



Chris McKhool

Earth, Seas & Air / Little Leaf
Teacher's Guide

SONGS

- 1- B is for Bicycle
- 2- Cosmic Storm
- 3- Five Great Lakes
- 4- Miracle in my Backyard
- 5- Mother Earth
- 6- Plant a Tree!
- 7- The Rivers, Lakes and Seas
- 8- Walk and Roll
- 9- We Must Take Care

Thank you for coming to see Chris McKhool perform!

These notes have been put together to help you, the educator, incorporate the messages of the songs into your classroom. In it, you will find demonstrations, games and discussion ideas. Feel free to try some of these before and after the performance.

Some of the activity ideas included in this guide are adopted from the EcoSource Teacher's Resource Kit. EcoSource is an innovative environmental education organization serving youth, adults and families in Mississauga. www.ecosource.ca

Animal Illustrations: Jeff Sweeney

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Chris McKhool

A Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal recipient for his work creating community through music, Chris produces, composes and plays violin for children and family audiences. He was recently awarded the Dr. Duke Redbird Lifetime Achievement Award and the Meriläinen Music Awards as Indigenous Ally of the Year, for his work on *Walking Through the Fire*, a collaborative project with First Nations, Métis and Inuit artists across Turtle Island. In April, Burlington's Mayor presented Chris with Key to the City to recognize his local contributions to creating community through music.



One of Canada's hottest musicians for a generation of kids, Chris has been hailed as a "Children's musical star" (National Post) and "Canada's greatest eco-troubadour for young people" (Mississauga Living Arts Centre). Everything Chris does comes from the heart, and he has been delighting audiences with his joyful songs and exotic world instruments for three decades, reaching over 1 million children live in concert, with hit performances on YTV's *Treehouse*, TVO's *Crawlspace*, *Mr. Dressup*, CITY-TV and the CBC.

A champion of environmental issues, Chris created the World Largest Bicycle Bell Orchestra at Yonge-Dundas Square with over 800 bell ringers. He was nominated for a JUNO Award for Best Children's Album, and won the Canadian Folk Music Award for Children's Album of the Year. He's also a multiple Parents' Choice Award Winner and a Green Toronto Award Winner, and was just inducted into the Burlington Performing Artist Centre Hall of Fame for his work with children.

In his role as producer, Chris has written, recorded and appeared with several jazz, world, folk and pop artists, leading *Sultans of String*, as well as with Béla Fleck, the Chieftains, Richard Bona, and Nikki Yanofsky. He has received multiple CFMAs as Producer of the Year, and won the inaugural PIVOT AWARD from CIMA for creating his *Zoom Room* series. Chris is also an award-winning filmmaker, and has written, directed and produced two Cannes World Film Festival Award winning films, *The Refuge Project* and *Walking Through the Fire*.

Chris' productions have landed on the Billboard charts and been featured in the New York Times. His work with *Sultans of String* has garnered multiple awards and accolades, including three JUNO nominations, first place in the International Songwriting Competition (out of 15,000 entries), and six Canadian Folk Music Awards. *Sultans of String's Refuge* won 2021 CFMA for Producer of the Year, and his follow-up *Sanctuary* won Global Music and Producer awards at the 2023 CFMAs.

Chris has gigged at JUNOfest, Celtic Connections Festival (Glasgow) and London's Trafalgar Square, Koerner Hall, and performed his *Fiddlefire Kids Show* with the Toronto, Vancouver, Niagara and Edmonton Symphony Orchestras. He has played live on CBC's *Canada Live*, BBC Radio, BBC TV, Irish National Radio, and the syndicated *World Café*, *Woodsongs*, and SiriusXM in Washington.

Kevin Laliberté – Guitar

Kevin's original compositions from his hit CDs *One*, *Sundance*, *Siesta* and *Elation* have been featured on TV shows on Showcase, The Outdoor Life Network and TVOntario. They can also be heard nation-wide on radio and satellite music services. They represent a meeting of many aspects of Kevin's experience as a guitarist melding flamenco rhythms, a jazz improvisational approach, and a pop melodic sensibility.

In addition to performing his own works, Kevin has toured around the globe with international artists Jesse Cook, the Chieftains, Sultans of String, performed on the Tonight Show with Charlotte Church, and in Beijing with Chinese recording artist Dadawa. His independent CDs have sold over 100,000 units under license with Somerset.



Saskia Tomkins – Nyckelharpa

Saskia is a master musician of violin, viola, cello and Nyckelharpa, an educator, and a composer. UK born, she is classically trained with a folk background and a B.A.hons. in Music (Jazz). She is an All-Britain Champion Irish Fiddler, and in 2022 received an award for services to Irish Music in Canada. Saskia was the official Artist in Residence in 2022 with Folk Alliance

International, and is currently Artist in Residence with British-based organization The Mixed Museum, which works to preserve and share the social history of racial mixing in Britain of Black and ethnic minorities for future generations.

Saskia worked the as a special consultant on the Broadway hit "Come From Away", to ensure the Celtic roots and traditions were communicated in an authentic way through the score.



