

# The LORAX's Earth Day

## EDUCATOR GUIDE

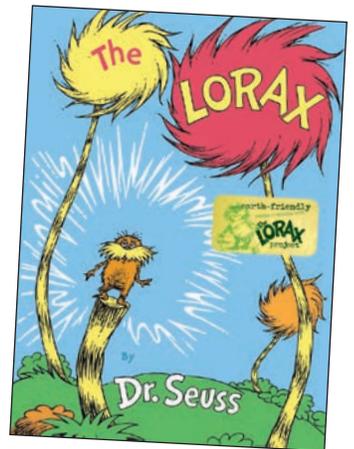


Students like Dr. Seuss books for their silly rhymes and whimsical creatures. But reading fun with Dr. Seuss also gets students to think, ask questions, and activate their imaginations!

Dr. Seuss challenges young readers to be knowledgeable, curious, and thoughtful about the world around them. Sharing *The Lorax* with students is an excellent and easy way to start a conversation about protecting the environment and caring for their surroundings.

Share these powerful words from *The Lorax* with your students: "UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." Ask them to take a stand and support the well-being of the planet.

A great place for kids to start is in their school! The Lorax inspires loads of ideas so make a list with your students and encourage them to take action to make their school cleaner and greener.



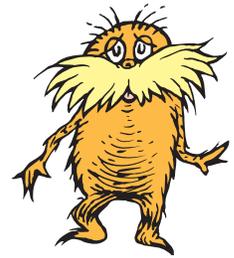
## LOOK INSIDE FOR IDEAS TO CREATE CLEAN GREEN KEEN SCHOOLS WITH THE LORAX!



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## MORE LORAX-FRIENDLY IDEAS FOR YOUR SCHOOL

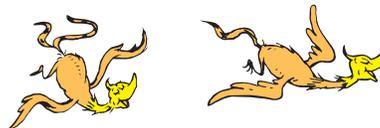
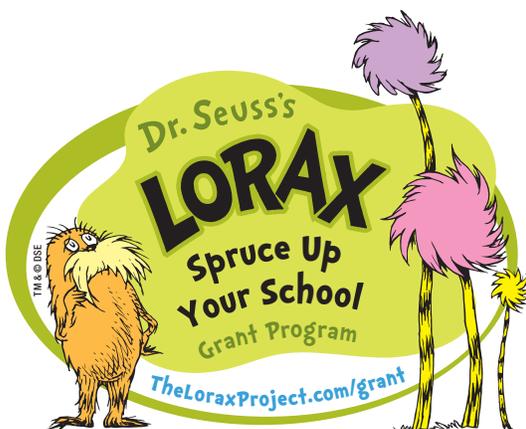


- Set up a Reading Garden in a quiet corner on the playground with plants and benches for reading.
- Turn asphalt into a lovely learning landscape! Use a stencil to paint your blacktop with a map of the United States or the continents with various points of interest and landforms.
- Keep nature close by with terrariums in the classroom or school library. Students can also make their own terrariums and bring nature home!
- Add art! Have students work together to paint canvas banners featuring native flowers, plants, and animals and hang them in the school halls or schoolyard. (Coat with clear polyurethane to protect outdoor art from the elements.)
- Build a bridge between gardening, nutrition, science, and summer learning by planting a school vegetable garden and hosting a summer garden club for students.
- Focus on the environment and invite students to submit nature photography as part of a schoolwide competition. Display all the entries, then enlarge and frame winning photos for permanent display in the hallways, cafeteria, or library.
- Turn a mown grass area or a swampy or weedy spot into a meadow of native wildflowers.
- Teach students to collaborate with nature by turning nature into art through activities such as leaf printing, pressing flowers, or sculpture with found objects from nature. Create a display that rotates new works as the seasons change.

## EXPLORE THE NATURE AROUND YOUR SCHOOL

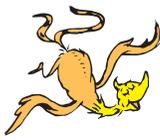
Your class will be empowered by the Lorax and inspired to take action in your community. Be sure to take some time to slow things down so they have a chance to simply appreciate the beauty of your surroundings.

- Schedule a stroll outside with your students and encourage them to identify plants, listen for birds, and notice the bark on a beautiful tree. Have them collect leaves and flowers, which they can then analyze under a microscope or press in a book to save as a memory of the day.
- Discover, observe, and investigate animal tracks in the snow, sand, or dirt based on your location. The class can record the animal tracks by taking photographs or drawing in their journals.
- If weather permits, allow students to lie on blankets outside and read, tell stories, or simply relax and look at the shapes of the clouds.
- If you have access to falling snow, have children collect snowflakes on black flannel board and look at them with a magnifying glass. Be sure to discuss the patterns and symmetry of snowflakes, which are a truly amazing part of nature.



