



Grade 1 Thankful Guardians

Overview

As Thankful Guardians, students will recognize the importance of Earth and our stewardship of the planet. Opportunities for experiencing differing text genres, hands-on exploration and engagement, problem-solving, planning, designing, creating, and writing will provide students with learning opportunities about different facets of recycling. Students will categorize materials, role-play a sorting recycling system, and write a letter to our planet to express appreciation for what it gives us.

Benchmarks

ELA.1.R.1.2 Identify and explain the moral of a story.

ELA.1.R.1.3 Explain who is telling the story using context clues.

ELA.1.R.2.2 Identify the topic of and relevant details in a text.

ELA.1.R.3.3 Compare and contrast two texts on the same topic.

ELA.1.C.1.3 Write opinions about a topic or text with at least one supporting reason from a source and a sense of closure.

ELA.1.C.1.5 With guidance and support from adults, improve writing, as needed, by planning, revising, and editing.

ELA.1.C.2.1 Present information orally using complete sentences and appropriate volume.

ELA.1.C.3.1 Follow the rules of standard English grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling appropriate to grade level.

ELA.K12.EE.6.1 Use appropriate voice and tone when speaking or writing.

SC.1.P.8.1 Sort objects by observable properties, such as size, shape, color, temperature (hot or cold), weight (heavy or light), texture, and whether objects sink or float.

SC.1.N.1.1 Raise questions about the natural world, investigate them in teams through free exploration, and generate appropriate explanations based on those explorations.

SC.1.N.1.2 Using the five senses as tools, make careful observations, describe objects in terms of number, shape, texture, size, weight, color, and motion, and compare their observations with others.

SC.1.N.1.3 Keep records as appropriate - such as pictorial and written records - of investigations conducted.



SS.1.C.2.2 Describe the characteristics of responsible citizenship in the school community.

SS.1.C.2.3 Identify ways students can participate in the betterment of their school and community.

A Matrix for Benchmarks can be found [here](#).

Time Frame

This unit is designed to be completed over 10 sessions, with each session lasting approximately 30 minutes. Teachers may choose to complete more than one session per day as their schedules allow.

Table of Contents

[Lesson 1](#) Taking Care of Earth

Students will begin learning to appreciate all that the earth provides through this introduction that uses the text, *Thank You, Earth* by April Pulley Sayre. Students will participate in a formative assessment to determine their knowledge about recycling.

[Lesson 2](#) What a Waste!

In this Explore activity students will create a pictograph with data that shows what's in the trash they produce.

[Lesson 3](#) Being a Guardian

This lesson uses the texts *Not for Me Please, I Choose to Act Green* by Maria Godsey and *Join Me, Please!* These multi-genre texts contain prose and informational text. This lesson focuses on the prose sections which will be used to determine the moral of the texts.

[Lesson 4](#) Why Do We Need Guardians?

This lesson is a continuation of lesson 3 and will focus on the informational text in *Join Me, Please!* Students will participate in an engagement activity that will encourage them to compare the prose vs. informational text using information about recycling.

[Lesson 5 & Lesson 6](#) Recycling Sort Part 1 & Part 2

In this lesson, students will participate in an open sort and sort. In part 1, students will sort trash from a safe trash kit into their own chosen categories, by color, and by size (3 different sorts). In part 2, students will sort by shape, texture, and weight using the same safe trash kit.

[Lesson 7 & Lesson 8](#) Designing a Recycling Sorting System-Engineering Design Challenge: Design a Recycling System

In these lessons, students will work together in small groups to design and create a



sorting system and present it to the class.

[Lesson 9](#) Brainstorming A Letter to Earth

In this lesson, students will use the *Dear Earth* digital text to learn the friendly letter writing format. Students will engage in a brainstorming activity in preparation of writing a friendly letter.

[Lesson 10](#) A Letter to Earth

In this culminating lesson, students will write their own letters to Earth telling what they are thankful for and will include an opinion, a reason, transitions, and a conclusion.

Materials

Several lessons in this unit require recyclable materials. It is important to have a variety of shapes, colors, and textures for students to sort. It is recommended that this resource is sent home prior to beginning the lessons:

- [Parent Letter](#)

Lesson 1

- picture book
 - *Thank You, Earth* by April Pulley Sayre
- [Dear Earth](#) - alternative text if you do not have access to *Thank You, Earth*
- [Formative Assessment Probe Lesson](#)
- student handout (1 paper student)
 - [Can it be Recycled?](#)

Lesson 2

- one week of clean classroom trash (or collect a variety of trash items)
- plastic table cloth, large garbage bag or small tarp
- chart paper
- for each group of 3 students
 - [sort activity labels](#) (print prior to lesson)
- student handout (1 per student)
 - [Lesson 2 Exit Slip](#)

Lesson 3

- Picture book
 - *Not for me, please! I choose to act green* by Maria Godsey
- student handouts (1 per student)
 - student text- [Join Me, Please!](#) (copies and assembly will need to happen prior to the lesson)
 - [Lesson 3 Exit Slip](#) (optional)



Lesson 4

- crayons
- pencils
- paper
- student handouts (1 per student)
 - student text- [Join Me, Please!](#) (copies and assembly will need to happen prior to the lesson)

Lessons 5 & 6

- for each pair of 2 students an assortment of recyclable and reusable materials such as
 - buttons
 - glass gem beads or marbles
 - colored paper clips
 - a variety of different colored/shaped bottle caps
 - metal lids to jars
 - small pieces of sandpaper
 - small plastic cups,
 - sticky notes or small pieces of colored paper
 - packing peanuts
 - small pieces of cardboard
 - toilet paper rolls
 - small plastic water bottles
 - coffee can containers
 - fabric
 - plastic zipper bags
- student materials (1 per student)
 - pair of nonlatex/plastic gloves
 - science notebook or [Lessons 5 & 6 Exit Slip](#)
 - [Parent Letter](#) (previously sent home)

Lessons 7 & 8

- [Recyclables are on the Move](#) text (alternative [digital presentation](#))
- [Sorting System Teacher Rubric](#)
- 1 long table
- 5 bins to place sorted items
- mixture of recyclable materials (paper, plastic, tin cans, and glass gem beads)
- a few examples of materials that are not recyclable (plastic bags, straws, coat hangers, napkins, etc.)
- 1 hair dryer or fan
- 2 wooden dowels



- 1 hand broom
- 2 pairs of tongs
- 2 magnetic wands
- for each group of 4 students
 - mixture of recyclable materials for practice
 - [Sorting System Planning Sheet](#)
 - [Sorting System Student Checklist](#)
 - [Lessons 7 & 8 Exit Slip](#)
- safety glasses (1 per student)

Lesson 9

- [Dear Earth](#) - alternative text from lesson 1
- music
- paper
- pencils

Lesson 10

- chart paper
- markers (different colors)
- paper
- pencils
- rubric (1 per student)
 - [Letter to the Earth Rubric](#)

Culminating Activity

The culminating task is a letter writing activity in which students write a letter to Earth telling what they are thankful for. A rubric will be provided. Students will be required to add detailed information in their letters and use correct letter writing formatting.

