

Schools Tree Day – What makes us click isn't a device – Primary

Teacher preparation

Overarching learning goal: Students will be able to make the connection between time in nature and an improvement in people's health and wellbeing. They will understand how humour and parody are used in a video to convey its message, and will use their understanding to create a short film with a specific health and wellbeing message.



Teacher content information: New research by Planet Ark released in the lead up to National Tree Day, examines how time in nature enhances and grows the key areas in life that Australians consider the most important for a fulfilling life – health, happiness, learning, relaxation and relationships.

The report presents the results from studies published in peer-reviewed journals and Planet Ark's National Survey, finding that nature helps make people happier, healthier, brighter, calmer and closer. The surveys included in the report used internationally-recognised scales to measure the connection to nature and happiness of participants. With people spending more and more time tethered to screens and devices, there's never been a greater need to add nature to our lives.

The report titled [Adding Trees - A Prescription for Health, Happiness and Fulfilment](#), found:

- Just 10 minutes' relaxing outside is enough to significantly reduce blood pressure.



- Time in nature reduces a person's chance of developing a range of diseases, including diabetes by 43%, cardiovascular disease and stroke by 37% and depression by 25%.
- Nature induces positive feelings through a number of physiological mechanisms, including activating the brain's dopamine reward system.
- Students who take part in outdoor learning programs perform better in reading, writing, maths and science, with 77% of teachers reporting student improvement in standardised tests.
- A strong connection to nature makes people more likely to feel passionate about relationships with their friends and family.

About the Video:

The phenomenally successful Nature RX short film spoofing "get-well advertising" - shares the same message as Planet Ark: Doctors recommend nature. So Planet Ark got in touch with Justin Bogardus at Nature RX and he agreed to write, direct and edit a similar film for an Australian audience.

For more background information, check out the links below:

- [30x30 Nature Challenge](#)
- [Planting Trees: Just What The Doctor Ordered](#)
- [Play Again - Youtube - Official Trailer](#)

Teaching sequence

25 minutes - Part A: Watch video & consider the message

30 minutes - Part B: Applying the message

60 minutes - Part C: Spreading the message for the benefit of others

05 minutes - Reflection

Work through this resource material in the following sequence:

Part A: Watch video & consider the message



Before the lesson, write the prompts for the Chalk Talk thinking tool activity in the centre of a piece butcher's paper so as to maintain the flow of the lesson.

Step 1. Ask students to sit in a semi-circle. As a class, watch the Planet Ark National Tree Day video.

[National Tree Day video - "What makes us click isn't a device"](https://vimeo.com/173675004)
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Step 2. As a whole class, use the Chalk-Talk visible thinking tool to have a 'silent conversation' about what they noticed about the National Tree Day video. This is a really useful way to encourage participation from the students in your class who are usually reluctant to contribute to class conversations.

Chalk-Talk visible thinking tool instructions: Place the butcher's paper with the first prompt on the floor in the middle of the group and ask students to move to the paper to write down the words, phrases and wonderings that they have in response to the prompt without chatting about them first. Follow this process for each of the prompts.

Prompt 1: What are your ideas, thoughts, questions and wonderings about the Planet Ark Tree Day video?

Some supplementary questions you could ask to further prompt student thinking:

- What did you notice about the people who were in the hospital?
- What were they doing?
- Why do you think they were in hospital?
- Would people really have to go to hospital for using phones/tablets/computers?
- Why do you think the video shows them in the hospital?
- What do you notice about the people in the video who are in nature?



- What are some of the things they are doing?
- What emotions are they showing?
- How can you tell that they feel that way?
- Why do you think they feel that way?
- What did you hear during the video?
- What is some of the information that you heard in the voiceover?
- What is the main message in the voiceover?

Prompt 2: What are your ideas, thoughts, questions and wonderings about WHAT the message of the video is?

Some supplementary questions you could ask to further prompt student thinking:

- What does the video want the audience to change?
- Do you think the man and woman in the video are real doctors?
- Have you ever seen an ad that is similar to this video?
- Do you think that that video is similar to ads about other health messages?
- In what way are they similar?
- In what way is the video different to other health messages we see on TV sometimes?
- How might the video change people's minds about devices?
- Who do you know that would benefit from a 'prescription of nature'?

Prompt 3: What are your ideas, thoughts and wonderings about HOW the video changes the audience's mind?

Some supplementary questions you could ask to further prompt student thinking:

- Was the video serious or funny?
- How did you react to the video?
- Did you laugh?
- Why do you think they made the video that way?

- Why would the audience to listen to the message in the video?

While individual students are writing, encourage the rest of the class to read the butcher's paper, and see if what is being written prompts their own thinking. They should try to elaborate on other students ideas, comment on what others have written and ask each other to provide more detail.