Visit [TheLoraxProject.com/grant](http://TheLoraxProject.com/grant) to learn about the launch of the grant program and get updates for 2015!





# CLEAN SCHOOLS

When reading *The Lorax*, kids see the negative effects the Once-ler and his business have on the Truffula forest and the creatures that live there. But what traces do students leave? Is litter a problem at school? Encourage students to become stewards of their school and help them plan regular cleanup efforts for the building and its grounds.

## TRASH TALK



The Gluppity-Glupp and the Schloppity-Schlopp produced by the Once-ler's Thneed factory would definitely be classified as hazardous waste. The trash typically found in your school—also known as municipal solid waste—is made up of everyday items we use and then throw away.

Ask students to think and talk about trash. Where does it come from? Where does it go after it's put in the garbage can? What if it doesn't get put in a garbage can? Who is responsible for keeping the school clean and trash free? How can students be more responsible? Would things have been different in *The Lorax* if the Once-ler had been more responsible? Have students brainstorm ideas for what the Once-ler should have done with his hazardous waste and how they can help make their school clean and beautiful.

It's best if students come up with their own cleanup ideas so that they become invested in the project. Many activities related to cleaning up one's immediate environment will also help create a sense of community and responsibility for the larger world. Help them along with practical tips and suggestions that build upon their ideas, such as:

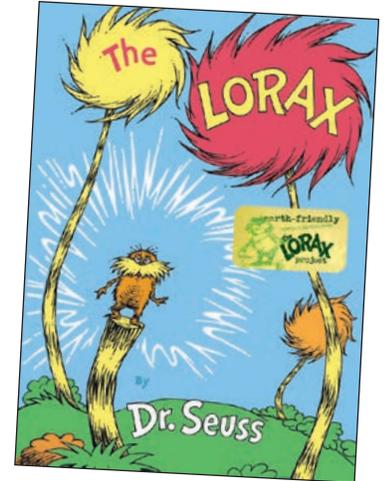
- When beautifying the schoolyard by picking up trash, have plenty of plastic gloves and trash bags on hand. Brooms and rakes are also useful.
- Invite parents and other volunteers to help clean up. These adults should closely supervise students to prevent interaction with harmful materials.
- Ask the school custodian for advice on how to help keep things clean. Make arrangements with the school custodian and/or principal about the proper disposal of the trash or recycling collected.
- Consider doing a litter study so students can observe the types of litter and the most heavily or frequently littered locations. See if additional garbage cans or recycling receptacles can be added or more conveniently located.
- Clean up school grounds by doing more than picking up trash. Weeding, trimming, raking, and spreading mulch help maintain beautiful school grounds.

Make sure you give students ongoing opportunities to renew their commitment to keeping their school clean, to share what they have done, and to talk about how it feels to have made a difference in their school community. Also make sure they get plenty of time to enjoy the outdoor clean spaces they've created!

## KEEP IT CLEAN



Challenge all students to keep the school clean and litter free. Encourage student-led education campaigns that include making posters, presentations, and videos or announcements about littering, recycling, and keeping things clean. Have different grade levels or classrooms serve as stewards of different areas of the school and grounds. Ask the principal to hold periodic surprise "clean" inspections that result in rewards—like Truffula fruits—to students for excellence in caring for their school. At the end of the school year, the team(s) with the most Truffula fruits gets a "Screen on the Green" outdoor movie party with a viewing of *The Lorax*!

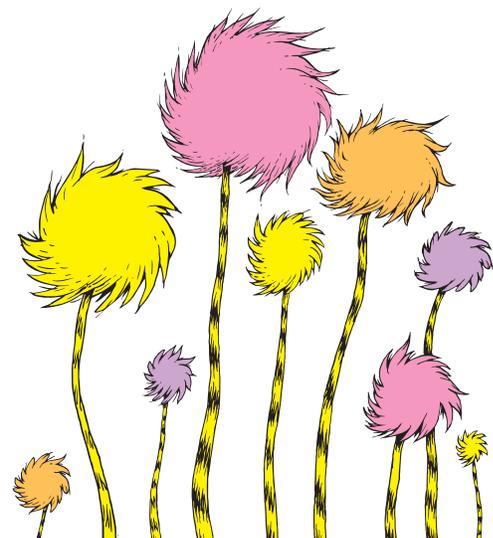


### THE LORAX

HC: 978-0-394-82337-9

GLB: 978-0-394-92337-6

EL: 978-0-385-37202-2 • ♻️





# GREEN SCHOOLS

Creating a school garden or native habitat can be a big project, but there's lots of excellent information available online to help you plan, design, raise funds for, and build a great outdoor learning space. There are also many small steps you and your students can take to beautify your schoolyard with trees, plants, flowers, and landscaping. *The Lorax* will have kids ready to explore the outdoors and find their places in the natural world. Make it as easy as stepping out the school door!

