one to move to – here is a friendly reminder: this is the only home we have! And let’s face it: it became an “ego”-system in which people can’t even breathe properly. But we’re all in this together, and we can make a change. What if we start with small acts? It is always better to do something small than do nothing.

We should have a national “GREEN DAY” when people could go on a “nature hunt” with different missions: plant a tree, pick up rubbish, and recycle cans and plastic bottles. Think about your car – or should I say – think about replacing it with a bike? Honestly, it’s not difficult to use rechargeable batteries, wash dry or turn off computers at night.

So let’s take attitude! The Earth is our home and it’s our duty to save it!

”

Premiu de Originalitate – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Luca Vlad Vlasceanu, ICHB Bucuresti

Bucuresti

“

I once read a book by Roald Dahl and there was this crazy idea about cars propelled by toothpaste. I thought it was silly but because now I know about the hole in the ozone layer, the greenhouse effect and acid rain we should think more about alternative power sources like biofuel. There should be a law: you cut what you plant and vice-versa.

By using, instead of coal and oil, seed and palm oil, algae, sugarcane or fats from food with the technology we've already got, much could be improved. In my opinion, we can not help with the layer's recovery; all we can do is not destroy it more.

Another idea is "do more with less". Restaurants should write in their menus "think before you choose". Food mustn't remain on your plate - if it does, take it and give it to shelters for poor people or eat it for your next meal.

By explaining these things to children and how our future will not be as they expect, we can motivate them to be green. Just a single person can't help the world too much but if everyone starts acting eco-friendly, then we'll really have a better planet.

”

Premiu Special – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Diana Ioana Hritcu, Colegiul National A.T.Laurian

Botosani

“

The Earth... our planet, the most wonderful place to live in.

I love my planet and we must be grateful for all that we find here. I really pray that people understand how necessary is to preserve the resources that the planet offers with such generosity.

The alternative sources that are used at present on a reduced scale will become the main resources, in future.

I often dream of my future life and imagine myself living in a “green” place where I can use the power of nature: the shade of trees instead of air conditioning, the water from the lake for a refreshing bath, the light and heat from the sun.

Until then, I will continue to live with my parents in our flat and do our best to save energy by using water saving devices, a programmable thermostat, smaller kitchen appliances and, when going on holidays, we never forget to give to our appliances a rest too.

My belief is that, one day, we could get power from the perfume of flowers and the blue of the sky, a special power that will feed our spirit and mind.

We and the planet are one!

”

Premiu Special – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Miruna Ruxandra Lica, Scoala Gimnaziala Sfantul

Dumitru

Craiova, jud. Dolj

“

Together we can build a better world!

I have recently read an article which was showing the annual appearance of a large lake that is forming around the North Pole because of the high temperatures in July. If this is not the result of the global warming trend on this planet, I don't know what else is. We are the only ones who can make the difference! We must all know that anytime we choose to walk, ride a bike or take public transportation, we reduce the carbon dioxide and the emissions of the cars.

The subject of electricity and its environmental impact is also a massive one considering that most of the energy used in our country is coal generated(coal is a huge source of greenhouse gas emissions). But the solution is in our hands: we can try to put our houses on an “electricity diet” and bring our contribution to save this planet. And if nature recycles everything, why can't we do the same?

I've already talked to my friends and we've decided to make a “green team”.It's only the beginning, but we are concious that together we can build a better world for the following generations!

”

Premiu Special – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Maria Victoria Iacob, Colegiul National Grigore Moisil

Bucuresti

“

In a large city, there was an 11-year-old girl named Mary.

She loved more the little village where her grandparents lived. She felt at home there, but she didn't know why.

One night Mary dreamed she was at her grandparents', but the place didn't look like in reality. The forest was not there anymore and it was extremely hot. It was like a desert full of garbage and plastic everywhere.

Mary woke up from this nightmare. She realized that she had fallen asleep watching a documentary about pollution. She knew that she had made a lot of mistakes in the past. Mary remembered how scared she was in her dream and she decided to change things.

After she had read a lot of articles, she did a lot of things to protect the environment. She told her friends to do the same: she also wrote an article in the school magazine.

Now Mary is an adult, but she does the same thing. She goes from school to school to tell children how important it is to keep the planet green. This was her mission to protect the environment: teach the young generation how to "act green". I am Mary.

”

Premiu Special – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Bianca-Mirela Ivascu, Scoala Nr. 1

Mizil, jud. Prahova

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The journey

There was a bottle named Kaiu. It was wandering around the world searching for a dream. Along the journey, dirt had stuck to it so it wasn't a clean bottle...it was just a thrown away wine bottle.

