



Eco Team Action Research



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Introducing the Teacher–Researcher, Students, & School



Teacher Researcher:

- Alexandra Goumakos
- Grade 2/3 French Immersion Teacher
- Dallington P.S. (K–5 TDSB School)



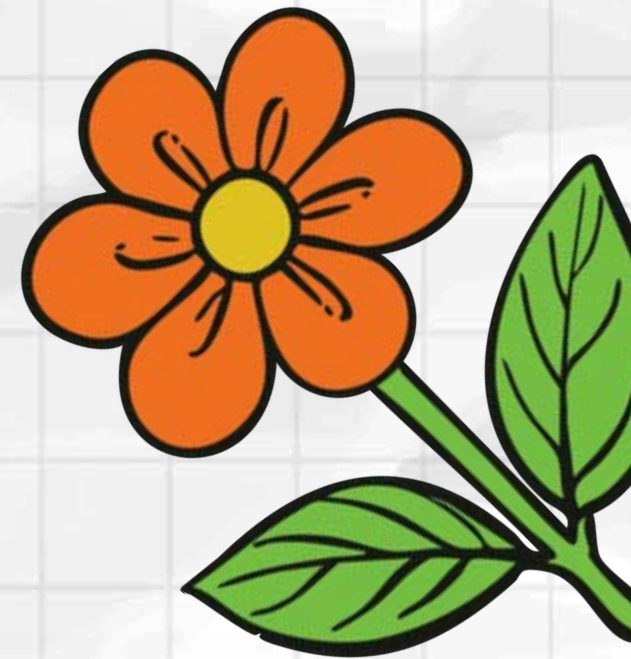
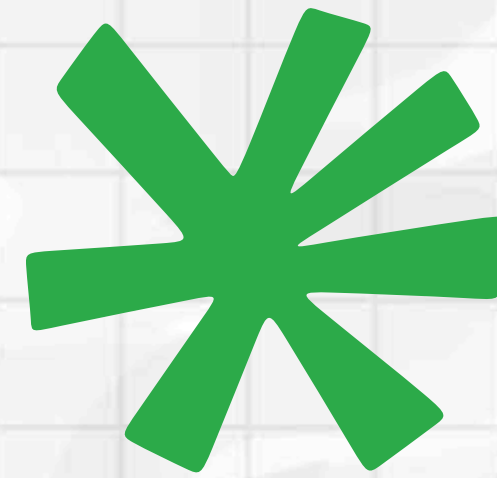
Students:

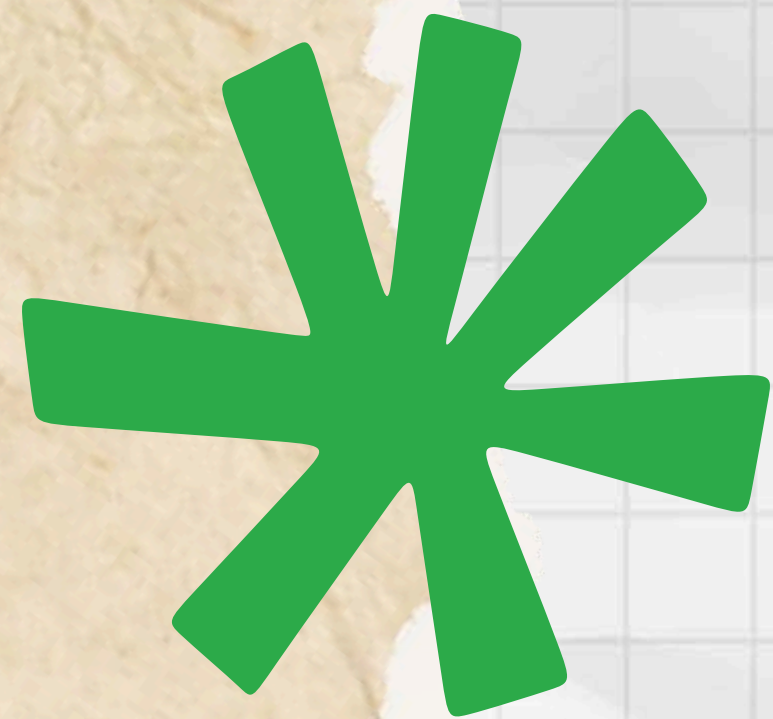
- Eco Team students who met weekly
- Comprised of students in grades 1–5 in both English and French Immersion programs



Key Research Question

What drives elementary students to want to be environmental leaders in our school community?