## SPRUCE UP

Like the Once-ler, kids often don't realize that our natural resources are limited. Before you read and discuss *The Lorax*, talk about the value of trees and what trees add to our lives. Why is it important to people, wildlife, and the environment that we care for and manage our forests and trees?

*The Lorax* will reinforce kids' conclusions that we all need trees and that they are especially important in providing food, animal habitats, clean air, and even many products we use. But trees also make places beautiful! Have students show their appreciation for all a tree's uses and natural beauty by planting a tree on school grounds.

Carefully choose where to plant a tree. Students can be involved in scouting a site that is away from buildings and power lines; not too close to driveways, parking lots or sidewalks; and has plenty of space for tree roots to grow wide and deep. Since kids can't plant an actual Truffula tree, they should research what type of tree is best suited to the schoolyard soils and your local climate. Whether you decide to plant a seedling or sapling, make sure there is a serious commitment to taking care of the tree before, during, and after planting.

If your school grounds already include trees that need love and attention, suggest your class adopt a tree and care for it. This might involve cleaning weeds and debris from around the tree, learning all about the tree and creating informational signage, or building or arranging to have a bench placed near the tree so students can enjoy its shade.

## CONTAIN THE ENTHUSIASM

Available space and soil quality are often barriers to green schoolyard transformations. Fortunately, practically anything will grow in a container! And a container can be almost any shape or size you like. Students will still need to plan, research, and choose appropriate plants for your climate as well as arrange for frequent watering. But creating a container garden is as exciting and rewarding an endeavor as a traditional garden.

Investigate what spaces are available that get plenty of light. At the same time, brainstorm about what kinds of containers you can use and what students would like to grow. Consider:

-  Vertical spaces (such as playground walls or chain-link fences) for hanging planters made of fabric or rain gutters with drainage holes
-  Ledges that can hold large window boxes for growing classroom vegetables and herbs
-  Cement and asphalt surfaces for large containers like barrels or raised beds made from wood

Students can get involved in repurposing a variety of items to add beauty and whimsy to a container garden. Have them brainstorm a garden theme for organizing efforts such as:

-  A Dr. Seuss-themed container garden! Plant an old bathtub with beautiful pink blooms—that Cat in the Hat has left a pink ring in the tub again! Secure two large red buckets, label them Thing 1 and Thing 2, and plant with cornflowers or other blue blossoms. Or turn an orange barrel into a Lorax planter by adding his distinctive bushy mustache with paint and planting pretty orange and yellow perennials.
-  Containers with spirit—school spirit that is! Have students paint clay or wooden containers in school colors. Choose appropriate flowering plants in school colors as well and plant them to contrast with the container. Situate this garden outside to welcome students at entry doors or create a vertical garden on a bookcase near a sunny window in the school foyer.





# KEEN SCHOOLS

*The Lorax* leaves readers longing to be surrounded by the wonders of nature, and inspired to make a commitment to the planet. Students need opportunities to express their feelings about the natural world. Making art and beautifying public spaces are good places to start.

## GREEN AT HEART

As the heart of the school, the school library should be one of the loveliest spots on your school campus. It's the place for student inquiry, imagination, discovery, and creativity—and it should look good and be comfortable. Plants bring the tranquility of the outdoors inside the school walls, improve indoor air quality, and help build student interest in the natural world. Make the school library an oasis of greenery and more students will come to the library!

If there is sufficient lighting, large plants or hanging baskets can be used as a room divider, creating a green focal point for the library. A “wall” of plants can also be an excellent backdrop for read-aloud sessions or other special programs. (Do avoid placing plants where water could potentially damage books or other items). Plants can also be used as screens to offer cozy areas for readers.

Paintings of Truffula trees, green grass, blue skies, or other scenes from nature can also brighten your school library. Get permission to paint directly on the wall or paint plywood or canvas panels to hang.

Add beauty to library shelves with new books! Introduce students to a bouquet of nonfiction offerings about green living, gardening, conservation, agriculture, and ecology as well as inspirational and entertaining titles like *The Lorax*.

## HELPING HANDS

Helping your students “speak for the trees” can be as simple as organizing a school beautification project that benefits the entire community. Don’t hesitate to turn to the community for help!

