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Energy Conservation Games for Kids

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Energy conservation involves such steps as turning down thermostats, drying clothes on outdoor lines and cutting back on light bulb usage. Similar measures can be incorporated at the school level, where students can learn about the impact of energy usage and take charge of energy consumption reduction efforts. Interactive websites, classroom activities, board games and participation in national challenges provide ways for kids to get involved.

Interactive Websites

The Internet offers numerous interactive games for children that are both

entertaining and educational. Energy Star Kids teaches children how to conserve energy at home with measures like unplugging mobile device chargers when not in use and turning water off while brushing teeth. These messages are conveyed in a bedroom setting so kids can see how their own conservation efforts might impact the entire household.

The Energy Hog is a site featuring an energy conservation training camp for kids. Children learn about household "energy hogs" and how to combat them. All of this is done through interactive lessons that teach kids how to reduce energy use in their lives.

Identify Energy Sources

Perform classroom activities to help students identify energy sources and recognize the difference between renewable and nonrenewable energy. Energy Detective, for example, is a game in which students collaborate in groups to find energy sources in the classroom. They must provide evidence of the energy, such as classroom lights, and identify its source, such as sun, electricity, etc. This helps students realize the multiple sources of electricity in their lives and how it should be conserved for the future.

Renew-a-Bean is a game that divides students into pairs. Each pair receives 100 beans, 92 of which are one color and eight of another color. The majority of beans represents renewable energy sources, while the minority represents nonrenewable sources. One student from each pair then wears a blindfold and begins randomly selecting beans, representing energy use. After each student in all pairs has taken a turn at this, they can see the ways in which nonrenewable energy sources are quickly used. Brainstorming should then follow to help students find new ways to conserve energy.

Board Games

Board games that teach students the importance of energy conservation prepare them for textbook lessons and classroom lectures. Engineering students at New York's Clarkston University had this concept in mind when they developed a board game called Energy Choices. The game shows students how policy makers develop energy usage programs, how the national economy factors into these decisions and what the positive and negative outcomes are for citizens. The game requires 40 to 60 minutes of playing time and shows students how personal choices impact Earth's overall health.

Cool School Challenge

Sponsored by the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, the Cool School Challenge is a national program to mobilize students in conserving energy. The challenge requires students of participating schools to identify ways their entire school can reduce energy consumption and improve environmental outcomes. To get started,

a challenge coach is selected to support and manage students in carrying out the program's objectives. Student challenge leaders are those who identify and develop the program strategies, which are usually visible after conducting a schoolwide audit. To inspire other students to participate provide awards to those who achieve the greatest energy consumption reductions. Use posters and fliers to educate students on energy and how to reduce overall usage.

Resources

- [Consumer Energy Center: Consumer Tips to Save Energy and Money](#)