Curricular Connections



Students who engage and learn in our Eco Team make connections to:

- Environmental & Sustainability
- Science and Technology
- Language
- Mathematics
- Physical Education & Health
- Social Studies
- Visual Arts



* Curricular Implementation *

Students who actively come to meetings learn in, about, and for the environment in a variety of ways. Eco Leaders:

- Learn about climate change and how to take individual and global climate action.
- Make campaigns and promote eco literacy.
- Learn about waste management and reducing waste in creative ways.
- Do things for enjoyment, such as eco art and gardening!





Why Students Join the Eco Team



Some emerging themes from student interviews and data collection:



1. Love for Nature & Animals
2. Desire for Knowledge
3. Stewardship & Global Impact
4. Social & Family Connections





When asked, "Do you consider yourself an environmental leader at Dallington?" They said:

- Yes: 60%
- Unsure: 40%
- No: 0%





Big Ideas that Stuck



They shared:

1. Climate change
 2. School wide events such as TMO Day, Clothing Swap, and the Holiday Eco Market
 3. Waste sorting and garbage clean-ups
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Eco Favourite: Clean up time!



Eco Favourite: Holiday Eco Market!



Eco Favourite: Clothing Swap!





Insights from this Action Research Study



The following slides outline the insights and conclusions that can be made from this study from the student interviews, their input, and observations.





Why Students Join the Eco Team



1. Love for Nature & Animals

- A significant number of students joined because of an existing passion for the natural world.
- Personal enjoyment of nature, love for animals, and a history and connection of planting trees or walking in forests with family.



"Since I was little I loved nature and I want to make the world a better place." (Grade 3 Student Quote)





Why Students Join the Eco Team



2. Desire for Knowledge

- Students are curious about the "how" and "where" of environmentalism.
- Learning about new animals and plants, understanding where waste actually goes, and wanting to learn more about the Earth.



"I just wanted to learn more about the Earth and know about trash." (Grade 5 Student Quote)





Why Students Join the Eco Team



3. Stewardship & Global Impact

- There is a clear trend of students wanting to fix problems they see in the world.
- Wanting to help the community, reducing pollution, making an impact, and continuing a habit of service started in earlier grades.



"I want to know how to make an impact on the environment." (Grade 5 Student Quote)





Why Students Join the Eco Team



4. Social & Family Connections

- Environmental leadership is often sparked by those closest to the students.
- Recommendations from siblings, wanting to make new friends with similar interests, and family traditions like "cleaning the park on Sundays."



"Because my sister said it was lots of fun."
(Grade 2 Student Quote)



