



EcoMentors®
EARTH DAY CANADA

Training Facilitator Manual



SAMPLE COPY

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A Message from the EcoMentors Program Manager

Dear EcoMentors Training Facilitator/Partner,

Thank you for your interest in Earth Day Canada's EcoMentors program! This program plays a valuable role in engaging youth in environmental education, enabling them to have a strong and active voice for positive and sustainable environmental change in their communities. By training young people to facilitate peer-led popular education workshops, activities, and lessons on a wide range of important environmental topics and issues, the EcoMentors program works to achieve its aspiration of continually and cyclically building environmental awareness and action among Canadians.

Your partnership in providing EcoMentors training for the youth in your community is an important part of Earth Day Canada's ambition to extend the capacity of the program nationally, providing opportunities for Canadian youth to take action through EcoMentoring in areas beyond the program's geographical reach. By offering the training described in this manual, you will be providing a rich and rewarding opportunity for youth to get involved in environmental education and action, as well as to develop and use a wide range of practical skills and experiences that will benefit them in many areas of their lives and futures.

The EcoMentors training session offers interested youth an engaging learning experience which encourages them to explore how education by and for young people can be a way for them to take action on the environmental issues that concern them. By participating in this training, EcoMentors build facilitation and group leadership skills which they can use to promote increased awareness of issues among their peers and younger generations. In this way, youth move from being learners to leaders with unique insights and connections to the people and issues that they work with – making them extremely effective environmental educators!

As you read through this manual, and you begin to plan and prepare for your EcoMentors training, please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or comments. As EcoMentors Program Manager, I am available to provide you with whatever support and information I can to help you make your training a success. You can contact me anytime at (416) 599-1991 Ext. 103, or email me at EcoMentors@earthday.ca.

Greenest wishes!



Josh Stevenson
EcoMentors Program Manager



The EcoMentors Training Facilitator Manual

The following training manual will guide you through the various components of an EcoMentors training. The manual was created with experienced facilitators in mind, but that doesn't mean you're expected to have all the answers. The training session was designed with the intent that you, the facilitator, will be *'facilitating'* participant learning through the coordination of various activities as opposed to directly *teaching* content. In this way, it's the youth that you will be working with who will have the answers. Your job as facilitator is to understand that the group you're working with brings valuable knowledge and insights and that by encouraging the group to share this information through discussion, reflection, and group activities, each individual (yourself included) is able to add to and gain from the entire group's common "pot" of knowledge.

fa·cil·i·tate

Pronunciation: \fə-'si-lə-,tāt\

Function: *transitive verb*

1. to make easier
 2. help bring about
- <*facilitate* growth>

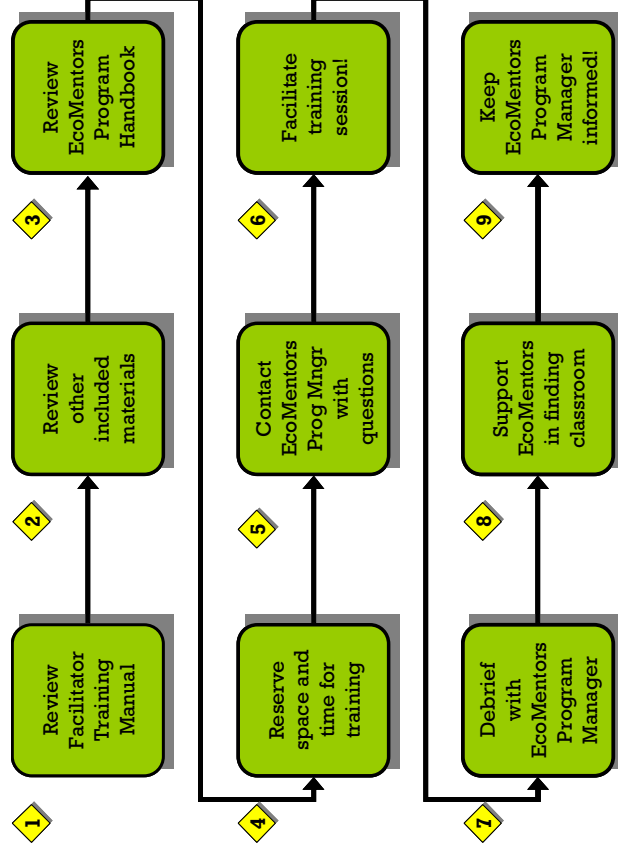
Take some time to read through the manual, paying close attention to the materials that are required and envisioning how these activities will play out. The activities are designed to be flexible to your situation. The backgrounder preceding each activity provides you with the intent of the activity. You may find that you have another activity that fulfils the same intent, or maybe you'll discover that an activity would better meet the needs of your group with just a little "tweaking" – go ahead and make substitutions and changes – the most important objective of this training is that it meets the unique needs of your group in preparing them to be confident and active EcoMentors.