1 B IS FOR BICYCLE

<https://open.spotify.com/track/7BCFRTvvndvSlhO9StCZ3t?si=7f36f455275f4d1c>

Green Communities

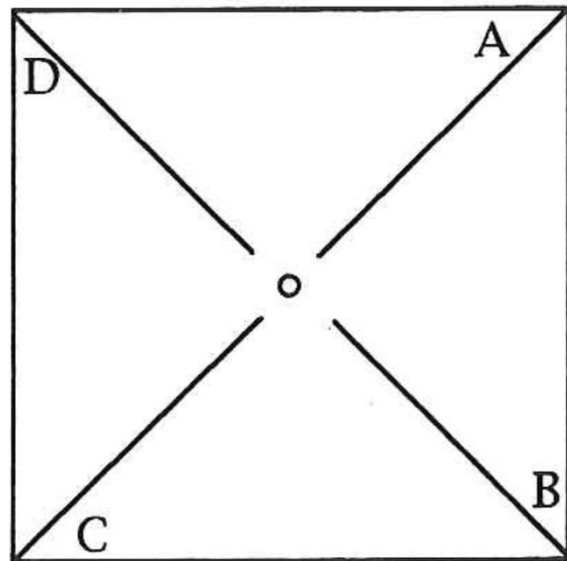
Many of the communities we live in are centered on the automobile. Our houses are on large plots of land, creating areas too widespread to support public transportation. The local corner stores and grocery stores have been replaced by far away shopping malls which are more convenient to drive to rather than walk to.

- On a large sheet, design an alternative community that is people centered.
Include:
 - shared housing co-ops and some row houses
 - rooftop gardens and solar panels
 - bike paths, walking paths, bus routes and carpooling pick-up sites
 - local merchants
 - a park and children's playground
 - a school, library and community centre
 - community gardens
- Using recycled materials whenever possible, create a small model of your community for display in the hall.

Make A Windmill!

- Alternative energies, like solar and wind power, will be providing more and more "clean" energy in the future.

- Draw a 4" * 4" square with diagonal lines as illustrated.
- Cut along the diagonal lines
- Fold the corners A, B, C, and D over towards the centre, and poke a pin through the corners and centrepoint of the square, into the eraser of a pencil to make a windmill.
- Bring your windmills outside and check out a free and unlimited source of energy!



2 COSMIC STORM

<https://open.spotify.com/track/21FnEmD3sw69Turw4ETmVM?si=5c99a0aa8ff04d85>

Window On the World (Developed by EcoSource)

Objective: To illustrate how the choices we make affect the world around us.

- Ask students to draw and paint a picture of a beautiful scene - their favourite park, bench, or imaginary place.
- Tape sheets of transparent acetate or clear plastic to the top edge of each picture. Students then cover appropriate areas of their scene with a collage of litter items or pictures of litter.
- Display in a group with instructions encouraging viewers to lift the plastic to view the scene.
- This project can be done as a class mural. Display in the school entrance to provide a visual reminder of the importance of not littering.

Hollywood North (Developed by EcoSource)

Objective: To stimulate new environmental projects through the sharing of knowledge and experience.

- Produce a school video of a successful environmental project at your school such as composting, tree planting, wasteless lunch campaign or naturalization of school grounds.
- Include live action, how-to footage, interviews with key people and charts showing costs, problems and solutions.
- Print a small handbook and make the kit available to other schools.

Shadow Box Scene

Materials: Kleenex boxes, fallen leaves, small stones, twigs etc.

- Ask students to bring a Kleenex box from home, and cut the top off.
- Take your class on a walk through a natural area and collect organic material. Do not pick any live plants.
- Students then bring the material back to class and arrange it in their box to create a "natural" scene.

Cooperative Art

Have the class decide upon a common theme. Then have each student make his or her own drawing based on this theme. Assemble these individual efforts with glue, staples or tape to make a mosaic. Discuss the similarities and differences between the various treatments of the theme. Display in the hall.

Turtle Time

Place the students in groups of 5-10 on their hands and knees. Using a gym mat or blanket, have each group support its own "turtle shell". The students learn that they have to cooperate in order to move the turtle in a straight line. You can even make an obstacle course, so that the turtle has to climb over "mountains" and under "bridges".

3 FIVE GREAT LAKES

<https://open.spotify.com/track/4YTBXsjDnAA4Z05p7sVsgK?si=fb87eaef7fc14f55>

Build the Great Lakes! - Interactive Map Creation

Objective: Students will identify, label, and describe the Five Great Lakes and their connections.

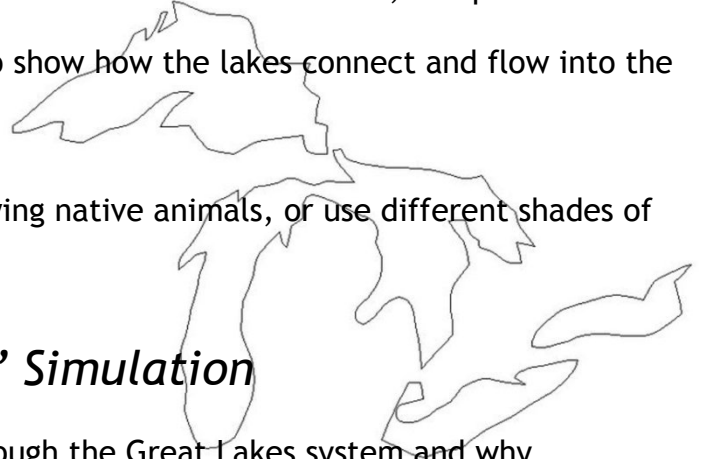
Materials:

- Large sheet of blue poster paper (or butcher paper for a class mural)
- Markers, scissors, glue
- Index cards or sticky notes
- Printouts or drawings of fish, ships, and cities (optional)

Instructions:

1. Map Base: Divide students into groups. Each group is assigned one of the Great Lakes to research.
2. Research: Each group finds:
 - The lake's location and shape
 - Bordering provinces/states
 - Size and depth (basic stats)
 - Interesting facts (wildlife, cities, shipwrecks, etc.)
3. Build the Map: On the large paper, the class collectively draws the outline of the five lakes in their correct relative positions.

4. Add Details: Groups label their lake, add fun facts on index cards, and place them around the map.
5. Connect Them: Use arrows or string to show how the lakes connect and flow into the St. Lawrence River.