Kaiu knew it could only disappear by being broken or melted ...only if someone would pick it up.

Kaiu searched new ways of being reused. One day something happened. While resting , a dog took it and dropped it in the sewer channel. There Kaiu heard voices getting closer: it was a rusty tin can, an old package and a plastic bottle. Kaiu realized they were also thrown away. They planned to be reused. The tin can had an idea. It knew a channel leading to a recycling place. They followed the tin can's plan.

Arriving to the containers they met three children. One of them took them to the recycling bins: the old rusty can and the plastic bottle went into a yellow bin, the old package into the blue one and the glass bottle into the white bin.

Their dream: to become RECYCLING MATERIALS.

We should help their dream because their dream makes our world better to live in.

”

Premiu Special – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Iulia Costachi, Colegiul National Mircea cel Batran

Constanta, jud. Constanta

“

Nowadays everybody is talking about pollution. This is a global problem which will affect us sooner or later. So, what's to be done?

One of the least used energy is the geothermal energy, which is the hot water and air from the Earth's core. Volcanoes and tectonic areas are the providers of this energy, which is considered the cheapest and non-invasive kind of energy. Iceland, Italy, USA and other countries have many geothermal power plants for hot water, electricity and factories. They could transport hot water through underground pipes in the countries with less tectonic areas. In the future, the buildings and factories could use only geothermal energy and even cars with vacuum-engines.

The greening process is slowed by the misunderstanding of people. Everybody knows what causes global warming but not everybody is trying to change something. Although there are programs in schools about recycling, people should participate. Due to the advanced technology, everybody could download games or applications related to pollution for a better understanding of recycling.

We are all responsible for the cleanliness of the environment. We should change the way we live now, if we want to live on a healthy planet.

”

Premiu Special – Adolescenți 11-14 ani

Irina Ioana Marinescu, Scoala Nr 59 Dimitrie Sturdza

Bucuresti

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How can we keep Planet Earth "green" for the future generation?

Everyone knows that our planet is in danger. But only a few people try to help it. Here are my ideas :

Firstly, we need to reuse the water. A family that lives in Australia has done this. They first used water for washing, then for the toilet, then for the plants.

Secondly is important to recycle ores, glass and paper. We don't need to extract so much gold and silver but we should reuse them by melting unfashionable jewelries and make new ones! A good idea is to take the copper from the old computers that don't work anymore. We can make powder from glass and use it for some architecture.

Another thing is to use more solar energy or hydro-energy where is possible. These won't release greenhouse gases that cause global warming.

I usually save paper by studying, reading and writing on my computer and my whiteboard and save rain water for plants. Maybe for now this isn't a lot but when I will be an adult I will be able to make stronger decisions for a green earth.

Effective non-polluting substitute for petrol we should start using bikes, at least for small distances.

”

Locul I – Tineri 15-20 ani

Andreea Badeu, Colegiul National Bilingv George Cosbuc

Bucuresti

“

Dear strangers,

I am writing to you out of despair. Hopeless as I am, I believe you are the only ones who could ease my pain, but before all else, I need to tell you the story of me and her.

Thousands or maybe millions of years ago, I fell in love with Terra. She was the most attractive of all the other planets, dazzlingly beautiful and vibrant. I was fascinated by the life that lay inside her and ever since then, I have been tenderly observing her.

Nevertheless, something has altered lately. Not only does she suffer from a disastrous injury – a hole in her Ozone layer-, but she is also treated terribly by the ones she loves the most. Her mix of colours has now turned into a veil of grey.

There is nothing I could do and my heart is aching terribly. Although I know that you are among the villains that caused my love so much trouble, I am now asking you for help. You need to understand that as long as ignorance keeps taking over your world, the situation will never improve. She is ill and demands your attention. Analyse your ancestors' attitudes towards the environment and try to find that long lost balance. Value the treasures you are given by nature by getting to know it. Discover the universe around you and thus you will learn to cherish your home.

Please, I want her back. And I know you love her, too.

Yours,

ALARMION

”

Locul II – Tineri 15-20 ani

Timea Koppandi, Liceul Dr.I.Mesota

Brasov, jud. Brasov

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Keeping Planet Earth green

A shade of a middle aged woman with sandy hair stood in front of me. Her face was scratched, her body was covered in scars and her eyes were bloodshot. She touched my shoulder saying she had vital information for me. All of it seemed so strange but if it had been that important I couldn't have afforded wasting time.