### School Garden Design Resources

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Schoolyard Habitat  
Project Guide  
[FWS.gov/cno/pdf/  
HabitatGuideColor.pdf](http://FWS.gov/cno/pdf/HabitatGuideColor.pdf)

National Gardening Association  
School Gardening  
[KidsGardening.org/school-gardening](http://KidsGardening.org/school-gardening)

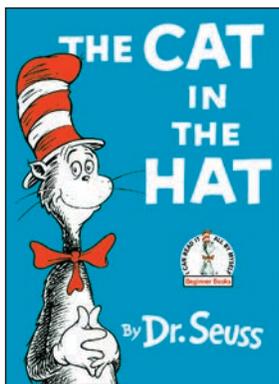
Asphalt to Ecosystems  
Design Ideas for Schoolyard  
Transformation by Sharon Danks  
[Asphalt2Ecosystems.org](http://Asphalt2Ecosystems.org)

-  Your school principal can rally community support and help secure appropriate permissions for projects from the school district or county.
-  Maintenance and custodial staff know the school and grounds inside and out. Invite their input and feedback.
-  Your school media specialist and your librarian are great resources for researching and planning beautification efforts.
-  Classroom teachers and specialists will want to use the beautified spaces as classrooms or learning laboratories. Ask for their ideas and their help in making it work for everyone.
-  Parents and your school’s parent organization can volunteer ideas, time, and possibly funding.
-  Local service clubs and scouting groups are often willing to provide manpower.
-  Garden clubs, nurseries, and other local businesses may donate or discount plants or supplies.
-  Your county or state government may have resources to share. Local employees of U.S. Department of the Interior agencies may also be able to offer advice, support, or resources.

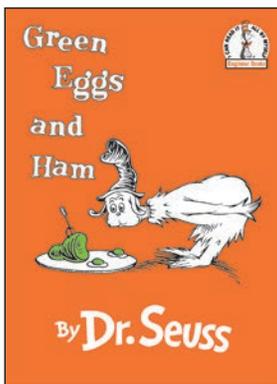




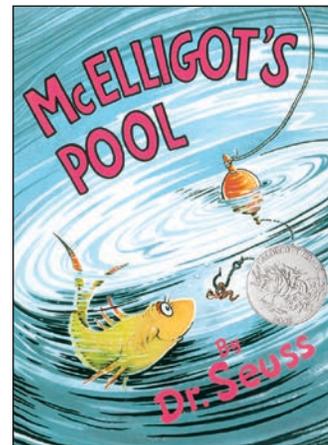
# More Dr. Seuss Books to Inspire Your Classroom!



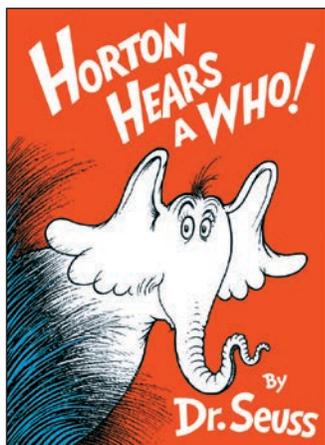
**THE CAT IN THE HAT**  
HC: 978-0-394-80001-1  
GLB: 978-0-394-90001-8



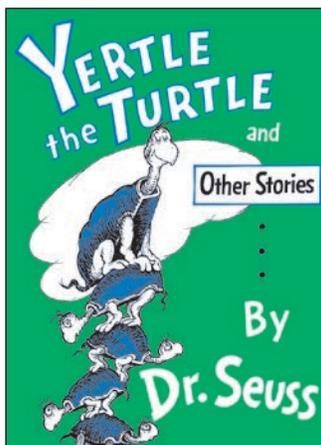
**GREEN EGGS AND HAM**  
HC: 978-0-394-80016-5  
GLB: 978-0-394-90016-2



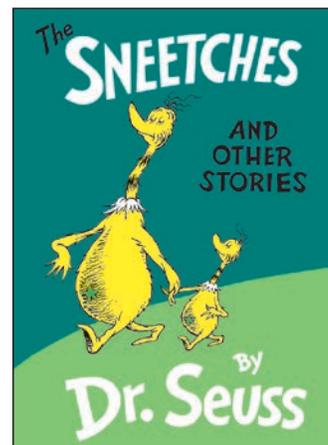
**MCELLIGOT'S POOL**  
HC: 978-0-385-37906-9  
GLB: 978-0-394-90083-4



**HORTON HEARS A WHO!**  
HC: 978-0-394-80078-3  
GLB: 978-0-394-90078-0



**YERTLE THE TURTLE  
AND OTHER STORIES**  
HC: 978-0-394-80087-5  
GLB: 978-0-394-90087-2



**THE SNEETCHES  
AND OTHER STORIES**  
HC: 978-0-394-80089-9  
GLB: 978-0-394-90089-6

**Dr. Seuss ebooks and  
audiobooks are also available.**



Guide prepared by Rachael Worthington Walker, Children's Literacy Consultant,  
with thanks to Holly Beck, Botanist, Boise District BLM.  
Random House Children's Books | School and Library Marketing  
1745 Broadway | New York, NY 10019