Extension:

Students can add “mini-ecosystems” by drawing native animals, or use different shades of blue to show which lakes are deepest.

“Great Lakes Water Journey” Simulation

Objective: Understand how water moves through the Great Lakes system and why protecting it matters.

Materials:

- Blue yarn or string (to show water flow)
- Large paper arrows
- Buckets or labeled stations for each lake (Lake Superior → Huron → Erie → Ontario → St. Lawrence River)
- Items that represent pollution (paper scraps, glitter, food coloring, etc.)
- Cups of water

Instructions:

1. Set Up: Arrange five “lake stations” around the room in the order of water flow.
2. Journey: Students carry cups of “lake water” from one station to the next, symbolizing the connected flow.
3. Introduce Pollution: At certain lakes, sprinkle a bit of “pollution” into the water and discuss how it spreads through the system.
4. Discussion: Ask:
 - What happens when one lake gets polluted?
 - How can people help keep all the lakes clean?

Extension:

Have students write a short story or comic strip from the perspective of a drop of water traveling through all five lakes.

4 MIRACLE IN MY BACKYARD

<https://open.spotify.com/track/6Jz9cb9U1hGmo4w3BSZMkl?si=0b1d88533a4c4428>

The World in Our Backyard (Developed by EcoSource)

Objective: To develop an understanding of the interdependence of our ecosystem.

- Undertake a naturalization project and create a wildflower/wildlife sanctuary on or near your school grounds. Provide a bird bath that will attract birds, insects and chipmunks.
- Study native plant and animal species and their habitat requirements. Fruit and nut trees, flowers and berry bushes can be a source of wild food as well as provide shelter for animals.
- Keep a record of seasonal observations as a permanent feature of the school library.

Interconnections

- Plot out an area ten metres square with string or pegs in a naturalized area.
- Write down all the living and non-living elements that influence this tiny ecosystem, from the sun to bacteria to the worms burrowing underground. How long a list can you make?
- Talk about how all these elements are "interconnected", that is, how each element affects every other element.

Make a wormery!

Materials:

a large glass jar or small fish bowl
sand and moist earth
worm food (leaves or veggies cut into very small pieces)
a screen or stocking
a rubber band
a few red wiggler worms (from an environmental or fishing store)

- Layer the sand and earth. Put the worms and worm food on top and cover the jar with the screen, securing it with the rubber band.
- Keep your wormery in a dark, cool place. Add a little worm food and spray the top layer with water every second day.
- What happens to the worm food? How do the different layers of sand and earth get mixed?

Gardening Relay game

This relay race has five people on each team. Each team has a hoe (you can use a stick or a ruler), some carrots, a watering can, a manure bucket, a basket and a tricycle, all of which are placed at the far end of the yard. The teams line up and the first person in each team runs to the other end, picks up the hoe and hoes the ground before running back. The second person then runs and plants the carrots and then runs back. The third waters the carrots, the fourth spreads the fertilizer and the fifth harvests the carrots, puts them in the basket and rides back on the tricycle, (taking the carrots to the market).

Discussion

- Have you ever been to a farm? What do you think it would be like to live and work on a Canadian farm?
- How is today's way of farming different from traditional ways of growing food and raising animals? How do these different methods affect people, animals, and the environment?

5 MOTHER EARTH

<https://open.spotify.com/track/23UsaShuL1cGVMhEoM0s4f?si=f8795aa6d293449d>

Creative Writing

Dawson's caribou, sea mink and the passenger pigeon are among several animal species that were formerly native to Canada, but now are extinct.

- Take a trip to a conservation centre or a library and have your students research endangered species.
- Write a story about a species that used to be on the endangered species list, but recovered to safe population numbers. What were the major threats to the survival of this species? How did people work to counter these threats and preserve the species?

Time Capsule (Developed by EcoSource)

Students are asked to make a written promise, signed and dated, to take a specific action to improve the environment. Promises are then sealed in a "time capsule", made from a used envelope or box, to be opened at a predetermined time for discussion and follow-up.

The promises must reflect something that the students themselves have control over, not a responsibility they can shift onto others. For instance - "I promise to bring reusable cloth bags for my purchases when I go shopping, instead of using store bags" is acceptable, but "I promise to get my parents to buy less packaging" is not.

Sample promise format to be reproduced on paper already used on one side:

MY PROMISE	
I PROMISE: _____	DATE: _____

	SIGNED: _____
RESULTS: _____	

- Decide on the length of time the promises will be sealed. A short time frame is more appropriate for younger students. The older the students, the longer the time frame can be. We recommend, however, that the period be confined within the current term and not carried over a break or vacation.
- Set aside a brief period each week to discuss progress and problems.

Discovery Day

- On the designated date, open the envelope and distribute the promises. Ask students to complete the "Results" section, saying whether or not they kept their promises, how they did so and if not, why.
- Help students evaluate their efforts by discussing:
 - Was my promise within my control?
 - Was it too easy or too ambitious?
 - Did I make a real effort to keep my promise?
 - If not, why not?
 - How do I feel about what I did?
 - Will I continue to do it from now on?
 - How do my actions affect the environment as a whole?

6 PLANT A TREE!

<https://open.spotify.com/track/4BOPPYlaIXJFd2hoSYPfWm?si=8f67645dc2bb48d7>

Leaf Rubbings!

Materials: a big leaf, thin paper, crayons, tape.

Place a leaf flat on the desk with a thin piece of paper over it. Tape the corners of the paper to the desk so that it will not move. Then rub the crayon flat against the paper to reveal the pattern of the leaf underneath.

Tree-Tag!

- Have most of the students be trees by asking them to stand straight up with their arms outstretched. Have two students be loggers and two be tree-planters. If a standing tree is touched by a logger, she shouts "Timber!" and falls to the ground. The tree can only grow again (stand upright) if touched by a tree-planter.
- What happens? Try the game with more loggers and then with more tree-planters. How does this affect the forest?