Through highly interactive group activities, brainstorming and discussion, participants are introduced to the program and their role as EcoMentors. They also begin to explore different environmental worldviews in order to prepare them for some of the perspectives they may encounter in their workshops. The core focus of the EcoMentors training is providing youth with the facilitation skills they need to deliver effective environmental education; however, the training also provides an opportunity for them to discuss the environmental issues most prevalent in their lives, and to begin to consider and strategize how they can use their involvement with the EcoMentors program in order to bring about increased awareness and positive action around these issues. In order to further support the group in achieving their ambition of becoming active EcoMentors, the training session is wrapped up with individual goal-setting and reflection activities that help participants move to the "next step" in becoming environmental leaders.

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Training Process

Here is the process that you will go through to deliver this training to your group:



3. Review the EcoMentors Program Handbook
 - Pay special attention to this document – It outlines the entire program and the role of an EcoMentor
4. Reserve date, space and time for your training session Consider:
 - Space for the participants to move around?
 - Make arrangements to accommodate needs of people with disabilities
 - Be aware of cultural/religious needs – Holidays? Worship/meditation space? Dietary requirements? Etc.
 - Evening or weekend training (when students aren't in school)?
 - Make training “green” – Reusable dishes (if serving food), book close to participants (suggest travel using public transit, bike, or walk), etc.
5. Contact EcoMentors Program Manager before the training with any questions you might have regarding training activities
6. Present your training session! Good luck!
7. Debrief your training session with the EcoMentors Program Manager and submit evaluations
 - What worked? What didn't? Feedback?
8. Support EcoMentors in finding a host group match
 - Consider various groups to work with (e.g. schools, community groups, afterschool programs, recreation groups, etc.)
 - Think about acting as a “support person” during workshops (the EcoMentors would take the lead of course)
9. Keep EcoMentors Program Manager informed about the work of your participants!

1. Review this Facilitator Training Manual
 - Envision how your training will play out
 - Consider the unique needs of your group and think of ways to adapt the training for them
2. Review the other materials included with this manual (e.g. Brochure, Check List, Letter of Introduction, etc.)

EcoMentors Training Facilitation FAQ

Q: *What is EcoMentors?*

A: EcoMentors is an environmental education program that trains and provides support for youth volunteers to deliver engaging and fun environmental education workshops to groups of young people across the country. EcoMentors provides opportunities for youth volunteers to pair up with groups of their peers or younger children to provide an enriching and rewarding experience for both groups.

EcoMentors have an opportunity to explore their career interests, gain experience in facilitation, leadership and environmental work, as well as developing general workplace skills.

Benefits of EcoMentoring:

- Environmental education training
- Facilitation skills and experience
- EcoMentors Certificate and reference letter upon completion of four workshops
- Volunteer and community involvement hours
- Up-to-date information about environmental issues and events
- Increased awareness among Canadian youth, children and their communities around a broad range of relevant environmental issues

Q *Who can be an EcoMentor?*

A The purpose of the EcoMentors program is to provide a valuable opportunity for Canadian youth to play a vital role in environmental education. While the program was initially targeted at high school students who wanted to work exclusively with elementary school students, it has since grown to engage youth between the ages of 13-25 from all walks of life across Canada. These youth are encouraged to work with groups of other young people in their communities wherever they might congregate.

