**Kindergarten**

**Key Concept: 9**

**Environment Lesson**

**Overview:** The purpose of this lesson is to discuss ways that students can take responsibility for their environment.

**For the Teacher:** Theeducation team for the Arkansas Secretary of State offers a presentation on Little Critter and Mercer Mayer called *Little Golden Books*. Plan this lesson for the day before or after the *Little Golden Books* presentation. This is a great way to integrate literacy into social studies standards, and is perfect for beginning readers. Find out more information about *Little Golden Books* and scheduling at: <http://www.sos.arkansas.gov/educational/Pages/ClassroomPresentations.aspx>

**Materials:**

Book: *It’s Earth Day!* By Mercer Mayer

Handouts: Copies of *Every Day is Earth Day* class book

**Objectives:**

C.2.K.3 Discuss the responsibilities of being a good citizen

G.9.K.1 Describe ways humans have a positive impact on their environment

**Instructions:**

1. Tell students that today they will be learning about ways they can help the environment.
2. On a whiteboard or chart paper, create a KWL chart for “Ways to Help the Environment.”
3. Ask students to brainstorm ways they can help the environment. Record their answers in the K column.
4. Then, ask students what questions they have about helping the environment. Record their answers in the W column.
5. Next, introduce the book *It’s Earth Day* by Mercer Mayer. Ask students to look at the cover. Have them predict what the book will be about based on the title and illustrations. Ask what Earth Day is.
6. First read: Take a “picture walk” of the book using only the illustrations. Have students infer what is happening in the book based on the pictures.
7. Second read: Read the words. Stop to point out some of the things that Little Critter does to help the environment (shut down computer, turn off lights, turn off water, recycle, plant trees, make a club, make signs).
8. After reading, refer back to your KWL chart. Discuss as a class some of the new ways they learned to help the environment, and record it in the L column.

**Assessment:**

* Informal: Ask check for understanding questions during the read aloud to make sure students are comprehending ways to help the environment. Use the L column of the KWL chart to make sure students have learned ways to help the environment.
* Formal: Create a class book. Each student is expected to write a short response and illustrate one way they can celebrate Earth Day every day. After the class book is created, bind it together and read it to the class. Keep it accessible during the school year so students can refer to it.

**Extension:**

* In the book, Little Critter and his classmates make signs around town to encourage people to reduce, reuse, and recycle. In small groups or as a class, create recycling posters to hang in the school hallway to encourage peers to recycle in school.
* Plant a tree with your class like Little Critter did.
* Little Critter coloring pages are available on Mercer Mayer’s website: <http://www.littlecritter.com/coloring_book1.html>
* Invite the Secretary of State’s Education team to your classroom to teach your students a little history about Mercer Meyer, Arkansas native author of many Little Golden Books, the difference between an author and an illustrator, why we use colorful language when we write, how to draw their own “little critter,” and why doing their homework/classwork and personal responsibility is important with Mercer Meyer’s *Just a Little Homework* read aloud from the biggest Little Golden Book you’ve ever seen.