Discussion

What is a rain forest? Why are rain forests so important to the health of our planet and everything that lives on it? Why are people cutting them down? What are some of the ways in which we can help preserve the forests that are left?

Other ideas for discussion:

- What do people use trees for? How do trees help people - to live, to work, to survive?
- What kind of animals live in trees? How do animals depend on trees for survival?
- How do trees make their own food (photosynthesis) and improve the air we breathe?

Paper Weights! (Developed by EcoSource)

- Collect and weigh all the paper discarded by the class for one week (include paper from the garbage and the Blue Box). Calculate the amount of paper used by the school for one week/month/year. Discuss ways to reduce the amount of paper used.
- Collect samples of all varieties of paper used in the school. Ask students to sort papers appropriately.
- Ask students to examine paper which is not accepted in the recycling program. Could it be replaced by a more acceptable material?

7 THE RIVERS, LAKES AND SEAS

<https://open.spotify.com/track/007z8qHW4n4qNk8xa5lHbs?si=e8043dbd69b047bc>

Celery Stalks!

Watch how a plant "drinks" water!

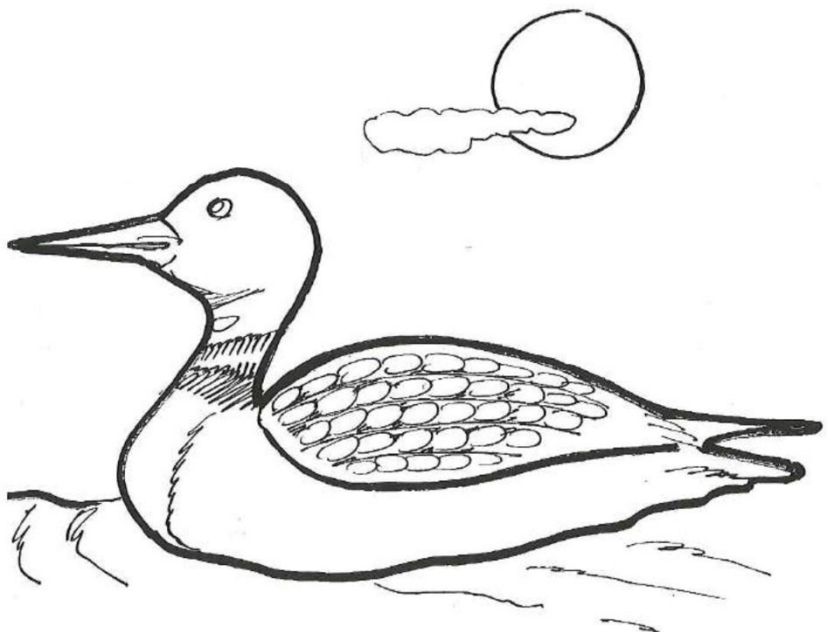
- Add a few drops of red or blue food colouring to half a glass of water. Watch how the colouring, representing pollution, spreads in the glass.
- Cut the bottom off a celery stick and put the stalk in the glass, and leave it for a few hours.
- Come back and see how the coloured water has moved up the celery stalk. Discuss how polluted water affects the animals that depend on it, including humans.

Creative Writing

Write a story about a drop of water which is growing up. Follow its travels through its entire water-cycle (raining, being absorbed by the earth, being drunk by plant roots, evaporating through the leaves, rising and becoming a cloud and back to being a raindrop again).

Other ideas for discussion:

- Traveling by water
- How many ways can you think of to conserve water at school?
- How about at home?



8 WALK AND ROLL

<https://open.spotify.com/track/5SZ5HPLrbB05ypw76LEh34?si=a01fa549b9344098>

The Great Green Commute Challenge!

Objective: Students will explore, compare, and promote environmentally friendly ways to travel to school, and understand how these choices help reduce pollution and protect the planet.

Time Needed: 1-2 class periods (can be split over two days)

Materials:

- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Markers and crayons
- “Commute Tracker” handouts or small journals
- Poster paper (for the final project)
- Stickers or stamps for participation rewards

Step-by-Step Instructions





1. Brainstorm (10-15 minutes). Start with a class discussion:

- “How do you get to school?”
- “What are some ways people can travel without using a car?”
- “Why might walking, biking, or carpooling be better for the environment?”

List their ideas on the board (e.g. walk, bike, scooter, bus, carpool, skateboard).

2. The Commute Challenge (Over 1 Week)

Give each student a “Commute Tracker” (a small chart or handout) where they mark how they travel to school each day.

- Each day, they circle or color a symbol ( ♀ = walk,  ♂ = bike,  = bus,  = carpool).
- At the end of the week, tally up the results as a class!

Bonus: Create a class bar graph showing how many students used each method.

3. Creative Project – “Our Green Way to School” Posters (30-40 minutes)

Students work in small groups to design a poster or mini-campaign that encourages others to use eco-friendly ways of getting to school.

- Include slogans, drawings, and tips (e.g., “Walk with a friend!”, “Bike to school - it’s cool!”).
 - Display posters in hallways or during an assembly.
-

9 WE MUST TAKE CARE

<https://open.spotify.com/track/0rLyojtEt6fvvkGYsElqOr?si=fdcacc7483ea4516>

Demonstration

- Go outside to the yard or to a park and bury five things: an apple core, an aluminum can, a Styrofoam cup, a newspaper, a piece of plastic/Saran wrap.
- Go back in a week. How have they changed? Leave them for another week and check them again. Remember to dig them up and dispose of them properly when the experiment is over!

