

## SABC Education Outreach Teacher Newsletter



Dear teachers

It is a pleasure to communicate with you once again by means of these newsletters. Each newsletter in this series will have the theme of a commemorative day or month. Each newsletter contains suggested activities to use in your classes for the various SABC Education focus areas. The activities should be adapted to suite your classes' age and interests.

This newsletter deals with National Arbor Week, which is held from 1 to 7 September and related issues. As teachers you are in an ideal position to encourage the young learners to take an interest in greening our country which of course has the added overall advantage of limiting the carbon emissions and protecting the ozone layer and consequently global warming. We invite you to try the suggested activities in class and encourage you to share pass on your ideas for activities to us so that we can share them with other teachers. Wishing you success!!

Educational Greetings

Nikki Florence - (SABC Education - Outreach)

### NATIONAL ARBOR WEEK (Iviki Lezihlahla)

1 – 7 SEPTEMBER



#### Background

How does one define 'arbor? Arbour means 'a shady sitting place, usually in a park or garden, and usually surrounded by climbing shrubs or vines and other vegetation' or 'a grove of trees'. Sounds lovely doesn't it?

Arbor Day originated in the Nebraska territory in the United States in 1872.

It came about when a Mr J Sterling Morton moved from Michigan, Detroit to Nebraska. The area consisted mainly of tall grass prairies with virtually no trees.

Few people wanted to settle in the area because there was no wood for building houses or for fuel to heat homes and he decided to do something about the matter.

He became the editor of Nebraska's first newspaper and used this position to encourage the inhabitants to plant trees.

He first proposed Arbor Day as a tree planting day in 1872 and the first official Arbor Day was held in 1874 where was claimed that more than a

million trees were planted. 'Arbor Day' was named after Mr Morton's home which was known as 'Arbor Lodge'

In South Africa, Arbor Day was celebrated from 1983 until 1999 when the national government extended it to National Arbor Week which lasts from 1-7 September.

Each year, two trees, one common and one rare, are highlighted to increase public awareness of indigenous trees, while various "greening" activities are undertaken by schools, businesses and other organizations.

The selected trees for 2008 are: the common trees are the Wild plum *Harpephyllum caffrum* and the Bladder-nut *Diospyros whyteana* while the Bell bean tree *Markhamia zanzibarica* the rare or uncommon tree. The list of selected trees can be downloaded from the website [www.planzafrica.com](http://www.planzafrica.com).

Let's take a look at some activities that you could do in your school in order to raise awareness among your learners in the various focus areas:

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## Literacy

Let learners make posters with the theme '*Plant trees and save our planet*'.

Get them to create their own tree and to name it. They then draw the tree, write the name and meaning on the poster as well as a message for other learners, e.g. '*think green-think clean!*'

Display their posters around the school.

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## Mathematics, Science and Technology

Here is an idea to use in your technology class:

### Make a leaf mobile:

You will need:

White poster paper  
Red and yellow water paint  
Cotton thread  
String  
Two pieces of thin dowel sticks approx. 30cm long

### How to proceed:

Give each learner a piece of white paper and instruct them to paint it using red and yellow paint – they may mix the paints to create orange.

Allow the papers to dry.

The learners then flip the papers over and draw leaf shapes on the back and cut out the leaves

Attach the two dowel sticks in the centre with string to form a 'X' shape and attach a piece of string with which to hang the mobile

Learners then make small holes at the stems of their leaves, pull cotton thread through the holes and attach it to the dowel sticks. Hang these from the ceiling to create an Autumn theme. For older learners, the leaves could be made to suite the different vein systems of the various types of leaves.

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## Agriculture and Environment

### Make a pine cone bird feeder

For each feeder you will need:

- 1 large open pine cone
- A piece of string
- Vegetable shortening such as lard or white margarine and food for the birds such as oats, bird seed, nuts (chopped), seed (e.g. sunflower seed).

### How to proceed:

Mix the bird food with the vegetable shortening and smear all over the pine cone.

Tie the piece of string to the top end of the cone and hang it on the branch of a tree.

The learners will enjoy seeing the birds come and eat.



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## Economics, Commerce and Finance

When explaining the importance of '*greening*' and how saving energy plays a role in preventing global warming, tell learners that each and every one of us can contribute to saving the planet by saving energy.