Q: *What is Earth Day Canada?*

A: Earth Day Canada (EDC), a national environmental charity founded in 1990, provides Canadians with the practical knowledge and tools they need to lessen their impact on the environment. In 2004 it was recognized as the top environmental education organization in North America, for its innovative year-round programs and educational



resources, by the Washington-based North American Association for Environmental Education, the world's largest association of environmental educators. In 2008, it was chosen as Canada's "Outstanding Non-profit Organization" by the Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication. EDC regularly partners with thousands of organizations in all parts of Canada. www.earthday.ca

Earth Day Canada operates year-round programs that engage people of all ages:

- **Ecokids** is a free, environmental education program that offers curriculum-linked materials and activities for Canadian elementary schools to engage in environmental action.
- **EcoMentors** is an environmental education program that trains and supports high school students in the delivery of hands-on and fun environmental unit plans to elementary school classes.
- **EcoAction Teams** provides Canadians with sound conservation choices in the home and in their daily lives. Through active participation and online results tracking, individuals can significantly reduce their natural resource and electricity use, greenhouse gas emissions and household waste.
- **Toyota Earth Day Scholarship Program** cultivates environmental leadership by providing \$5,000 scholarships to graduating Canadian high school students who have distinguished themselves through environmental community service, extracurricular and volunteer activities, and academic excellence.
- **Hometown Heroes Award Program** recognizes and celebrates environmental leaders of any age who have fostered meaningful, long-term community awareness and action.

Earth Day Canada also co-hosts the largest Greater Toronto Area Earth Day Festival and helps community groups across Canada organize their own events in support of Earth Day. For more information visit www.earthday.ca

Q *Aside from facilitating the training, what other responsibilities do I have?*

A As an EcoMentors Facilitator or Training Partner, your primary function is to provide an opportunity for the youth in your community to become trained as EcoMentors so that they can begin to plan and facilitate their own environmental education workshops. You will also (at least in the beginning) be the main point of contact between the youth



you're working with and the program, and you would be responsible for tracking and collecting feedback from those sessions and reporting back to the program. You may choose to continue being the key contact after the training, acting as a leader/support/mentor for your group, or you may choose to pass this type of contact on to the EcoMentors program – in either case, you should work this out with the EcoMentors Program Manager before you begin your training.

Q: *Where can my group EcoMentor?*

A: Your group can EcoMentor in any area where there is a gathering of youth.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- School classes
- Afterschool programs/clubs
- Community centre recreational programs
- Scouts/Girl Guide Groups
- Faith Based Groups

Q: *What can participants expect to learn in an EcoMentors Training Session?*

A: EcoMentors Training Sessions focus on developing presentation and facilitation skills. We try to leave the actual environmental content open to presenters to utilize their own prior knowledge and particular interests in workshops. To guide them along, we offer EcoMentors Workshop Lesson Plans that are accessible online at ecomentors.ca

Q: *What do I need to run a training session?*

A: The following items will be helpful to have for your training session:

- | | |
|---|---|
| • A room with blank wall space big enough for everyone to move around | • Markers (enough for each participant in the workshop) |
| • Chairs and Tables | • Tape |
| • Chart Paper/chalkboard /whiteboard | • Computer* |
| | • Projector and Screen* |

(* = if available)

Organizing Your Training

You can use the following sample training outline as a framework for organizing your own training. This outline contains six general agenda items under which we have organized 20 more specific activities/discussions along with the page number of this manual that you will find comprehensive information and instructions on how you can facilitate each component.

This outline and each of the training components have been developed, tested and refined by the EcoMentors program since it began operation in 2001. Over the years we have discovered that the training can be completed in roughly 3-4 hours minimum (this time has been achieved by facilitators who have become extremely familiar with the content). The times listed in this manual assume that the training is four hours (without breaks). However, you should be aware that these times are meant to serve as suggestions only and you may find that some activities require more time... in which case (if you have the luxury of additional time and an interested group)... Go for it!

