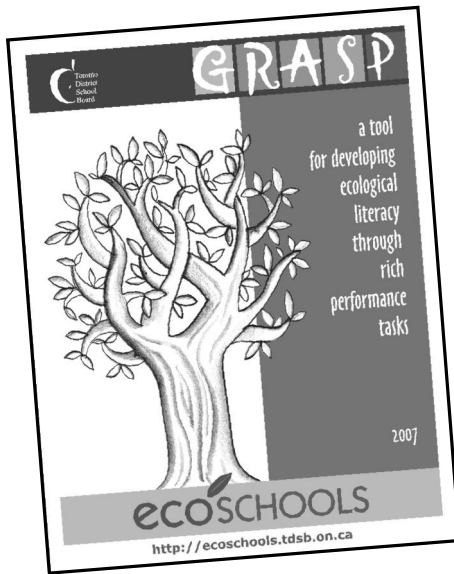


GRASP: Developing Ecological Literacy through Rich Performance Tasks



► What is this strategy for?

GRASP: A tool for developing ecological literacy through rich performance tasks (TDSB, 2007) has been written to help teachers introduce an ecological literacy dimension to their program. Planning rich performance tasks takes time, but teachers who have done this work say that they are a powerful and meaningful way to frame expectations for students and plan lessons. A rich performance task can integrate clusters of expectations gracefully from several disciplines so that teaching and learning have a purpose that students can readily understand.

This resource contains tools to help teachers frame their educational goals so that they develop students' ecological literacy through teasing out the human-nature interconnections. They cast learning in realistic scenarios that involve role play and awareness of audience, and culminate in a persuasive presentation or product. The scenario sets the stage for critical thinking and problem solving, with the goal usually being to reduce negative human impact on the environment.

Use the GRASP brainstorming tool that follows to generate many ideas quickly.

Once you have settled on an idea to develop further, use the summery of Rich Performances Task on page 118 to add detail to the task. Use the chosen task as a compass to guide you in selecting and developing lesson plans, resources, field trips, visits to the school ground, and other learning opportunities that will enable your students to successfully achieve what you have set for them. (For example, see *A Day with Trees*, page 115)

And finally (the most difficult step to make time for!) reflect on the experience so that you have a record of how well this process worked. Try using the reflective learning log on page 120 .

Check out the GRASP resource for specific strategies for brainstorming rich performance tasks, as well as listing roles/careers, products or performances, and audiences.

To download a pdf of the GRASP resource, visit ecoschools.ca > *guides and other publications*

To order a print copy see the order form on page 4 of this guide.