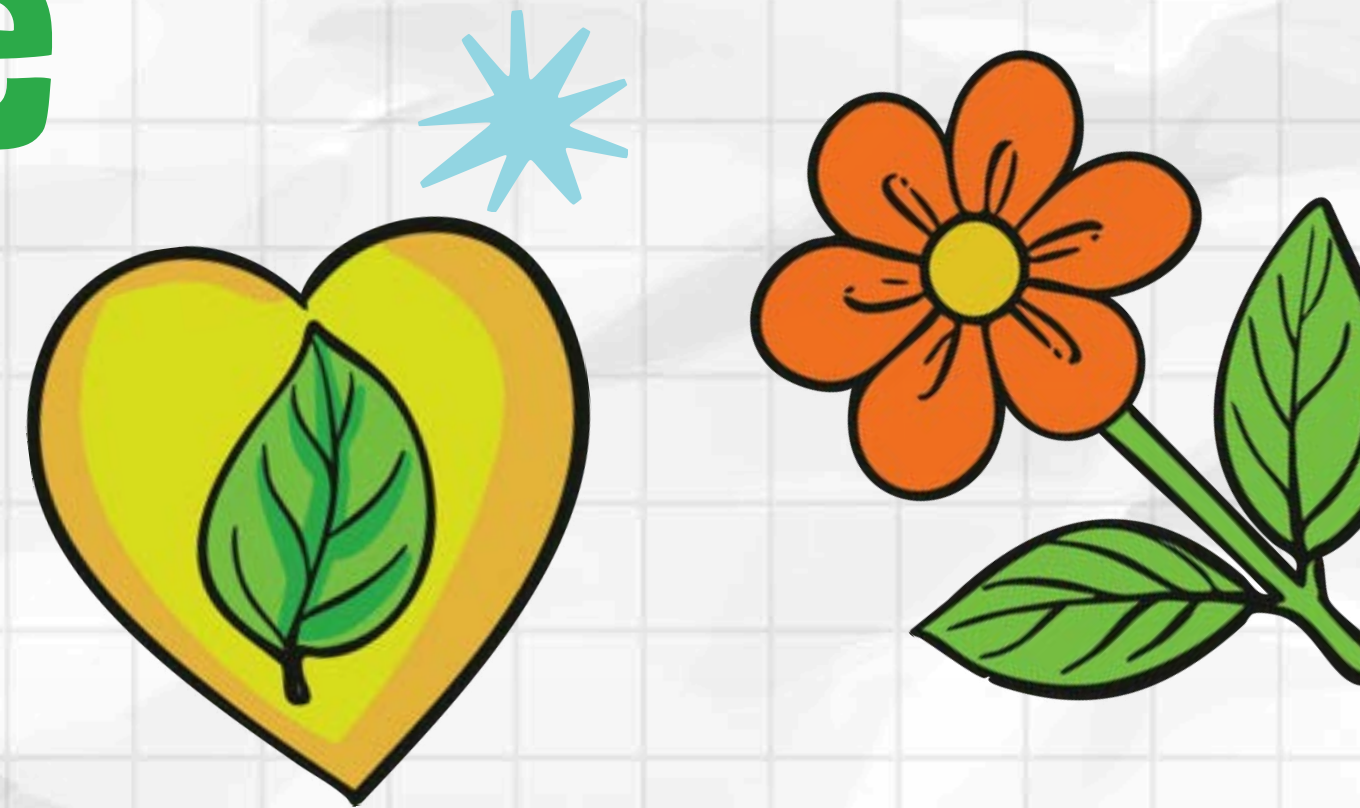
What actions have you taken?

Waste Action: Cleaning up litter, starting garbage teams, sorting trash for others.

Event Leadership: TMO Day, Clothing Swaps, Holiday Eco Market.

Planning & Ideas: Writing ideas for Winter TMO Day and helping friends make “eco” choices.

Direct Nature Care: Planting, working in the garden, and making paper.



Favourite Part of being an Eco Team Leader at our School



Environmental Ethics:

- Respecting and protecting the Earth from harm.

Active Stewardship:

- Planting, gardening, and litter removal.

Scientific Exploration:

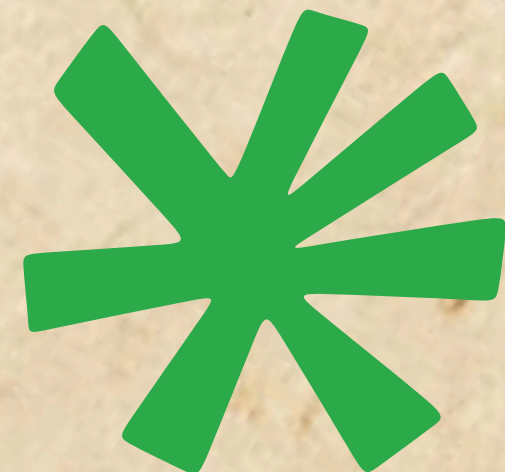
- Observing worms, trees, and new species.

School Culture:

- Participating in TMO Day and building friendships.

Peer Education:

- Teaching others about waste sorting and sustainability.



What has "stuck" from Eco Team?

