

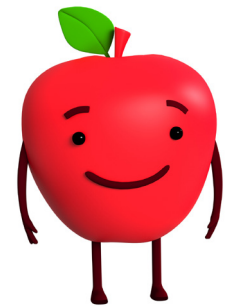
# TEAM POWER



## GREEN AMBASSADORS

### TEACHER RESOURCE

Your pupils are growing up in a world that faces some of its biggest challenges ever. Our over-consumption of natural resources and unsustainable lifestyles are threatening the very future of the planet that we share with millions of species. The huge variety of life on Earth, biodiversity, provides us with all we need from the air we breathe to the materials we use to build our homes. But if we upset the delicate balance of our planet then we risk losing all that we have.



Your pupils will be aware of some of the dangers that our planet faces. They will probably know that species such as the polar bear are under threat. Or they may have watched news reports on extreme weather conditions such as flooding in the UK. Young people sometimes feel powerless in the face of such events but that's where the Green Ambassadors scheme comes in.

Taking part in the Green Ambassadors scheme is an inspiring way to learn about the simple steps that we can take to make our schools more sustainable, promote biodiversity, and help pupils to care for themselves, each other (across cultures, distances and generations) and the environment (both far and near).

The Green Ambassadors scheme provides plenty of ideas to get your Teams started, with fun characters who help to bring the ideas to life. It's up to your Green Ambassador Team where they choose to begin, whether it's thinking about how to save energy with Switch, promoting school lunches that are healthy for people and the planet with Smith, or boosting reusing, recycling – or just using less - in the school with Crush.

### WHAT IS THE TEACHER'S ROLE?

A green team is led by pupils and its success will depend on their taking ownership of the project and its positive outcomes. But they will need your guidance at key moments. Your job is to encourage the Green Ambassador Team members to channel their passion, energy and creativity so that they can bring about long-lasting change in the school and wider community.

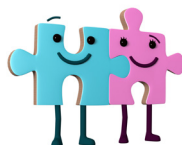
Your role in supporting your school's Green Ambassador Team will vary. The Green Ambassador characters highlight just a few of them:



Earth looks out for everyone and encourages them in all they do. As a mentor, you'll be guiding members of the Green Ambassador Team through the process of setting up the team and working effectively together.



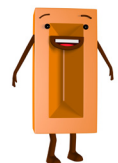
Smith is a great team player. You will be a Green Ambassador Team facilitator, encouraging members of the management team and other staff to get on board and put sustainability on the agenda through the whole school.



Puz and Zel get everyone involved. As a communicator you will help spread the word about the Green Ambassador Team's activities.



Leafy likes to question. The Green Ambassador Team may need a coach to help them think through issues in new ways.



Brick is solid and dependable. You'll sometimes need to provide impartial guidance and act as a referee to settle any disagreements that arise within the team.

The Green Ambassador ['Team Power pupil resource'](#) links closely to this teacher's resource, and contains ideas and guidance for pupils on how to get up and running with a great Green Ambassador Team.

### HERE ARE A FEW TOP TIPS FROM SMITH:

Introduce the Green Ambassadors scheme to your pupils using the film. Organise the first meeting soon after and harness everyone's enthusiasm!

Think through the structure of your Green Ambassador Team. Will you ask for 1 or 2 volunteers from each year group? Will you hold elections so that pupils can vote for their representatives or will the team be open to everyone? How will you make sure that everyone in the school is represented?

With your Green Ambassador Team, decide when and how often you are going to meet. Will you meet during lesson time, lunch time or after school? You don't always have to stick to the same time, but if you do it helps people remember to come along.

Create a Green Ambassador Team identity. Choose a name together, make badges, and give a Green Ambassador VIP kit to each member of the Green Ambassador Team at the first meeting.

Get your Head Teacher, governors and other staff on board as you'll need their support. Perhaps you could invite a governor to a meeting and be sure to invite key supporters along to your events.

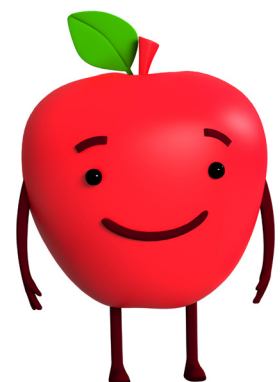
Once your Green Ambassador Team is up and running, you may want to set up working groups so that the workload is more evenly shared. This allows a smaller group of pupils to work on one area, such as organising an assembly or carrying out and reporting back on a survey. They can then report back to the whole team.

