



EARTH DAY

WebQuest

What Is the Most Serious Problem Earth Faces?

Introduction

What is the most serious environmental issue Earth faces on this Earth Day? Is it...

- vanishing species?
- overflowing landfills?
- air pollution?
- forest destruction?
- water pollution?
- energy depletion?
- another threat?

In this WebQuest, you will learn more about one of the threats to Earth. You will learn from your classmates about other threats. At the end of this WebQuest, you will decide which is the *most* serious threat to Earth's environment?

The Task

The Help Our World (HOW) Foundation has announced that it will give \$1 million to help solve the most serious environmental problem Earth faces. Your job is to prove to HOW that your team deserves that money because the problem you are working on is the *most* serious threat to Earth. Use Internet and library resources to make the case for your team's cause. Your team will have 3 minutes to present your case to the board of the HOW Foundation. Based on that presentation, the board will decide which problem they will invest \$1 million to solve.

The Team

You will need to appoint a member of your team to carry out each of the following roles:

- Note taker -- gathers team members' notes; leads a team discussion about the most important points collected; records the most important information.
- Essayist -- composes a concise statement based on note taker's notes; leads a team discussion about changes to the statement, the team's plan to spend the \$1 million from HOW, and an appropriate graphic to help make its case.
- Editor -- edits the team's script into a final presentation; leads a team discussion about final changes needed to polish the team's presentation.
- Graphic artist -- creates a rough draft of a team graphic; presents the draft to the team for comment; creates a final version of the art.
- Presenter -- rehearses the final script in front of the team; listens to team members' comments about the presentation; makes the final presentation on Presentation Day.



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Process

Research: _____ days

Each member of your team will be responsible for investigating the threat to Earth's environment that you have been assigned. As you research, write down special notes on the Earth WebQuest Notes page (see page 4). Those notes can include interesting facts about your team's environmental issues, numbers worth knowing about the problem, and other important information.

Note: At the end of the project, each team member will be graded by the other members of the team; each grade will be based on the quality of the research/Earth WebQuest Notes he or she contributed to the team project.

Sharing: 1 day

Share the results of your research with your team members. The note taker on your team records the most important information gathered from your research. The note taker then leads a group discussion to determine which points are most important and should be included in the team's final statement.

Overnight, the *essayist* takes the *note taker's* notes and composes a 2-3 paragraph statement presenting the most important information about your team's threat to Earth.

First Draft: 1 day

The *essayist* presents the 2-3 paragraph statement of your team's most convincing arguments; that statement will become the script for your team's final presentation. The *essayist* leads a team discussion about

- changes that should be made to the statement to make it *more* convincing and
- the team's plan for spending the \$1 million you hope to receive from the HOW Foundation. Will the team propose to spend the \$1 million budget on newspaper ads, a TV commercial, or in some other way(s)?



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First Draft (continued)

Your team also discusses what graphic art might best help your presenter make the case; that graphic might take the form of a chart, graph, map, or something else that presents a strong visual argument about the threat to Earth.

Overnight, your team's *editor* edits the presentation script. The *graphic artist* creates a rough sketch/layout of the graphic your team has decided would best make its case.

Editing: 1 day

Your team's editor shares the final essay -- *including the team's plan for spending the \$1 million* -- with the team. The editor leads a team discussion about edits/changes that would make your team's final presentation the best it can be. The graphic artist presents his or her draft/layout of the art and seeks feedback about it.

Overnight, the *editor* completes the final presentation script. The *graphic artist* creates the final art.

Final Preparations/Rehearsal: 1 day

The editor presents the final essay/presentation script to your team. The graphic artist presents the final art. Then the presenter practices the presentation in front of the team. Team members make suggestions to help polish the team's presentation to the board of the HOW Foundation.

Overnight, the *presenter* practices the team's final presentation.

Presentation Day: 1 day

Each team has 2-3 minutes to present its most convincing arguments and accompanying graphic to the board of the HOW Foundation (their classmates). After the presentations, class members vote -- in a secret ballot -- to determine which team made the most compelling arguments. That team receives the \$1 million in funding from HOW.



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My Earth WebQuest Notes _____

The Problem My Team Is Exploring _____

DIRECTIONS: Use copies of this work sheet as you explore at least three online or library resources related to a problem threatening Earth's environment. For each resource you use, write three facts you found to convince HOW board members that your problem is the *most* important environmental issue facing Earth. Remember: Your team is vying for \$1 million in funding from the Help Our World (HOW) Foundation.

1 Resource Title: _____

Source: Author of book/article or URL of Web site _____

Fact 1
Fact 2
Fact 3

2 Resource Title: _____

Source: Author of book/article or URL of Web site _____

Fact 1
Fact 2
Fact 3

3 Resource Title: _____

Source: Author of book/article or URL of Web site _____

Fact 1
Fact 2
Fact 3

When you finish your research, write a three to four sentence paragraph summarizing the strongest points you found. Use lined paper. Your team will refer to those points as it develops its presentation statement.