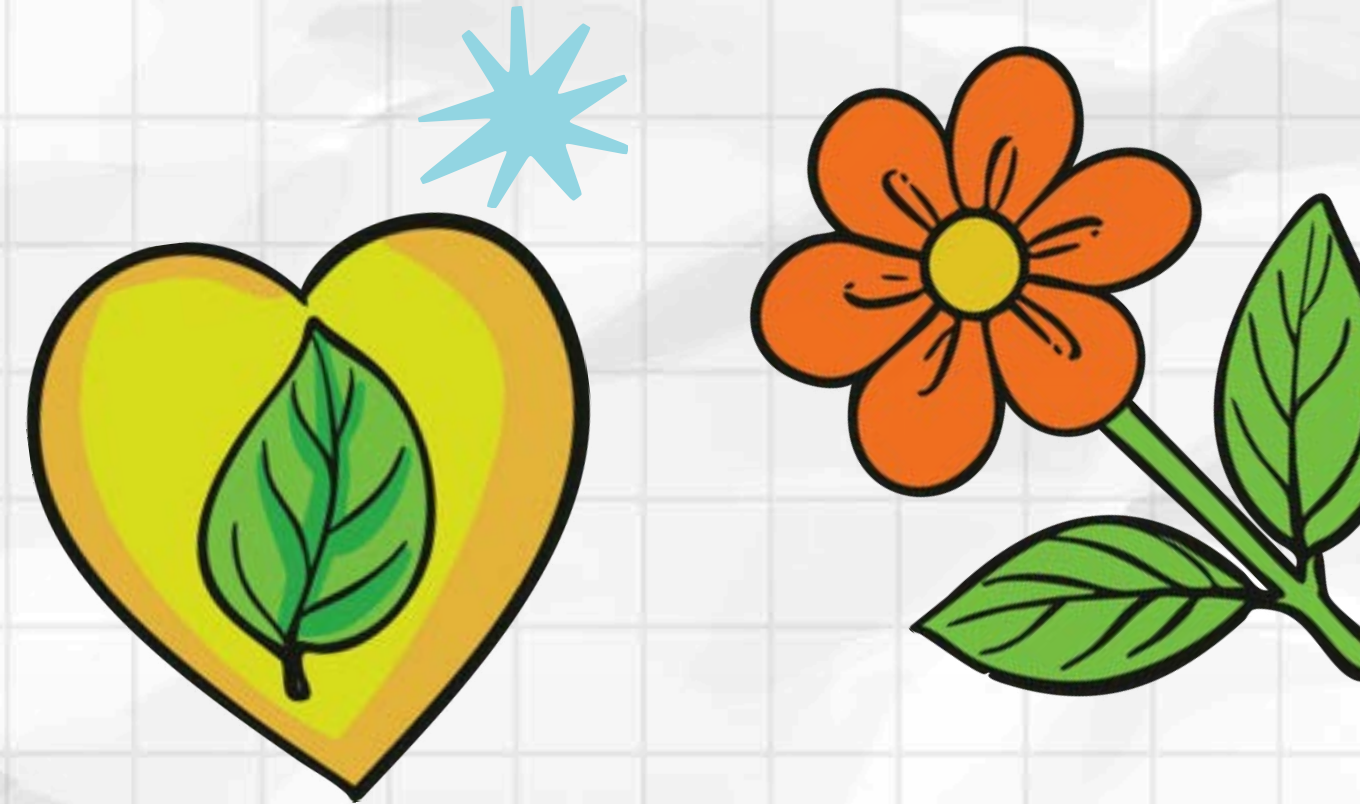
Theme → Concept → Why it mattered...

Global Systems

- Animals (polar bears) losing homes
 - Emotional connection to Climate Change.

Manufacturing

- Making "new" paper from "old" paper
 - Demystified how recycling works and that we should reuse/repurpose before recycling.



What has "stuck" from Eco Team?