Make sure that everyone in the Green Ambassador Team can join in. Younger pupils can find it more difficult to keep up with their roles so a 'buddy' system where older members are paired with younger ones can make sure they get the support they need.

Make your meetings fun! You will find lots of ideas for activities here [\[LINK\]](#), from making bird feeders or bug hotels to encourage wildlife into the school grounds to making polar bear lanterns from recycled materials.

Celebrate! Help pupils feel proud of their achievements by celebrating what they have done. At the end of the year hold a Green Awards assembly to reward efforts and raise the Green Ambassador Team's profile for the start of the next year. Create a Year Book as the year progresses to keep a record of what has been achieved.

There are many different days and actions that take place through the year. Here are some that your Green Ambassador Team could get involved in: The RSPB Big Schools' Birdwatch (January), Earth Hour (March), World Earth Day (April), World Environment Day (June), Walk to School Week (May),



## THE FIRST MEETING

At the first meeting it's important to make everyone feel confident and motivated so that they stay involved through the whole year. Spend time getting to know each other and building up a team spirit.

A introductory round is a good way to help pupils get to know each other's names and feel settled. In a circle, pupils take turns to finish the sentence 'If I were an animal I would like to be a ..... because.....'.

### **Activity: Getting to know you**

This ice-breaker activity is designed to help Green Team members think about sustainability while getting to know others in the group.

### **Preparation**

You will need a copy of the Getting to Know You sheet for each member of the team.

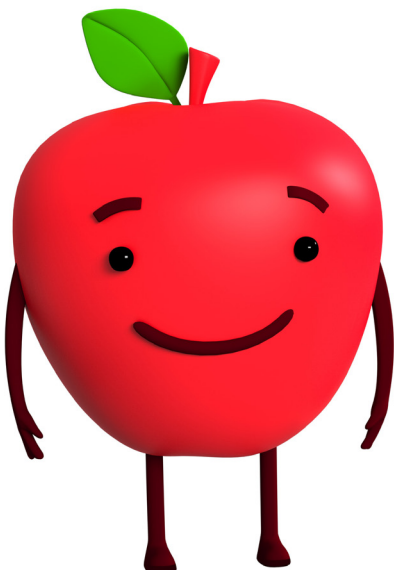
### **What to do**

Give each pupil a copy of the sheet and ask them to go around the room and note down a different relevant person for each statement. If there is time they might ask that person a question about the statement.

After pupils have filled in their sheets come together and ask pupils what interesting things they learned from this activity. Point out that everyone has done something to protect the natural world and they are going to build on this through the year.

The Green Ambassadors Team Power section for pupils contains lots of further information

It will help your Green Ambassador Team members think about what qualities they are looking for in their team. These might include: being a good listener, reliability, a positive outlook, commitment, a willingness to work with others, the ability to share good ideas and be a good role model.



Fill in each slot with the name of a different person in your Green Ambassador Team.

## FIND SOMEONE WHO....

## NAME

Always puts their litter in the bin	
Switches off lights when they are not needed	
Has a healthy diet with lots of vegetables	
Takes the bus to school	
Turns the plug off after they have recharged their mobile phone	
Has made something from recycled materials	
Turns off the tap while they are brushing their teeth	
Has used a compost bin	
Recycles paper and plastic	
Walks to school	
Can name a species of endangered animal	
Has bought something from a charity shop	
Drinks tap water instead of bottled water	
Uses a shower instead of a bath	
Tries not to waste food	
Has enjoyed a walk outside recently	
Has taken part in a green event	

# INTRODUCTION TO SUSTAINABILITY



GREEN AMBASSADORS

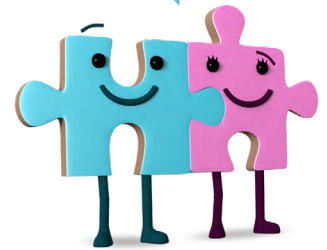
## TEACHER RESOURCE

The Green Ambassadors scheme is all about encouraging young people to become sustainability champions.

Our amazing planet gives us all that we need for our survival and well-being. It provides us with the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink, and the medicines that protect us. The Earth gives us the raw materials for everything from the clothes we wear to the materials that build our homes and schools, and the energy that powers our industries.

Our planet is also home to millions of other species. The huge variety of life on Earth, and the places where they live, is called biological diversity or biodiversity. It is amazing to think that every living species is connected. We are all delicate threads in the web of life. In carefully balanced ecosystems these threads act as a safety net. But if we don't look after the threads in the net, then it will eventually become too broken to look after us.