Seeing that she captured my attention, she came a bit closer and started talking.

'Earth is dead' she said sharply. 'Trees are gone, water is running out, air and food are barely holding us alive... Disease and plague are spreading fast and we have no medicine left. People are dying... we drove our way to extinction.' Her eyes spoke a thousand words... I knew she had told the truth. I chose to listen the strange looking lady...

I tried to seem interested as she continued:

'In the first place, don't cut the trees. Plant new ones and use tablets instead of books and copybooks.

Secondly, don't pollute the Planet, you and others need oxygen to survive.

And in the end, try to save energy, water and food. Don't waste them, others are starving while you are playing with the food.'

'I see...you have a point there.' I replied. 'Thank you...but, who are you?'

Much for my surprise, she answered:

'Look into the mirror twenty years from now and you'll find out...that, if you still own one.'

She disappeared, leaving the world a clue to survival.

”

Locul III – Tineri 15-20 ani

Simina Popescu, Liceul de Arte Plastice Nicolae Tonitza

Bucuresti

“

Seeing the monumental damage continuously done to the environment nowadays, sustainability seems like a difficult goal to reach.

Not enough people are educated about the repercussions of pollution and the many ways it affects our lives. People who seem like they could care less about environmental issues could change their minds would they be pointed out the negative effects they have on humans' personal health. Also, many influential people could use their social status to raise awareness of the matters of pollution.

Due to the fact that organic aliments and renewable sources of energy are produced in limited amounts, in few areas of the world, they are expensive and inaccessible to many. Returning to a natural, healthier way to produce food and making use of solar and wind energy on a worldwide scale would reduce both costs and prevent depletion of natural resources such as fossil fuels.

An ingrained education underlying the importance of preserving our planet's resources is just as important as actively getting involved in large scale ecological movements as well as small nature friendly gestures. Sorting recyclable waste, walking instead of taking a cab and using tap water sparingly may seem irrelevant but if everybody were doing these, they would have a massive significance in the big picture.

Throughout history, people had been capable of many dreadful acts to achieve their goals. I believe that, for a goal as important as conserving our planet, we should be able to assemble and start making changes.

”

Premiul Juriului – Tineri 15-20 ani

Camelia Mocanu, Colegiul National Vasile Alecsandri

Galati, jud. Galati

“

Imagine unsustainable lifestyle as the equivalent of malignant cancer eating away at the Earth's ecosystems, thus becoming the major impediment in keeping Planet Earth 'green'. Analyzing the decay of the environment, it is apparent that unethical consumption represents the cause.

Sterile, lifeless – this is how our proudly called 'Blue Planet' will look like unless we stop taking nature for granted. Instead of consuming thousands of liters of tap water, we could start harvesting rain water for irrigation, livestock or domestic use just as our grandparents used to do.

Unsustainable lifestyles are also detrimental to the Earth's indispensable jade umbrella: the forest. A stroll in the polluted wilderness suffering devastation from clear-cuts is bound to bring tears to our eyes. If this poignant pain is reason enough, then spread the word! Let's run volunteer projects, campaigns supported by governmental grants to raise society's awareness and transform citizens into eco-friendly educated individuals.

Education, the engine that moves the world, seems to be the key point here. Early childhood guidance in the natural environment can prove its effectiveness as children tend to imitate their parents' behaviour. Moreover, through interactive recycling games and debates we could be taught how to reduce dependency upon fossil fuels, synthetic chemicals and appreciate their replacements: hybrid vehicles, organic food, compost bins, etc.

Unless we want to risk following the path of ancient civilizations that collapsed because of overexploitation, I say it is high time we understood the importance of sustainable lifestyles and the impact of their absence.

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Premiul Juriului – Tineri 15-20 ani

Andrei Badulescu, Colegiul National Emanuil Gojdu

Oradea

“

The protection of the environment has been, for the last decades, an increasingly popular subject in the mass-media and, as such, more and more people have been informed on this particularly pressing matter for our society.

Ironically, even though the interest has grown exponentially, the actual effects of this environmental protection campaign remain barely noticeable: pollution levels are constantly increasing, more and more species become extinct every year, the ozone layer is shrinking at an alarming rate, and the concentrations of greenhouse gases are getting closer and closer to a dangerous level.

Correlating these two premises, we can conclude: people, although well-informed, rarely act about this situation. As such, what the society is currently lacking is a form of motivation – almost everybody has heard of the ‘living green’ concept, but how many people do eventually change their lifestyles?