Garbageless Lunches

- Challenge your students to bring a "garbageless" lunch to school. Bargain stores are an excellent place to find plastic containers for sandwiches, veggies and juice which can be brought to school in a lunch box or cloth bag.
- Create a school-wide draw to take place every Friday. Every time students bring in a garbageless lunch, they can enter another ballot to win a prize. Five days of eco-friendly lunches gives them five chances to win!

Discussion

What happens to our trash after it gets picked up by the garbage truck? Talk about the different ways we get rid of garbage, such as incineration and dumping. Compare the advantages and disadvantages of disposal methods. Which do you think are less harmful to the environment? What are some of the ways we can reduce the amount of garbage we create at school in the first place? How about at home?

Green Jeans and Cool Jools! (Developed by MCCC)

Objective: To emphasize the importance of reuse by creating new, useful items from discarded materials.

- Over a period of weeks, have the students collect old pairs of jeans, any size but no longer wearable; used plastic containers and lids; old junk jewelry and broken watches.
- Cut legs off jeans. Legs can be made into travel shoe bags or lunch bags by stitching up one end and putting a drawstring at the other, or into plastic bag savers with a drawstring top and an elasticized opening at the bottom. Jean tops can be stitched for gym bags or backpacks or turned into unique waste-paper bins or flower pot holders by stiffening with hodge-podge.

- Disassemble jewelry and watches. Cut interesting shapes from plastic lids to form a base for new jewelry. Glue on a collage of jewelry and watch parts to create pins, pendants, earrings.
- Encourage students to be creative and develop their own ideas. Extend the concept to other materials. Sell your creations at a school craft sale and donate the profits to a local charity.

Pollution-Free Zone

Materials: cardboard, markers, tape or string

- Make your classroom a pollution-free zone. Decide with your students what constitutes unnecessary garbage, and determine not to create it whenever possible.
- Create signs reminding people of your commitment and place them in various locations.
- Expand this activity to the lunchroom, the school, the yard, the neighbourhood and, finally, the community.
- If there are any restaurants or fast-food places in the neighbourhood that create unnecessary waste, start a campaign with your class to persuade them to change.

Eco-tourism

Clear-cutting is still going on in Canada.

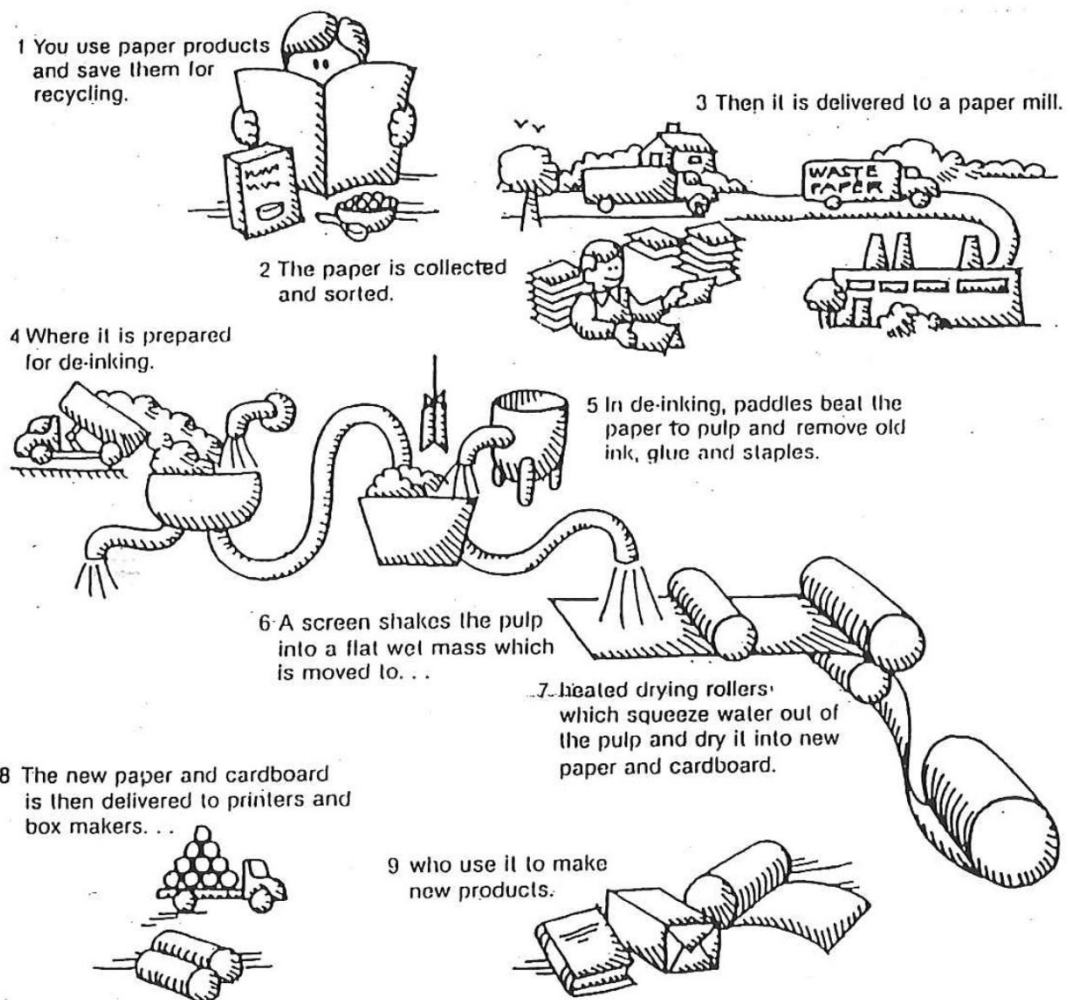
- Have your students come up with a community-based eco-tourism plan to support the economy of a small town near a forest. Include a wildlife sanctuary open to the public that has signed boardwalks, guided nature trails and a biodiversity museum including information on species found in the area, as well as the modern pharmaceuticals derived from the forest. Also include a sporting goods store that organizes local canoeing, hiking and camping trips.
- Research magazine advertisements, and then develop an advertising campaign which would attract people to the area to learn about natural wonders. Include information about socially responsible lodging, dining, shopping and local artisans' market.
- Develop guidelines to ensure that the natural environment will be protected despite these new visitors.

