

McKenna Britten

Topic #1,

The Earth Steward

Over the years, as I have gained more knowledge and understanding about the Earth, a growing concern has been welling up inside of me. My most frequent concern is what will happen when we use up all of the Earth's natural resources. The first time I remember learning of this concern was whenever I was in the fifth grade. It was just a regular day of class when our teacher announced that someone would be coming to talk to our class about water conservation. At the time, I had no idea what our teacher was talking about. I had heard the word "conservation" before, but why would we ever need to conserve something as abundant in our world as water? How could we run out of what seemed like an endless stream of water coming out of our kitchen faucets?

When the man from the Soil and Water Conservation District came in to talk to us, he explained that less than one percent of our water is drinkable, and the water we use comes from the Ogallala Aquifer, which is way deep down in the Earth, right beneath our own feet. He explained that the problem was that we are using up the water faster than it can replenish itself. Unless humanity could change its ways, we would run out of water very soon. He then gave us numerous examples of how we could change our ways to fix that problem, such as watering our yards when the sun isn't up or turning off the faucet when we brush our teeth.

Soon after this shocking realization, I became very conscious of how much water was being used in my own home. Faucets were sometimes left dripping, or a water hose was accidentally left running overnight. I spoke to my parents about this, and they agreed that we should all take a more active stand against wasting water. My family started taking shorter showers, turning off the faucet while brushing our teeth, the toilet that constantly ran was repaired, and I my parents replaced our shower heads with high efficiency, low-flow shower heads. We have been continuing this effort ever since then.

In my science classes throughout the years, I have learned that we should not only conserve water, but also energy, because it would reduce the demand for fossil fuels which pollute our air, water, and soil. I have also studied renewable energy sources that can also reduce the demand for fossil fuels. It has been so exciting to watch windmills pop up around our landscape. Wind is an energy resource that we are not likely to run short on, especially where I live. Not only is this a perfect solution in preserving our fossil fuels, but it helps the economy, as well as my school district.

In the future, when I am a pharmacist, I plan to do everything I can to protect the environment, as well as encourage other people to do the same. A large fraction of the diseases and cases of death in our world are caused by environmental factors. A pharmacist's main duty is to protect and promote the health and well-being of humanity, so that makes it a pharmacist's responsibility to promote a clean, healthy environment. Pharmacists have many opportunities to recycle. A lot of paper and plastics pass through pharmacies and other health related businesses. Boxes, Styrofoam and plastic bottles are all necessary items in my chosen

career, and I know that many pharmacies work hard at recycling these items whenever possible. When I am a pharmacist, I will recycle as often as possible. It will also be important to teach others how to dispose of their medications properly, so that they don't pollute water systems and soil. The profession of Pharmacist is a prestigious one and by working in this field, I will have the opportunities to be an advocate for issues important to me. Through my work and personal example, I will strive to speak out about the importance of conservation and pollution control.

I know that I cannot fix the problems of the Earth alone. I believe that in order for our Earth to be preserved, everyone needs to join together to work on protecting it and its resources. This problem we are facing can't be fixed in a day, a week, or even a year, but every small step matters. It is a lifestyle that must be learned and practiced continually. Everyone can find ways to help protect our environment. Some of those efforts may seem insignificant, like they won't do anything to help, but we should all do our share to help out in this effort. A Native American Proverb says, "We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children." If we all do our small part, we will preserve our Earth and make our limited resources last for the next generations.