

Science – It's For Everyone!

**Do you know that science is a part of your everyday life?
When you see that flowers don't grow when it snows,
That all kites need a wind that blows,
Some birds are red, some blue, some brown,
And for a wheel to roll, it must be round!
That's science and it is everywhere and for everyone!**

Arlene Hanna
Extension Associate

Science helps us gather facts, think critically and make the right decision. We learn to use our senses to obtain information about ourselves and the world around us. We can communicate with one another. We predict the future by using past observations. We investigate, interpret and make conclusions, then evaluate. These steps are all part of the science process.

Elementary grades are a good time for capturing children's interest in science. Lancaster County youth development programs and 4-H School Enrichment are doing their part to educate students in science. Each year, over 15,000 Lancaster County youngsters participate in the following science programs:

Smelly stuff—trash—things we don't need anymore! These are ideas that come to the minds of second graders when they hear the word "garbage."

GARBOLOGY welcomes students to the world of solid waste management and the three R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Youngsters develop an increased awareness of garbage – where it comes from and where it goes, the problems it presents, and possible solutions. This curriculum is revised and set to the National and Nebraska Science Standards.

"I recycle because of my children. They have taught me



loads of things. I am in real trouble if I throw away a pop can," laughs the mother of a Rousseau student.

Worms that eat garbage? It's true! About 1,000 red wrigglers can eat up to three to five pounds of kitchen scraps a week. Then they'll give you worm castings that can be added to potting or garden soil for richer plantings. Students from all over Lancaster County are indeed, learning a new way to compost – **VERMICOMPOSTING**.

Soft and furry with very large appetites! Things that go "cheep" in the night. The miracle of life unfolds in **EMBRYOLOGY** as third graders study life cycles. Students and teachers are responsible for the care of fertile eggs throughout the twenty-one day incubation period, then...baby chicks are hatched right in the classroom. This curriculum is revised and set to the National and Nebraska Science Standards



and is a core subject in the science curriculum of the Lincoln Public Schools.

"This is the most popular science program I teach in my classroom. Students learn responsibility and an appreciation for life." (Teacher from Belmont)

BLUE SKY BELOW MY FEET links space technology to the everyday interest of fourth grade students. By using features from the space shuttle program as working models, youngsters learn how forces, fibers and food affect their daily lives on earth and astronauts while in space. Youth learn about gravity, taste space food and communicate with NASA via the Internet. With the exploration of Mars and the building of the new space station Alpha, students become globally aware of their place and responsibility in the Universe.

With an emphasis on quantity and quality, **4-H WATER RICHES** looks at the complexities on one of our most precious natural resources – water. Fifth grade students determine ways to manage our water supply and commit to the preservation and conservation of this natural resource.

Each year, approximately 3,000 fifth graders attend **EARTH WELLNESS FESTIVAL**, an environmental education experience sponsored by ten Lancaster County education resource agencies. Youngsters explore, create and discover the relationships and interdependency of land, water, air, and living resources, identify the human impact on

our planet, and recognize how they can enrich the world around them. The earth wellness festival's Kit For Kids is revised and set to the National and State Science Standards. The water and wetlands section of the curriculum is identified as a core subject in the science curriculum of the Lincoln Public Schools.

HEALTHY ME! WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE? CLEAN HANDS DETECTIVE! These are just a few enrichment opportunities that the Nutrition Education Program offers to selected schools and grade levels in Lancaster County. Karen Wobig, Extension Assistant and presenter of these programs reflects, "It is exciting to hear what students have learned about healthy eating...they are able to tell me all the steps for proper hand washing, including the 20-second rule for scrubbing with soap."

As you can see, Lancaster County youth development programs are offering educational opportunities in science for our youngsters. If you wish to encourage children's study of science out-of-school, you can participate in the growing number of informal science activities at zoos, museums, nature centers, national parks and community organizations such as 4-H clubs. Watch for your student's participation in 4-H School Enrichment.

It's science for everyone!!



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