Personally, I find it irrelevant to repeat all the clichés usually associated with the stereotypical ‘green’ lifestyle (travelling by public transport, not wasting water or electricity, discouraging protected animal traffic and so on), due to them being well-known by the majority. What I think it is of great importance is raising awareness over the effects of our attitude, and how close we actually are to a crisis situation.

We are not yet desperate, but time is of the essence: a large-scale change is required soon, before it is too late.

As a conclusion, our best option is suggestively illustrated by a well-known Roman proverb: Acta, non verba - ‘Deeds, not words’.

”

Premiul Juriului – Tineri 15-20 ani

Nadia Abdul-Karem, Cambridge School of Bucharest

Bucuresti

“

The twenty-first century has been so loaded with the slogan of a “green world”, that the term has virtually lost all essence. It is now used mindlessly, almost upon impulse or as means of commercial propaganda. The greatest modern mistake, therefore, is no longer the lack of awareness of the importance of taking care of our planet, but our ambiguous and often twisted understanding of its more fundamental implications.

Before we recycle we must understand why we recycle. We have to look deep into our own being and recognize that what compels us to plant trees is the same principle that tells us to care for a baby: the protection of life. Thus, the marriage between the notions of ‘green’ and ‘life’ brings into attention an essential plight of both humanity and planet Earth: war.

War has an astonishing power of both destruction and squander. The two Great Wars have left the earth barren and poisoned, its people hungry and sick. Fuels have been burnt to move killing machines, waters contaminated, food blown up and bullets shot. In retrospect, one cannot help but imagine that the wood of coffins could have been a breathing tree.

War is not only a tragic history, but the enduring reality of a world that consumes itself in vain. Only the end of fighting can be marked the dawn of a world that’s truly ‘green’, for we cannot reasonably expect life to flourish where we sow the seeds of death.

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Premiul Juriului – Tineri 15-20 ani

Sabina Stanciu, Colegiul National Gheorghe Lazar

Bucuresti

“

A new dream

Once upon a time, there was an inextricable bond between humans and nature. Nurtured and guided by this symbiotic relationship, we soon accessed the mysteries of this world and began to dream of improving it. This ultimately led to the alteration of Earth's equilibrium. But can dreaming be considered wrong or does the problem lie elsewhere?

Since evolution and development came naturally to us, it can be asserted that they are ingrained in our genes and that following our instincts should not be malignant. However, our choice of means to actualise our dreams was clearly erroneous. Over the years, we have harmed the very structure which made our existence possible.

It is still not too late to heal this world. Sadly, we believe that the ones who have the power to do something meaningful are our leaders, when it is us who should work towards achieving this new goal. If each of us chose to walk to work instead of driving a car, to buy local produce both to help the economy and to reduce pollution, to encourage the use of renewable energy and simply to live a greener life, the effect would be astonishing.

Only if we stand united in this time of sorrow can we make a difference. Strength truly lies in numbers.

Over the time, we have built our dreams from scratch. A healthy, thriving planet has now become the dream of all mankind. So what stops us from making it come true?

”

Premiu de Originalitate – Tineri 15-20 ani

Tudor Obretin, Colegiul National de Informatica Tudor Vianu

Bucuresti

“

I woke up feeling a burn on my face; the sunlight was blazing through my blinds hurting my retina. The heat suffocated me. The room seemed a hot cage I couldn't escape from.

I got out of bed and ran to the window. I didn't know what to think, but found myself shaking, crushed, frightened. I kept rubbing my eyes. I couldn't believe that was the world I lived in. All colors were gone. Grey was overflowing everywhere. I never felt so empty.

I needed a deep breath of fresh air but could only sense the dust particles colliding into my skin while I was moving.

I ran to the park without looking back, afraid of the view the city could give me. The park was a deserted ghost place. The trees were all fallen, gray. The one that I used to climb was now lying, like a man on its dying bed, carving to say two more words before his departure. The ground was dry and cracked and piles of rusty metal parts and thrash were all over. I couldn't stand anymore. My legs failed me as I collapsed on my knees crying. I would have given anything in the world to find a leaf. Devastated I started digging with my bare hands searching for life.

I found myself scratching the pillow-fortunately it was a nightmare. I ran to the window and cried with happiness. The world is too beautiful to be destroyed, please keep it green!

”

Premiu de Originalitate – Tineri 15-20 ani

Iuliana Nyerges, Colegiul National Mihai Viteazul

Bucuresti

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Raise awareness...