*Would you believe that we depend on microscopic marine plants, called phytoplankton, which produce over half the oxygen that we, and all other land animals, breathe.*



## WHY DOES SUSTAINABILITY MATTER?

Today we are putting our planet under more pressure than ever before. We only have one planet and we are using up its resources and polluting it much faster than it can cope with. Our activities, such as burning fossil fuels to produce energy, mean that billions of tonnes of carbon dioxide are released, causing climate change. The Earth's atmosphere is warming faster today than it probably ever has - 16 of the 17 warmest years on record have occurred since 2001, with 2017 being the third warmest ever. Climate change has caused more extreme weather events such as drought and flooding. Some experts believe that climate change will force 250 million people from their homes and lands by 2050.

What and how much we eat, and the way we produce food also has a major impact on the planet. In the UK alone, almost a third of our greenhouse gas emissions come from growing, processing, distributing and storing our food. What's more, unsustainable food production is the biggest contributor to biodiversity loss. Changes are so rapid that wildlife and people are struggling to adapt and nearly a quarter of all mammal species and a third of amphibians are now threatened with extinction.



## SO, WHAT CAN WE DO?

The challenges that our planet faces are huge. But we can all do something about it. We have the knowledge and the technology to reduce our impact on the climate and ease the pressures on the world's most vulnerable places, people and wildlife.

Every one of us can take some simple steps to lead a more sustainable lifestyle and the Green Ambassador scheme is all about encouraging young people to help their schools and local communities to do this. The young people in your school represent the future of our planet. The values and attitudes that they learn today will influence their future choices and it is important that they become empowered to make a difference.

As Green Ambassadors your pupils will become confident and responsible sustainability champions. They will see that by acting individually and collectively, they can bring about change in their schools, families and local communities. As they spread the message about the importance of sustainability they will be taking the first steps to protect our precious planet long into the future.

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## ACTIVITY: EXPLORING SUSTAINABILITY

Here's an activity to help your Green Ambassador team think about what sustainability means to them. It helps to build a shared understanding and is a good starting point for the year's activities.

### PREPARATION

- Large sheet of paper - sticking two strips of wallpaper together works well for this
- Plenty of recyclable materials...
- Glue
- Paints
- Colouring materials

### WHAT TO DO

As a group, talk about what people understand by the word "sustainability".

Note down all ideas. The ['What is Sustainability?'](#) pupil resource sheet also provides further information.

Then, in small groups ask Green Ambassador team members to think about what a completely sustainable school might look like. What do they think that they would see in the school – vegetable gardens, rainwater butts, a pond, solar panels, compost heaps, trees, recycling bins, wind chimes etc. How might they travel to school?

Now set to work as a team creating this vision on the large sheet of paper. When you have finished, ask each person to think of a small statement that sums up their vision, finishing the sentence: "Our sustainable school ...". Display this vision to the whole school. You could ask people to write their own comments around the display.

Keep these to put in your ['Green Ambassador Year Book'](#).

## TEACHER RESOURCE

The Green Ambassador scheme is all about helping young people to become sustainability champions. Suitably supported, they'll be able to build an understanding of how wildlife, the environment and human activity are all connected. And with the help of the Green Ambassador characters, they will also find out about what steps they can take to make their school more sustainable.

In practical terms, reducing your school's carbon footprint by taking some simple environmental steps can save money, growing and cooking food at school can teach children an important life skill and build their understanding of healthy eating, while wildlife gardening can really help the biodiversity in your area. What's more, as staff, pupils and the local community work towards a common goal, schools will feel happier places.

You can fit the work of the green team into school policies, development plans, inspection requirements and self-evaluation processes. Having a well-supported, pupil-led Green Ambassador team can also help your school meet one of the requirements necessary to achieve Eco-Schools Green Flag status.

A Green Ambassador team is a fantastic way of motivating and engaging young people. They will experience their own effectiveness and learn that they have the power to really make a difference. At the same time, they will be learning a whole range of life skills:



Working together as a whole school team, there are many ways in which you can integrate sustainability into your school curriculum and embed it as a core approach across different subject areas.



Here are some ideas:

## ENGLISH

Participation in Green Ambassador activities will allow pupils to develop their spoken language skills through group work, discussion and debates, assembly presentations and team meetings. Many WWF schools resources contain activities to develop group work skills in young people.