After they have noted their ideas, ask students to spend some time reading each other's contributions and notice any themes that have emerged, as well as any common issues and reactions. Discuss what students observe, as well as anything that surprised them.

Once students have debriefed their understanding of the video, ask them to consider the change in their own understanding around the video's content and messages too. You could ask each member of the class to name one way that their thinking developed during the Chalk-Talk activity.

Part B: Applying the message

Hot tip: The message of the video could be reinforced by taking your class outdoors for the rest of this lesson. Choose somewhere in the school yard where students can still write and draw - perhaps take a set of clipboards outside with you. Before you go, have a discussion with your class about behaviour protocols and what they expect of themselves and each other so that the class can fully benefit from the change in scenery.

Step 1. As a class, create a written list of the different activities that they can do outside. For example:

- bike riding
- camping
- walking the dog
- climbing a tree
- building a cubby/fairy garden



- collecting insects
- playing with friends
- playing sport such as soccer/cricket
- planting trees/gardening

Step 2. Next, encourage students to connect with their own experiences of having fun in nature. Invite students to choose one of the listed activities that they enjoy. They will create a mind map of rough-sketch images that illustrate what the activity looks like (in the middle of the page), then what they they remember seeing/thinking/feeling when they were outside experiencing the activity (around the middle picture). Emphasise with students that this is only a quick-sketch activity - they are sharing their experiences (not their artistic prowess!).

Step 3. Once students have completed their sketches, ask them to pair up with a class mate and swap the stories that their pictures tell about their experiences when out in nature.

Step 4. Finally, engage students in a brief class discussion an invite students to think about whether a device is necessary to participate in any of these activities - why or why not?

Part C: Spreading the message for the benefit of others

Step 1. Inform students that they now have the opportunity to encourage more people to enjoy time in nature in the same way that they have just illustrated in their drawings. They will do so by creating a short film that highlights the fun that people can have in nature. The aim of the film is to persuade their audience to want to spend more time in nature.

Step 2. Coordinate students to form groups of around four (mixed ability groups would be ideal, due to the self-directed nature of the project).

Step 3. Invite students to start thinking about what they want their film



to be about and look like. Before beginning this stage of planning, explain to students that the film should focus on sharing the benefits of spending time in nature and may include genres such as animation, humour, comedy, drama and musical. The film can tell a story, be a song, or a documentary. A suggested time for the film is 3 minutes.

Give each group some butcher's paper and textas. Invite groups to brainstorm ideas for what the film might look like. Ask students to start thinking about how they might engage their audience and what techniques they might use in their message to grab the attention of their audience. For example, will they use humour or music?

Ask each group to select their favourite idea and develop it in more detail, imagining a brief plot or structure and describing the key events or features of the film.

Step 4. Explain to students that they are now ready to plan their film in more detail. Groups can use the planning table on the Student Worksheet (online or printed) to guide thoughts and record ideas. The [How to make a short film - help sheet](#) can be used to help students understand some of the steps that may need to be taken and the resources required when making a short film. They can use the Student Worksheet to guide their thoughts and record their ideas. Students can use the [How to make a short film - help sheet](#) to help them understand some of the steps that may need to be taken and the resources required when making a short film.

Give each group a copy of this [Storyboard template](#) - they can use it to map out their ideas and imagine how they will look on the screen. Groups should check that their draft idea flows in a way that makes sense and is conveying a specific message to the audience.

Step 5. Once groups have planned their film they can start to make it! This will include both shooting and post production. See the [How to make a short film - help sheet](#) for more information on these stages. It is recommended that you give students some tight deadlines to work to and assign roles based on student skills or interest. This helps students



focus on the task in a directed and collaborative way. For example, instruct students that they have half a day to film and another half of a day to edit. The timeline should direct the task.

Step 6. Before sharing their film with audiences outside the classroom, invite groups to share their films with the class and instruct students to provide constructive peer reviews by providing a copy of the [Peer film assessment rubric](#).

Step 7. Encourage students to share their films! Invite other students, teachers and parents to watch the films. This could even be done by uploading student's film onto a free video sharing platform such as Vimeo and sending the links for people to view and comment on. You could also send student's videos to Planet Ark! They want to see how Australian students are making a world of difference with their bright ideas - they can forward files and links of their films to treeday@planetark.org

Reflection

Invite students to respond to the following questions on the Student Worksheet:

- When you were working on your film, what did you find easy? Give some detail about what it was and why you found it easy.
- When you were working on your film, what did you find difficult? Give some detail about what it was and why you found it difficult.

Extension

Students could plan their own [Planet Ark's School Tree Day](#) event. This could involve your class planning and coordinating the event for other students in the school.

The class could use this [Project Planning Tool](#) to plan their event.



A important part of project-based learning is the provision of an opportunity for students to present their learning in a public forum. This celebrates student achievement and learning and could look like a newsletter article or class blog post detailing student's projects.