The classic filler, the bullet at the bottom of the leaflet, below recycling and adopting green electricity and now, for a limited time only, the thing that might save the Earth.

These days, the majority of people that have a somewhat stable financial situation, and thus can afford to think about the environment, are also the ones with the capacity to improve our current situation. And what do they do? Well, close to nothing.

It is easy, as a middle-class consumer of this day and age, to stare in disbelief at these corporations and believe there is nothing you can do. After all, you're not that firm's CEO. You have no power over them.

That seems logical until you consider that your lifestyle is dependent on these corporations so, by extension, they rely on your compliance to continue existing.

Let's be clear, I am in no way advocating for giving up your western life-style. What I am doing is encouraging you to become aware of your place in this issue and teach others about it. Change will not come from one person making a great effort, it will come many little actions that, added up, have a massive impact.

So with that being said, dear reader, consider your awareness risen. This is your queue to go out there and change your own behaviour and that of others. Support NGOs, talk to your family and friends, hold people in power accountable for their mistakes.

And, you know... recycle.

”

Premiu Special – Tineri 15-20 ani

Ege Nevin Apti, Colegiul National Mircea cel Batran

Constanta, jud. Constanta

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A Cry for Help

Our planet's natural resources have been overused and the problems that have arisen start to become more threatening each passing day.

Firstly, there are other alternatives to obtain energy. For instance we can use special mirrors to capture enough solar energy for several households in a way that doesn't eliminate tons of CO₂.

Another alternative is the controlled nuclear fusion, a process which can produce the quantity of energy contained in 80 000 l of oil by using the deuterium and tritium from a glass of water.

Secondly, we should turn to environmental friendly cars, such as the electric car or cars that use diesel obtained from plastic bags. Nuclear batteries based on water and a radioactive isotope can produce electrical energy for electric cars. This way we will reduce the amount of pollution and we will stop the crisis that is about to break out due to the insufficient oil resources aka diesel.

Our resources level may be sinking, but the technology has been making progress, for we can now alter the composition of substances to make them more durable. Scientists predict that we will soon be able to use modified cellulose instead of glass fibers or cotton.

All in all we are yet to face a major problem for it has been said that the North Pole has started to melt. If we don't take action now to stop the pollution and thus global warming "soon" will turn into "too late". Take action!

”

Premiu Special – Tineri 15-20 ani

Alexandra Covor, Colegiul National Gheorghe Lazar

Fundulea, jud. Calarasi

“

“Save the whales”, read a flyer I received a few days ago. Still, in the small print below the pompous call I identified the advertising strategy.

However disappointing, it still prompted me into a reflection on “save-the-planet-kind-of-campaigns”. Obviously, there are a few things each individual can directly do to literally save the whales. And yet I have this intense feeling that it is the small gestures we make everyday that have a great impact on the whole. We are an integral part of a mechanism called “the butterfly effect”, in which the slight flutter of a butterfly’s wings in the southern hemisphere can bring about a tornado elsewhere.

So, what are the small things a humble piece of a great mechanism can do to shape its by-products differently?

First of all, our greed artificially boosts our hunger, which is why overfishing can satisfy our snobbish preferences. The fish population is shrinking, so both whales and other sea creatures are affected by the insufficiency of food.

More than that, domestic cooking oil released in the flow of wastewater can have far-reaching impact on the aquatic ecosystems by causing oxygen levels to drop drastically and therefore affecting the marine animals. Instead, the waste can be wisely transformed into green energy by free cooking-oil recycling programs.

In the end, take the whales as a symbol of the entire planet. Saving one ring will definitely change the destiny of the whole chain.

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Premiu Special – Tineri 15-20 ani

Ella Stanciugelu, Colegiul National Mihai Viteazul

Bucuresti

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Education plays a primordial role in shaping the character of young individuals. It possesses an infinite power of persuasion, and is often used to implement the latest concepts designed to improve the living standards of the world's inhabitants. Yet, those in charge of providing our young generation with a proper education sometimes fail to identify the real issues that suffocate our nowadays society slowly but surely. An exponentially increasing population, global warming and a rapidly decreasing availability of natural resources clearly are leading to one thing: we, on a worldwide scale, systematically fail to protect our environment.

The solution to this frightening situation is rather simple. All it really takes is for us to recognise our generation's failure to conserve the planet, and to make environmental sustainability the next generation's priority. This can be done through the delivery of a more responsible education in the longer term, for as once stated by Nelson Mandela, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". Indeed, drastic change is exactly what we need, because the ecosystem is deteriorating at an alarming rate which endangers the current as well as future generations.