Eco-action (Developed by MCCC)

Objective: To empower students to effect change through environmental action .

- Have students define and select an issue (e.g. reusable vs. disposable diapers, junk mail, packaging).
- Decide what you want to know about the issue and develop an opinion survey. Conduct the survey in the school community, and compile data from the results, using graphs, pictures, charts, etc. Present your project to other classes or at a school assembly.
- Share your findings with those involved (manufacturers, government, etc.) Include a clear outline of the problem, what kind of remedial action you would like to see, and request a reply.
- Formulate an action plan for your group to tackle the issue. Contact the media, tell them what you have found and what you are trying to do about the problem.

Recycling paper (Developed by MCCC)



VERMICOMPOSTING AT SCHOOL (Developed by EcoSource)

What is vermicomposting?

Vermicomposting is simply composting with worms. The best kind of earth worm to use is the redworm, or "red wiggler". These worms are incredible garbage eaters. They eat and expel their own weight every day; even a small bin of red worms will yield pounds of rich sweet-smelling compost. Finished compost can be harvested in as little as two to three months. Redworms are extremely prolific. It takes about three weeks for fertilized eggs to develop in a cocoon from which two or more young worms can hatch. In three months, the worms are sexually mature and will start breeding. Within a year you'll be able to give worms away to get another class started!

What do we feed the worms?

- Worms will eat just about any kind of food waste including fruits and vegetables, coffee grounds and tea bags. It's better to avoid meats and fats.
- When adding food scraps, it's best to puree them in a food processor or blender. If this is not practical, chop them into the smallest pieces possible before adding to the bin. To avoid odours and fruit flies, dig the scraps well into the bedding.
- Worms will survive, without feeding, over a weekend. During vacations, however, the worms need regular care. Someone should be responsible for taking them home.

How can we harvest the finished compost?

After about three months you'll notice that the volume of materials has dropped substantially and the original bedding is no longer recognizable. At this point the finished compost and worms can be moved over to one side of the bin and new bedding added to the vacant side. Put new food wastes into the fresh bedding only, so the worms will move from the finished compost in search of new food. After two weeks or so remove the lid under a bright light source. The worms are sensitive to light and will burrow away from it. Scoop out the finished compost a few layers at a time and place in a plastic bag until you're ready to use it.

How can we use the finished compost?

Vermicompost will provide nutrients to plants and will help soil hold moisture. Use it for:

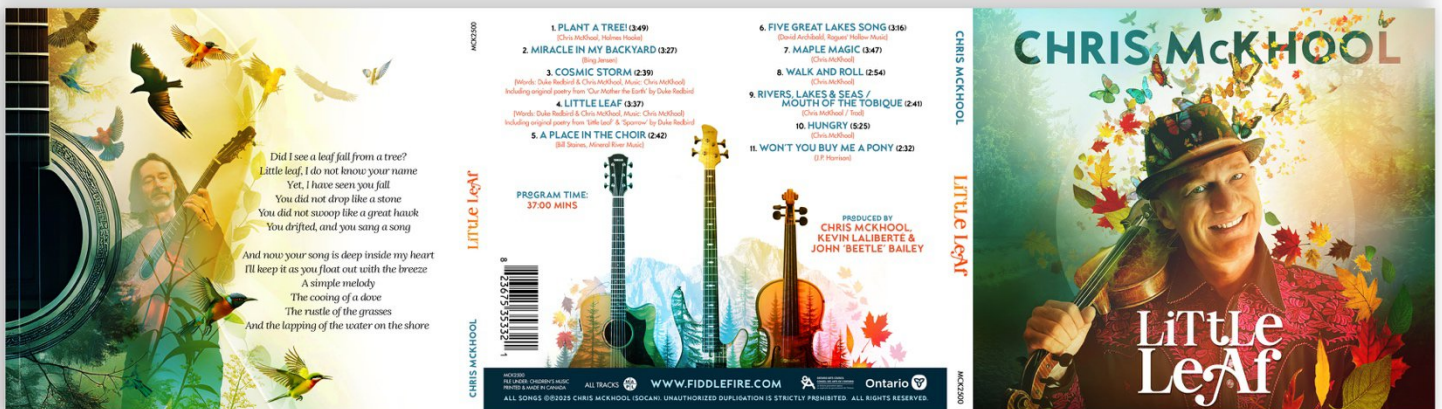
- Class planting projects (starting seeds or cuttings). Mix half-and-half with potting soil first.
- Outdoor plantings (trees, annuals, perennials). Add a handful to the hole before planting.
- School fundraising. Invent a nifty name, package it nicely and sell it as a high-nutrient soil conditioner.

Little Leaf - Lyrics and Links

Many of the songs in performance and in this guide are from Chris' new album of environmental songs, called *Little Leaf*.

