



Student Reporter Ideas: Sustainability and the Environment

Sustainability is one of the three key pillars of the 2010 Winter Games in Vancouver. Encourage the student reporters in your classroom to explore one of these sustainability-related Olympic topics.

Richmond Oval & the Mountain Pine Beetle:



Photo source: *Jonathan Hayward/Canadian Press*

The Richmond Oval was constructed using a variety of sustainable building practices. In particular, the six-acre roof was built using mountain pine beetle wood. Are there any buildings in your community that were built using mountain pine beetle wood? Students can research and report on the uses of mountain pine beetle wood at the 2010 Winter Games and in their local community.

Green Building:



Are there any Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified buildings in your community? All of the new buildings constructed for the 2010 Winter Games are using the Canadian Building Council's LEED rating system to ensure that the Games encourage sustainable land use and neighbourhood planning. Students can research what LEED certification is, they can interview LEED builders in their community, make a poster about a local LEED project, or host a video tour of a local LEED building. (http://www.livesmartbc.ca/community/features/richmond_oval.html)

Coastal Tailed Frogs:



While building the Whistler Creekside Olympic venue, VANOC was sensitive to the coastal tailed frog habitat around the area. Volunteers re-located frogs by hand to an upstream creek where current monitoring indicates they are thriving. Students can research coastal tailed frogs and their habitat requirements. Students can interview a local biologist about the impact of development on animal habitat or research a local development project in their community that took extra care to protect a native plant or animal.

(<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/frogwatch/whoswho/factshts/tailed.htm>)



Sharing the Dream

BC Parks:



Cypress Provincial Park is hosting two Olympic venues. Local parks are great places to experience winter sports such as nordic skiing and ice skating. Students can visit a local park, interview a ranger, try out a new sport and report on their adventure! (<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/index.html>)

LiveSmart BC Community Heroes:



LiveSmart BC profiles community heroes throughout British Columbia who are making a difference by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating sustainable communities. Are there any community heroes in your areas? Students can interview local heroes and ask them questions about sustainable living. (<http://www.livesmartbc.ca/community/heroes.html>)

International Year of Biodiversity:



In addition to the year of the Olympic Winter Games, 2010 is also the United Nation's International Year of Biodiversity (IYB). What is biodiversity and what is Canada doing for 2010 IYB? Students can research International and Canadian efforts to celebrate and promote IYB and can report on local initiatives that support biodiversity (e.g. local stream restoration project, native plant gardening, etc.).

Mascots:



The Olympic Mascots Miga and Sumi represent some of BC's most cherished animals. Miga is part kermode bear and part orca whale. Sumi is part orca, thunderbird and black bear. Students can research BC's Species at Risk and report on some of the challenges facing these animals. What Species at Risk live near your community? Students can interview local researchers concerned about these animals. (<http://www.speciesatrisk.bc.ca/>)

Recycling and Waste Management:



VANOC has committed to diverting from the landfill 85% of the waste generated at the 2010 Winter Games. Students can profile recycling efforts at your school and compare them to what VANOC is doing at the Games. This could inspire your students to initiate a recycling project in the classroom too! (<http://www.vancouver2010.com/en/sustainability-and-aboriginal-parti/environmental-stewardship-and-brimp/waste-management/waste-minimization/-/32016/1sllwwz/index.html>)