



Strengthening education in human values - The Link between Recycling and Climate Change

SOFIA KASTANIDOU

Larissa, Greece (skastanidou@yahoo.gr)

High school of Nikaia – Larissas, Greece (mail@lyk-nikaias.lar.sch.gr)

This work is an environmental education program of 50 hours- off curriculum, currently run by High school of Nikaia – Larissas. I as coordinator teacher, another two teachers and 24 students participate in this program. Intended learning outcomes: students will be able to define the importance of climate change, to evaluate the effect of human activities on climate, and to recognize the role of recycling in preventing global climate change. It is an environmental program with social goals. That means students have to understand the link between human and environment and learn how to combine environmental protection with human help. As a consequence collaboration has already begun between High school of Nikaia and the Paraplegic & Physically Disabled Association of Pella-Greece. This is a nonprofit association that collects plastic caps; with the contribution of a recycling company the Paraplegic Association converts plastic caps in wheelchairs and gives them to needy families. So, recycling caps becomes a meaningful form of environmental and social activism. Students are educated about the meaning of recycling and encouraged to collect all types of plastic caps; they are also educated in the meaning of helping people.

Further, this environmental education program consists of two parts, a theoretical and a practical one:

a) Theoretical part: education is an essential element of the global response to climate change, so students have to research on climate change; they visit the Center for Environmental Education in Florina and experience the aquatic ecosystem of Prespa lakes; specialists of the Centre inform students about the effects of climate change on wetlands; students have further to research how recycling can help fight global climate change as well as examine how recycling a key component of modern waste reduction is, as the third component of the "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" waste hierarchy; they discover the interdependence of society, economy and the natural environment; they visit the City Cleaning-Recycling Services; scientists visit our school and engage students in the climate change issue; students are educated in developing ecological consciousness paths to a sustainable future.

b) Practical part: students use recycled materials to build containers where everyone can put the plastic caps; they decorate containers with other recyclable materials such as magazine clippings, ribbons etc.; students are encouraged to contact local organizations (municipality, post office, and banks), sports clubs and shops, to inform people about their action and to put the containers for plastic caps in the place they work or in their houses; they collect plastic caps frequently at school; at the end of the environmental education program all the students visit Paraplegic & Physically Disabled Association in Pella-Yannitsa and deliver the collected caps.

We hope that students will leave the program with new skills, experiences and knowledge that can be used to help themselves, their communities, their environment and future generations. "Our changing planet – our changing society for a better future".