You can Stream it here: <https://ChrisMcKhool.lnk.to/Album>

And order CDs here: <https://fiddlefire.com/store/>



1. Plant a Tree!

Words and Music by Chris McKhool, Holmes Hooke (SOCAN)

Forests are a home for many animals
Providing food and shelter from the storm
Canada's so huge, with many microclimates
Where different kinds of forests come into form

Chorus:

*I'm gonna plant a Tree! Gonna plant a Tree,
I'm gonna plant a Tree! Gonna plant a Tree,*

The Boreal stretches across Canada
Where conifers keep their needles all year 'round
Wolverine and porcupine live among the spruce and pine
And listen, you can hear the wolf give a howl

Southwestern Ontario has my favourite trees
Deciduous, the ones that lose their leaves
Basswood and white ash house opossum and raccoons
And the squirrels chatter in the tops of sugar maple trees

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence mix deciduous with pine
In the valleys and the waters that the glaciers left behind
Bears and wild turkeys and families of deer
Live among the oak, maple, birch & hemlock that grow here

Gonna take a pen to paper
And write a letter to the government
About how much I love Canada
And all her forests
And all her forests' trees

Pacific Rainforests are the wonder of the West
Where giant red cedars scrape the sky where they crest
Bald eagles soar high above the forest floor
And look who's fishing there, the world's largest black bear!

2. Miracle in my Backyard

Words & Music by Bing Jensen (SOCAN)

Winter is gone, the world begins to change
The air is warmer, snow turns into rain
Trees start to bud, they know that it's spring
Daffodils bloom, my heart begins to sing

I grow a garden, in my backyard
I read about plants, I think real hard
What can I do, and what do they need
To grow so big, from such a tiny seed

Chorus: I grow big red tomatoes
And little green peas
Lilacs and roses
Plum and cherry trees
Gladi-ali-olus
And giant Swiss chard
It's a miracle my friends
In my backyard

I get some seeds, and put 'em in the ground
I cover them with soil, and pat it all down
Rain from the skies, light from the sun
It's all they ever need, each and every one

Chorus

Bridge:
No one knows what makes a seed grow
Or the heartbeat in your chest
Or the freckles on your nose,
It's a miracle in my backyard x3

Summer is gone, the plants are all through
I put them in the compost, so they can renew
The soil for next year, when we'll do it once more
Just like I did, the year before

Chorus

Bridge

3. Cosmic Storm

Words Duke Redbird/Chris McKhool, Music Chris McKhool (SOCAN)
Including original poetry from 'Our Mother the Earth' by Duke Redbird

It's a cosmic miracle, organically spherical
This precious planet Earth,
With a sun to shine, and air to breathe
It's a marvel, that gave us birth

With a sky painted blue, 'n earth painted green
And fresh air sandwiched in between,
And species in the Millions, numbering in Billions
With so many still unseen

Chorus:

*Shake shake shake your hands / Together we are stronger
Shake shake shake your hands / We can't wait any longer
Clap clap clap your hands / Together we are stronger
Clap clap clap your hands / We can't wait any longer*

You know, we don't choose where we are born,
We are the outcome of a cosmic storm.
Let us activate, contemplate, let us all regenerate
Life in all its forms

And if we march together, hand in hand
We will never stand apart,
As it grows in strength, inside us all
This love inside our hearts

Chorus

4. Little Leaf

Words Duke Redbird/Chris McKhool, Music Chris McKhool (SOCAN)
Including original poetry from 'Little Leaf' and 'Sparrow' by Duke Redbird

Did I see a leaf fall from a tree?
Little Leaf, I do not know your name
Yet, I have seen you fall
You did not drop like a stone
You did not swoop like a great hawk
You drifted, and you sang a song

And now your song is deep inside my heart
I'll keep it as you float out with the breeze
A simple melody
The cooing of a dove
The rustle of the grasses
And the lapping of the water on the shore

Chorus:
Hello, hello, hello, Little Leaf
Hello, hello, hello, your song is in my heart
Hello, hello, hello, hello, hello

We're all a part of a community
So go ahead and name that leaf you see
And name the frogs and bugs
And snakes and turtles and the skunk
The chipmunk and the white-tailed deer
Good morning, my friends I love you all

Chorus

Silent flies the hawk at night
Silent float the clouds in flight
Silent stands the redwood tall
Silent is the mountains call

Laughter in the darkness deep
Laughter in a dream-filled sleep
Laughter is a rainbow sky
Laughter is my sparrow's cry

Chorus x2

5. A Place in the Choir

Words and music by Bill Staines (Mineral River Music, BMI)

Chorus:

*All God's critters got a place in the choir
Some sing low and some sing higher
Some sing out loud on the telephone wire
Some just clap their hands or paws,
Or anything they've got now*

Listen to the bass, it's the one on the bottom
Where the bullfrog croaks, and the ram and ewe
Moan and groan with a big to-do
And the old cow just goes "moo"

Dogs and the cats, they take up the middle
While the honeybee hums, and the cricket fiddles
The donkey brays and the pony neighs
The old coyote howls

Chorus

Listen to the top, where the little birds sing
On the melodies, with the high notes ringing
The barred owl hollers over everything
And the jay bird disagrees

Singing in the nighttime, singing in the day
The little duck quacks and he's on his way
Opossum hasn't got much to say
And the porcupine talks to himself

Chorus

It's a simple song of living sung everywhere
By the ox and the fox and the grizzly bear
The grumpy goat and the hawk above
The sly racoon and the turtle dove

Chorus

6. Five Great Lakes

Words & Music by David Archibald (Rogues' Hollow Music, SOCAN)

Let's talk about Superior
It's cold and deep
And by Thunder Bay the Sleeping Giant
Somehow stays asleep

Yes, you've got five (Five?) Five!
Count 'em...Five great Lakes
They're the Greatest Lakes I know
And once you've visited
Lake Superior
You've got four Great Lakes to go

Let's talk about Michigan
The soil is fine
And don't forget Chicago
Where the harbour lights all shine

And you've got five (Five?) Five!
Count 'em...Five great Lakes
They're the Greatest Lakes I know
And once you've visited
Old Lake Michigan and Lake Superior
You've got three Great Lakes to go

Let's talk about Huron
And Georgian Bay
They've got thirty thousand islands
For your summer holiday

