**Let’s Paint the Globe Green!**

This epals project has students connecting with students in other countries to share the ways that they help conserve and preserve the environment. I would like to tie the epals project into a research project that students in fifth grade complete on building a schoolyard habitat. We have begun the process of becoming a green school. I believe these projects inter-twined would give students a greater understanding for the global need of conservation.

**Epals Project Objectives:**

* Develop bonds with students of various countries and varied cultures.
* Share the activities done by them as a part of the Eco-Club or Green Clubs in their schools.
* Understand the varied local needs of environment conservation under the broad global umbrella.

**Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards:**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5 – Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

* CCSS.ELA-Literacy SL.5.1 – Engage effectively in a range of collaboration discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others’ ideas and expression their own clearly.
* CCSS>ELA-Literacy.SL.5.2-Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually quantitatively, and orally.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

* CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL5.4 – Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.
* CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL5.5 – Include multimedia components (e.g. graphics, sound) and visual displays in presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

**Maryland State STEM Standards of Practice**

1. Learn and Apply Rigorous Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Content

b. Apply science, technology, engineering and mathematics content to answer complex questions, to investigate global issues, and to develop solutions for challenges and real world problems.

5. Engage in Logical Reasoning

c. Apply science, technology, engineering, and mathematics content to construct creative and innovative ideas.

d. Analyze the impact of global issues and real world problems at the local, state, national, and international levels.

**Technical Requirements:**

This project is quite in depth, as it requires both a large research assignment, as well as preparing and contributing tele collaboratively with students from all over the world.

**Requirements:**

* Epal accounts
* Laptops/desktops/devices available for each students or small groups of students for research and communication
* Video/audio recording devices
* Headphones
* Internet connections
* Note-taking sheets, either digital or paper copies
* [Symbaloo of Resources](http://www.symbaloo.com/mix/greeningtheschoolyard)
* Animoto, photostory or other multi-media programming tool
* All resources needed for the research project “[Greening the Schoolyard](greening%20the%20schoolyard%20teacher%20guide%20merged.docx)”

**Contingency Plans**

* Because this project is so dependent on technology, there is always the chance of technical difficulties. Should internet access not be available, students would need to be provided with print resources for the research portion of the project.
* Should there be any students that are on the “opt out” list for technology use, we would need to have those students either pair with another student so that they would not be responding to an epal or they could even use pencil and paper communication.
* There is the possibility that some of the resources needed in the Symbaloo could have broken links, so additional resources would need to be found and provided.
* Should the epals site no longer continue to exist, the relationship between the students could be continued through an [Edmodo](https://www.edmodo.com/) account. This may actually be a preferred way to communicate as it is very easy to share projects and comment in a more community type forum.
* Skype might also be another option for connecting with their epal students, but it would be time zone dependent.
* Students that struggle with reading may need to pair up with other students or be provided resources (Kurzwell) that will read the information aloud for the research portion of this project.

**Detailed Plan:**

* (August, 2015) - Students will begin this endeavor by connecting with an epal to develop friendships. This would preferably happen in the beginning of the school year to be able to nurture the relationship with their epal. They would need to share information about their country, culture, school environment, etc. It would be most beneficial if students were given the opportunity to email at least weekly or biweekly, perhaps to answer or pose questions to their telecommunicating peer.
* (September – January, 2016) During this time, students will begin the research project on [“Greening the Schoolyard”.](greening%20the%20schoolyard%20teacher%20guide%20merged.docx)  This is an intensive research project that aligns with Oliver Beach’s desire to become a green school.

Research and activities include: schoolyard report card, conserving natural resources, conserving energy, reducing air pollution, conserving water, decreasing waste in landfills, and designing a schoolyard habitat. Some of the students’ findings could be shared with their epals during their email conversations.

* (September – January, 2016) As students are working through this research project, they will continue to work as recycling helpers in our cafeteria. They will also work together to create a video representation of the work that they do in the cafeteria. This will require them to collaborate and write about their jobs as well as choose a tool to display their work, such as animoto, photostory or a similar program. This video project could then be shared with their global epals. Students will be completing self-evaluations during the worktime to gauge their effort and understanding ([self-evaluation document](Self%20Evaluation%20for%20group%20research.JPG))
* (September – January, 2016) I am assuming that through this project, the epal partners will also be sharing ways in which they are working to preserve or protect their environment or natural resources, as well. This will give my students the opportunity to see conservation as a global issue. It should also help them to gain a better understanding of the difficulties that other students might face throughout the world.
* (January, 2016) The epals project has a culminating activity of exchanging bookmarks with our epal partners. This would be a wonderful way to send a physical object and representation to show our friendship.

**Closure**

* (February, 2016) Closure would come with the exchange of the bookmarks, but I would also like for my students to compare the two regions and the efforts that each school is making to “Paint the Globe Green”. With the intense research and the collaboration within our class and the epals community, I believe students could answer the essential question, “How can people all over the world contribute to conserving and preserving the resources found around the globe?” There answer and understanding of this essential question will also lend itself to the overall evaluation of this project.

**Evaluation**

* (February, 2016) To evaluate this project, I would have students complete a [google form](http://goo.gl/forms/bFRbzq8Kgc) to share their opinions, learning and understanding. To evaluate the success, I would have to see the responses to the essential question, as well as the students overall feelings on the epals project.

**Google Form Evaluation**

<http://goo.gl/forms/bFRbzq8Kgc>