Role play is an effective way to explore environmental issues such as the effects of litter on a school; how proposals for wind farms might affect opposing members of a community; or different approaches to food production. [wwwf.org.uk/plant2plateresources](http://wwwf.org.uk/plant2plateresources)

Pupils can write for a range of real purposes and audiences on sustainability issues. Younger pupils could write instructions for looking after a plant or feeding the birds that visit feeders in the playground. Older pupils can develop persuasive arguments on issues such as changes to land use or, further afield, they can write to a world leader expressing their concerns about the future of the polar regions.

Performance, poetry and storytelling are powerful communication tools. Tiger Tales resource contains activities based around story telling. [wwwf.org.uk/iptschoolresources](http://wwwf.org.uk/iptschoolresources)

Story books are a great starting point for exploring environmental issues through literacy work. Dinosaurs and all that Rubbish by Michael Foreman, The Promise by Nicola Davies, The Window by Jeannie Baker, and Oi, Get Off Our Train! by John Burningham can all be used with children aged 5 - 7.

## MATHEMATICS

Carrying out a survey as a whole class allows pupils to apply their learning and, at the same time, build skills in working scientifically. Focus on an issue such as litter, traffic, or wildlife (the number of birds visiting a bird table, for instance). Pupils can record, sort and categorise, date and interpret information before communicating results in an appropriate way through pictograms or block graphs. This can then lead to discussions about what action could be taken.

Pupils can identify and describe the properties of 2D and 3D shapes in the natural or built environment. They can also make shapes using twigs and other found objects, and can sort and describe collections according to mathematical properties such as size, shape and pattern.

Leaves can be used to measure area and perimeter, and pupils can then sort them into sets writing their own rules to describe each one. Leaves with several lobes can be used for multiplication or times table work.

There are many natural sequences and patterns that can be investigated. For example, spirals of seeds in flower heads, pine cones, leaf arrangements or numbers of petals can be used to explore the Fibonacci sequence.



## SCIENCE

Pupils can identify a variety of everyday materials, both natural (wood, rock, water) and human-made (plastic, glass, metal) looking at some of their properties and how we use them.

Exploring living things in their habitats gives pupils the opportunity to investigate plants and animals that live in the school grounds and local area. They can also carry out a general survey of plants and animals or look more closely at biodiversity.

When investigating electricity, pupils can identify common appliances that run on electricity and look at the amounts of energy used by different ones. They can carry out an energy survey and investigate the different ways that renewable and non-renewable electricity is produced.

Pupils can explore changes in substances as they rot down in soil. In an ongoing investigation they can predict and then measure the decomposition times of objects found in the playground such as apples, crisps, sticks, paper and cans and the implications of this for our planet.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

The topic of food allows pupils to develop their understanding of the principles of a healthy diet and understand where food comes from. WWF's two resources ['Food for Thought'](#) and ['The Food Connection'](#) contain a wide range of activities exploring food and sustainability.

Sculptures can be created using non-natural materials that have been thrown away. Pupils could build Rubbish Monsters, in teams, and learn about reduction, reuse, and recycling in school.

Design and making activities can be built around reusing plastic bags. Pupils could carry out a Dragons' Den session where groups pitch their ideas for products to the rest of the class.

## HISTORY

Pupils can carry out interviews with older local residents to find out how the environment, or a particular issue such as transport, has changed. They could invite local people in to talk to them and even make a film about what they've found out.

## GEOGRAPHY

A survey on transport or the school grounds will allow pupils to collect information about the area around the school and suggest improvements.

The impact of climate change can be explored by looking at the polar regions and finding out about the threats that they face.

Pupils can build an understanding of sustainability by looking at the school buildings and grounds.

## ART

Pupils can take inspiration from land artists such as Richard Long and Andy Goldsworthy and create outdoor pieces that use only natural objects.

Using the outdoor school environment, pupils can improve their skills in art and design techniques such as drawing and painting through close observation of plants and leaves.

## MUSIC

Pupils could use the 'music of nature', such as bird song, to inspire their own compositions. Beginning by listening to sounds in a natural environment (bird calls, leaf crunches, animal sounds) pupils can then recreate these sounds using their own bodies and found objects.

Influenced by the short rap in the One Planet Future animation, pupils can create their own songs or raps on sustainability issues.

## PE

Link games to the environment by developing warm-up activities based on plants or animals. The Bean Game, for example, refers to different types of beans (runner, jelly, jumping, butter etc) and gets pupils moving in different ways.

Create dances based on the movements and growth of plants or animals, or the sounds of nature.