Yes, you've got five (Five?) Five!
Count 'em...Five great Lakes
They're the Greatest Lakes I know
And once you've visited
Lake Huron /Georgian Bay, and Lake Michigan and Lake Superior
You've got two Great Lakes to go

Bridge:
Let's talk about Erie
It's nice and warm
But shallow waters whip up
Into whitecaps in a storm
And flocks of birds

*You hear their calls
Above the splashing of the paddles
and the Thunder of the Falls.*

Yes, you've got five (Five?) Five!
Count 'em...Five great Lakes
They're the Greatest Lakes I know
And once you've visited, old Lake Erie,
Lake Huron /Georgian Bay and Lake Michigan and Lake Superior
You've got one Great Lake to go

And what about Ontario
It's last not least
It's where you'll find Toronto
It's your last stop heading east

And you've got five (Five?) Five!
Count 'em...Five great Lakes
They're the Greatest Lakes I know
And once you've visited, Lake Ontario, and Lake Erie,
Lake Huron /Georgian Bay and Lake Michigan and Lake Superior
You've got no Great Lakes to go

7. Maple Magic

Words and music by Chris McKhool (SOCAN)

Here in this forest, there is magic in the air
There's a cool springtime breeze and robins everywhere
And I'm warm by this fire that crackles all day long
Making maple syrup while we sing this song

Chorus:

*We boil it down, down, down, all day long
I hope it's done, done, done, by the end of this song*

Tapping trees is an ancient practice of the Indigenous northeast
That helped sustain First Peoples, a sweetener for the feast
Collecting sap in a birch bark bowl from a spout drilled in a tree
With fire-heated stones, to burn the water free

Chorus

Bridge:

*Bubbling kettles over crackling fire
A gift of springtime straight from the tree
You fetch the wood, I'll stoke the fire
Taste some syrup, it's a treat*

It takes 40 pails of sap to make a jug of syrup we can eat
We evaporate the water leaving a sweet and sticky treat
It's a true gift of springtime that comes straight from the woods
Giving life so selflessly, as only nature could

Chorus

8. Walk and Roll

Words and music by Chris McKhool (SOCAN)

We can make energy from water, wind and sun
Biogas and people power get the job done
I feel chills when I'm trying to be
A more sustainable, renewable, reusable me

Chorus:

We're gonna walk and roll,
We're gonna rock and roll
We're gonna walk, we're gonna walk,
Let's rock the world today

Why take a car when you can take a bike
Why take a 4x4 when you can take a hike
Why take a plane when you can take a train
Or a people packed bus that'll get you there the same

Chorus

There are way better ways to try to get to school
Then jamming up our roads and burning more fuel
You can skateboard, rollerblade, bicycle too
Or pick me up at eight and I will walk with you

Chorus

Bridge:

*If we all work together,
We won't feel alone.
Write your government leaders
Don't let them postpone.
Cause there's a movement afoot
Look how it has grown.
We are the new wave, Let's do it with style,
Tread lightly on our Earth, If we want to stay awhile*

Chorus

9. Rivers, Lakes and Seas

Words and music by Chris McKhool (SOCAN)

There's a turtle that's two hundred years old
She doesn't mind the water's icy cold

Chorus:

The rivers, lakes and seas
The rivers, lakes and seas
Oh, how I love the rivers, lakes and seas

There's a beluga whale swimming free
He's only one year old but bigger than you and me

Chorus

I love to listen to the call of the loon
As I paddle to the light of the moon

Chorus

The lakes turn to clouds and then to rain
Then run into the rivers once again

10. Hungry

Words and music by Chris McKhool (SOCAN)

A great white bear lives in the North near the Hamlet of Arctic Bay
Where her favourite meal, the black ringed seals, splash about and play
This great white bear fishes with her claw for the slippery arctic seals
For hours she waits by the edge of sea hoping to catch her meal

It's the great floe edge where ice meets sea where the white bear hunts alone
It's a place of risk where the loose floe drifts and hunting skills are honed
But today she waited, and waited still, and she waited even more
And feeling bored she fell asleep on the snowy, cold ice floor

Now the black ringed seals, though they hunt their meals swimming beneath the sea
Must break through the ice from hour to hour to breathe air like you and me
They hide their holes with a little snow and they're careful when they surface
For any sound or smell of bear waiting with hungry purpose

But this young seal, hearing not the bear slumbering in the snow,
Came up for air, greeting the day with a wet and cold black nose
The seal saw the bear and laughed out loud "Ha! She fell asleep!
What a lazy bear, a pitiful sight, this so called 'Fearful Beast'"

And the seal laughing all too loud woke up the bear, who rose
And furiously lashed out her claw and caught the seal's nose
The seal wailed and cried "You fiend!" before dropping back to the sea
And the great white bear, although well rested, was all the more hungry

Now she missed her chance and worse than that she missed another meal
And she wandered off back to her lair thinking about that seal
And although the seal was incensed, he felt lucky in the sea
For a bloody nose he earned that day but at least he was not hungry

11. Won't You Buy Me a Pony

Words and music by J.P. Harrison (SOCAN)

*Won't you buy me a pony, that I can ride
We can stand and look out, from upon the hillside*

Well, the Pony you got, looks just like you said
With your hair hangin' down, all over your head

*Won't you take me to the seaside, so I can hear the waves sing
And I can watch the sun shinin', from a seagull's white wing*

Well, just close your eyes, and the ocean you'll hear
When I hold this shell up to your ear

*Won't you write me a song, about nothing at all
About the thoughts in your head, or a mockingbird's call*

Well, the song that you got, just came out of my head
And there's a mockingbird a sittin', on the edge of your bed

*When I get older, can I be like you
Can I write songs and sing em', and play guitar too*

You can do all those things, you can start in your dreams
Goodnight, sleep tight, I love you