I personally hope that society will acknowledge the rapidly approaching environmental collapse sooner rather than later, and will act accordingly through the delivery of a modern education designed to enrich individuals with profound respect and sense of responsibility for the environment.

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Premiu Special – Tineri 15-20 ani

Anca Millio, Colegiul National Sfantul Sava

Bucuresti

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A smelly business

What is this appalling smell? Oh, my grandfather is just cleaning the hen-roost, while the pestering flies are buzzing around. Meanwhile, the hens are greedily waiting for their grains. Suddenly, an idea crossed my mind! What if I discover a way to convert animals' manure into edibles?

A few people could collect the garbage from the farmers, and deposit it near the village. Assuredly, it will be instantly invaded by flies, which are going to lay hundreds of eggs. Before long, an army of larvae is born and is going to consume all the rests, thereby becoming a significant quantity of future nourishment.

Isn't it a tremendous idea? Therefore, hens will benefit from a true delicacy at every meal, without requiring too much investment from the owner. But, wait a second! The fish farm in the area could also profit from this and people would be delighted by the reduced price of fish fed with larvae.

Furthermore, the remaining matter from the process represents a natural, high quality fertilizer, which will contribute to the increase of cereal production.

All in all, this idea, put into practice, represents a sustainable process, managing to satisfy all the three pillars of sustainability. The environmental one, by reducing the amount of garbage; the economic pillar, through the raise in the grain production and also the lowering of the hen and fish production cost; and last but not least, the social one, by creating new jobs and thus, fighting poverty.

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Premiu Special – Tineri 15-20 ani

Bianca Mihaela Cristea, Colegiul National Matei

Basarab

Ramnicu Valcea, jud. Valcea

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The turn of the 21st century brought about a world-wide feeling of insecurity as we find ourselves on the verge of irreversible natural changes.

To start with, pollution is a very complex issue that affects everything pertaining our existence. Unfortunately, it reaches beyond into vast eco-systems that sustain the land as well as the sea, spreading toxic waste into natural habitats.

Moreover, consumer society teaches us how to turn into compulsive buyers. But modern families need to be educated in order to buy only what they consume, otherwise it would be a real waste of money and products. Another solution when families buy extraproducts is to recycle.

Or for example, food should be grown organically without throwing pesticides on fruits and vegetables.

Above all, wasting resources is another major problem we are confronting. In other words, a good option would be to use electric cars, instead of the ones nowadays, which consume more petrol than ever and spread exhausted fumes. In addition, one-quarter of our carbon footprint comes from transportation. By combining errands, we reduce the number of miles we drive. Rather than drive, we can walk or ride the bike.

Furthermore, I highly believe that informative programs should be introduced in schools. This way, children are educated and well-informed about how we can reduce the consumption of resources and show respect for mother Earth.

To sum up, we need to find out ways in which we can become rational consumers and cherish the values of keeping a clean society.

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Premiu Special – Tineri 15-20 ani

Madalina Cornelia Cetean, Colegiul Național

Lucian Blaga

Sebes, jud Alba

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Sustainable technology?

Nowadays, modern technology is becoming increasingly indispensable, thus causing a considerable number of people to regard themselves as powerless when not using their devices. What could embolden the humankind to cease energy waste for the wellbeing of future generations?

Were I to have an influence on the masses, I would propose that alternative methods of charging electronics should be implemented. Not only are photovoltaic panels mounted on the rooftops of buildings, but they are also used in transport, spacecrafts, and therefore the applications of this revolutionary contribution to humanity are unquestionably going to widen in the foreseeable future.

A simplistic, yet ground-breaking idea has been materialized by two Japanese masterminds: the portable solar-powered window socket. Though still a concept, its efficiency is obvious. This green gadget has a suction plate that can stick to a window, doing its job naturally afterwards. Nevertheless, it still needs additional improvements and the designers are eager to launch it as soon as those advancements are thorough.

Furthermore, charging smartphones and tablets implies a massive consumption of power; hence sustainability represents a global concern. This sort of unconventional gadgets, such as the window socket, may help preserve natural resources as well as offer those who embrace them a sense of content.

It can be concluded that the world-shattering electronic devices have enslaved a great part of the population, putting it in harm's way, as sustainability is in decline. Only by indulging in an environmentally-friendly behaviour will we be able to shield planet Earth.

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