



***The Planet* Teacher Resource**

This teacher resource has been adapted from the *The Planet* study guide written by Susan Starkman, available through the John VanDuzer Children's Film Collection.

TITLE: *The Planet*

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Sweden

RELEASE YEAR: 2006

ORIGINAL LANGUAGE: English

DIRECTOR: Michael Sternberg, Linus Torell, Johan Soderberg

RUNTIME: 97 minutes

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY:

Linus Torell

1. *The Planet* (2006)
2. *Vinnarskallar* (2006) TV series
3. *Misa Mi* (2003)
4. *Allra mest tecknat* (2002) TV series

CURRICULUM LINKS:

- **Grade 9, 10, 11 and 12 Science:**
Sustainable Ecosystems and Human Activity, Climate Change, The Study of the Universe, Plants in the Natural Environment, Diversity of Living Things, Chemistry in the Environment, Human Impact on the Environment.
- **Grade 9 Geography:**
Space and Systems, Human-Environment Interactions, Global Connections, Understanding and Managing Change, Sustainable Ecosystems.
- **Grade 11 and 12 Canadian and World Studies:**
How does climate change affect the global economy?



- **Grade 10 Civics:**
Informed Citizenship, Purposeful Citizenship, Active Citizenship,
- **Politics:**
How do different countries deal with the issue of global warming?
What role does the environment play in international relations?
- **Media Studies:**
How are environmental issues depicted in the media? What techniques do documentaries use to persuade audiences to agree with a particular argument?

FOCUSING QUESTION: How does global warming impact the environment?

SYNOPSIS:

To mark Earth Day, Sprockets is pleased to present a screening and discussion of the award-winning documentary *The Planet*. Filmed across twenty-five countries over a period of two years, *The Planet* offers an international perspective on the topic of climate change. Exploring both the various causes of climate change as well as the potential consequences it poses to the environment, economy and global political landscape, the film focuses on the earth as a whole, where actions in one area can have an impact on the rest of the world. Interviews with both experts and lay people are mixed with stunningly photographed images and combined with creative use of sound and text. The final product is a dynamic and absorbing multimedia experience that delivers a powerful caution: the planet we live on has its limits. One of the film's key messages is that the actions we take now to address climate change will have a profound effect on the future. A discussion following the screening will address questions about the points raised in the film and offer concrete steps that individuals can take to change the current climatic course.

The Planet is part of the John VanDuzer Children's Film Collection. For more information on renting films from the collection to screen in the classroom, please visit reellearning.ca.

Recommended for Grades: 9 through 12



An educator's comments after screening the film:

"*The Planet* provides a fresh approach to learning about the environment and the challenges our society will face when trying to repair some of the damage that has been done. By interviewing researchers and professionals from many different countries around the world, this film provides a global perspective on the issues and the solutions. It reinforces the concept that our actions in North America will have a direct impact on those living in places such as Africa."

PRE-SCREENING PREPARATION:

Have students reflect on how their actions and lifestyles as individuals impact on the environment and consider specific actions they can take to help minimize these effects. An interesting introductory lesson would be getting students to calculate their individual "footprint." Here are some websites that students can visit in order to do this:

- Earth Day <http://www.earthday.net>
- Environment Canada <http://www.ec.gc.ca>

POST-SCREENING ACTIVITY:

The Planet conveys some convincing information about the dangers of global warming, but it does not offer any dissenting opinions. Listed below is a series of assertions made by the experts interviewed in the film. Students should research each statement and see if they can find alternative viewpoints or interpretations of the same data. Who provides the more convincing argument? Why?

Assertion	Rebuttal
The rate of which species are going extinct now is 1000 times greater than it would have been under natural circumstances. (Stuart Pimm, Professor of Conservation Ecology, Duke University)	

<p>If you continue with business as usual, you will see agricultural failures, you will see more conflict over water shortages and essentially, I think you'll start seeing a real breakdown of civilization into much more fractious, combative societies. I think you'll see more and more competition among smaller groups that are increasingly divided and fragmented. (Robert Gelbspan, writer)</p>	
<p>The disappearance of those glaciers [Himalayan Glaciers] alone is enough to throw the world into net food deficit. It is enough to cause a global humanitarian catastrophe. (George Monbiot, Visiting Professor, Oxford Brookes University)</p>	
<p>So this means that we have from now until about the middle of the century to think very carefully and to actually start doing something about changing energy systems, changing land-use systems, changing the way we live. If we don't do it by the middle of the century, we're facing much higher risks of significant and potentially very damaging changes. (Will Steffen, Professor/Director, Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, Australian National University, Canberra)</p>	

CONCLUSION/WRAP-UP:

Have students produce a five-minute public service announcement encouraging young people to become more environmentally aware. Students could take on different roles involved with the production (e.g. writing, directing, acting, filming, producing the soundtrack).



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

1. Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication
<http://www.eecom.org>
2. Environment Canada
<http://www.ec.gc.ca>
3. Woods Hole Research Centre
<http://www.whrc.org>