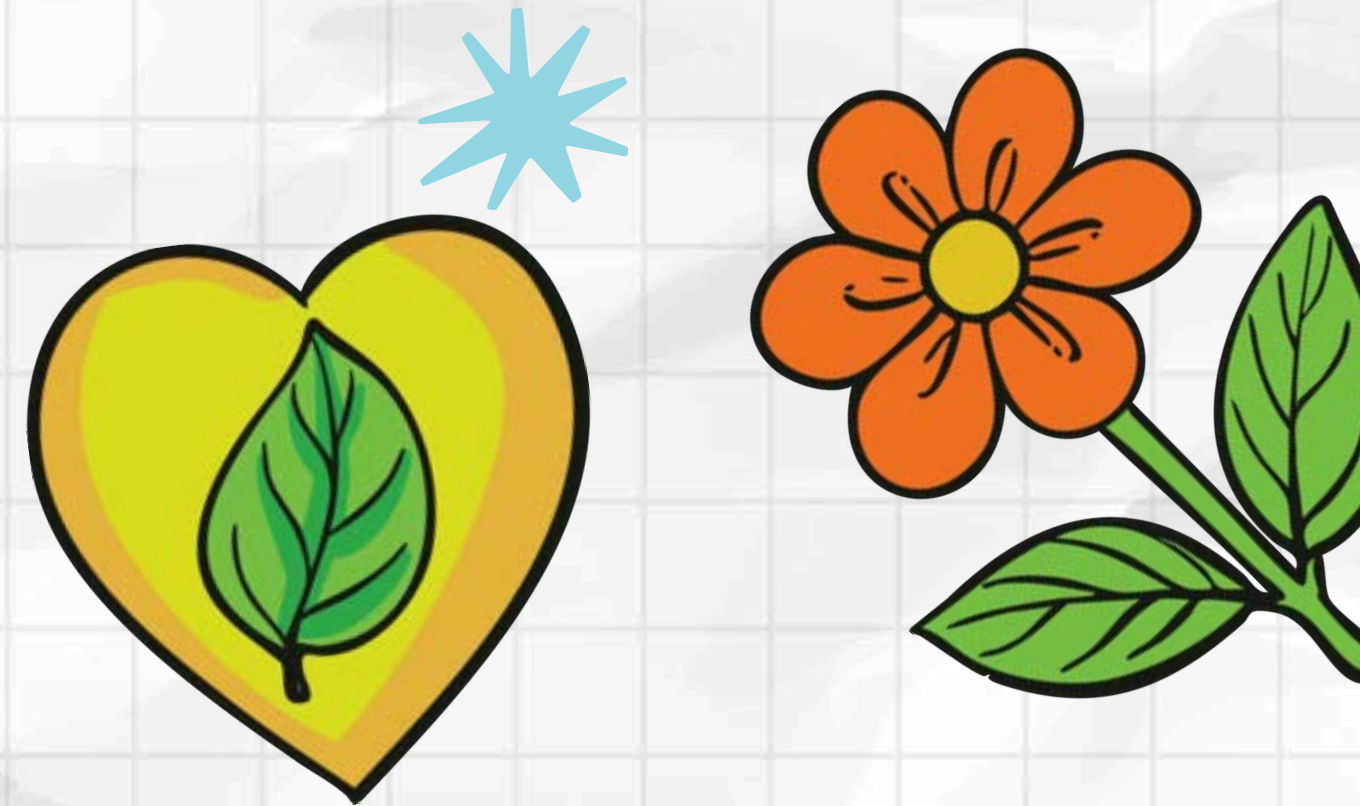
Theme → Concept → Why it mattered...

Urgency

- Greenhouse gases and quality of air
 - Showed the link between nature and human health.

Responsibility

- "The clothing monster" & waste sorting
 - It turned abstract "waste" into a tangible problem to solve.

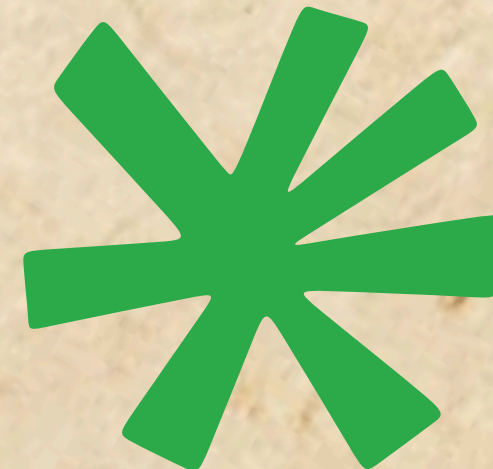




Data Collection Strategies



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- Photos
 - Student work samples
 - Student interviews



Thank you!