Elaborate further on how a person's energy-saving efforts will also mean saving money.

Let the class give suggestions as to how they can save energy and money for example:

- Turn off lights when not needed.
- Walking instead of driving.

- Not opening the fridge door constantly and closing the door each time it is opened.
- Using stairs instead of a lift.

There are numerous energy saving ideas and learners can give as many suggestions as they can think of according to their level of knowledge. Let them keep a diary of all energy saving activities they do over a one-week period.

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## Heritage, Arts and Culture

How about using leaves for creative classroom activities?

Ask the learners to collect leaves from different trees and plants. Use these leaves to make:

### Leaf People

Have the learners glue a leaf on a piece of paper, and draw legs, arms, and a head to create a person.

### Leaf Paintings

Have the children paint, using leaves as paint brushes.

### Leaf Rubbings

Have the child place a leaf under a piece of paper, and rub the paper with crayon, and the leaf shape will appear. This works much better with green leaves.

Any of the abovementioned activities could form part of your Arbor week activities when raising awareness of our environment. The higher grades could incorporate the various colours, shades, hues, etc. from the Arts and Culture curriculum.




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## Health and Wellbeing

Encourage good eating habits!

Your lessons relating to 'arbor' can be extended into explaining how plant-life is used to keep us healthy.



**Have a salad day:**

**You will need:** Knives (not too sharp), two large bowls. Small containers (paper cupcake containers can be used). Plastic spoons. Two salad spoons.

**How to proceed:**

- Divide the class in half: one half is the **green salad** group and the other half is the **fruit salad** group).
- Arrange for the learners to each bring a salad vegetable (e.g. lettuce, cucumber, tomato, onion) or fruit (e.g. apple, banana, pear, grapes, etc.) depending on which group they are in.
- You could bring a little oil, vinegar and sugar to make a green salad dressing and a small fruit juice to pour over the fruit salad.
- Arrange for 2 or 3 parents to assist in the lower grades.
- Let the learners work in their groups peeling and slicing their fruit and vegetables to make their salads (you and the volunteer parents can assist in the peeling and cutting process with the younger learners).
- Mix the dressing for the green salad and pour a little fruit juice over the fruit salad.
- Toss the salads and let everyone have a taste.

## September month is also literacy month!

- **Join the 'READERS FOR LIFE' book club.**
- **Look out for the 'I'M A WRITER' competition in our September newsletter – coming soon!**



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## Civic Issues

Learners learn the basic reasons why alien plants should be eradicated, e.g.:

- They use too much water
- They displace indigenous plants
- They cause fires
- Cause soil erosion

Show learners pictures of certain alien plants – some examples of typical common alien plants are:



Oleander



Castor oil



Syringa



Bluegum



Eucalyptus

Learners show share if they know of alien plants in their environment. Let learners research for the names of other alien plants with pictures to show the rest of the class. The learners could draw/copy the different flowers or types of leaves in order to help them identify the plants.

### Volunteer:

Encourage the learners to volunteer their time to organisations and projects where people are committed to saving our environment. Assist them in making contact with these organisations or joining, e.g. the Woolworths Trust EduPlant Programme (see details below).

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## Leadership and Management

Learners are grouped into 'committees' of approximately 6 learners. They should discuss what action they would take if they were the Minister of Environmental Affairs, to eradicate alien vegetation in South Africa.

They must also come up with ideas to prevent alien vegetation from entering our country. E.g. when entering a country through an airport, the officials search all luggage and even check under shoes in case seeds are brought in, either on purpose or by accident.

The groups write up their 'laws' on a large sheet of paper and present to the class.

For the lower grades, the learners could be guided by teacher to table their 'laws' according to their age and interest level.

### Contact Us

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*Join our network of TEACHER SUPPORT, we would love to hear from you....let us have your great ideas for classroom activities! See contact details above.*

### Other Useful contacts:

#### Food & Trees for Africa:

Telephone: (011) 803 9750  
Write to: PO Box 2035  
Gallo Manor  
2052  
E-mail: [info@trees.org.za](mailto:info@trees.org.za)  
Website: [www.trees.org.za](http://www.trees.org.za)

#### Woolworths Trust EduPlant programme:

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