Some other things to consider when organizing you training include:

- Number of participants – We have found 12-15 participants to be the ideal size of group to work with
- Does the “flow” of the session work for your group? If you’re adding or changing activities, determine where the most appropriate spots in the agenda would be.
- Make sure to schedule break times and/or mealtimes
- When preparing ANY aspect or activity in your workshop, make sure to consider how you can accommodate the needs of your participants. Are there any people with mobility issues? Does your activity require people to differentiate between colours (this may be difficult for someone who is colour blind)? If food is being offered as a reward or prize for completing an activity (or just lunch!), is it peanut-free? Halal? Kosher? Is there a vegetarian or vegan option?



Sample Training Outline

Time	Agenda item	Discussion/Activity	Instructions
30 min	1. Introduction	1.1 Slide Show & PSA (15 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
		1.2 Breaking the Ice Activity (10 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
		1.3 Setting the Stage: Group Guidelines & Working Assumptions (10 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
70 min	2. Environmental Education & Environmental Issues	2.1 What is Environmental Education? (15 min)	Page 12
		2.2 The River - “Upstream/Downstream” Environmental Action (15 min)	Page 14
		2.3 Education to Action (20 min)	Page 16
		2.4 Facilitation vs. Presentation (10 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
		2.5 Environmental Worldviews (10 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
45 min	3. Facilitation Skills	3.1 Do-Be-Do-Be... Don’t (10 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
		3.2 Powerful Communication Activity (5 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
		3.3 The Art of Questioning (10 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.



Time	Agenda item	Discussion/Activity	Instructions
		3.4 Non-Verbal Communication: Facilitator Dos and Don'ts (20 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
50 min	4. Your Workshop Experience	4.1 Workshop Planning: Before, During, and After (15 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
		4.2 Lesson Plan Practice (20 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
		4.3 Death Defying Feats of EcoMentoring! (15 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
30 min	5. Ensuring You're Prepared – Tools And Tips	5.1 Community Connections: Where to EcoMentor (15 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
		5.2 Roles and Responsibilities (10 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
		5.3 Program Resources and Forms (10 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
15 min	6. Wrap Up	6.1 Go-Around (10 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.
		6.2 Training Session Feedback (5 min)	Page Error! Bookmark not defined.

The following Training Sections Part 1- Part 5, contain the content for your training sessions. Before facilitating your training session, read through the training activities and carefully consider the needs of your group – Which activities will they benefit from? Which might be a review? Do any activities need to be adapted for your group?

Once you've become familiar with the content of the training workshop, you can use the Training Outline Template at the end of this manual (Appendix A) to help you organize your training. Keep in mind that one of the practical

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things about dividing-up the training into individual components like this, is that you may choose to schedule the training across a longer period of time – in fact you could even expand each agenda item into its own hour-long session and do training every night for a week, or do two two-hour session on a weekend – whatever works best for your group.

Let's Begin!



TRAINING PART 2: ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

2.1 What is Environmental Education?

Suggested Time:	15 minutes
Preparation/Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrap paper or post-it notes • Tape or reusable adhesive (safe for walls)

Background:

EcoMentors is a “peer-led environmental education” program for youth... But what is purpose of this environmental education, and what role do young people have in it?

Young people can often feel disempowered or disengaged from their own educational activities and often see education as something that they’re “given” by someone with more expertise, authority, or power. It can often be difficult for a youth to see themselves as partners or leaders in their own education and that of others. By training youth to facilitate and lead popular education based environmental activities, workshops, and lessons, the EcoMentors program provides an extremely valuable opportunity for youth to become active participants and leaders in environmental education.

Peers influence many aspects of how and what we learn, and youth development theories tell us that young people are more likely to accept information from peers rather than adults. Youth are also at a time in their lives when they are highly engaged and interested in many different social/political/environmental issues, and it’s this unique energy for learning and sharing combined with heightened influence that give youth such an important role to play in the environmental education.

The following activity asks EcoMentors trainees to begin thinking about what environmental education is, and what their role as youth is in it.

Instructions:

- On scrap paper or post-it notes, ask participants to individually write a short paragraph or sentence that completes the following statement:
 - “Environmental education is...”
- Explain to them that they will be sharing their answer with the rest of the group.
- Ask the following questions to help them think through their answer:
 - Why is environmental education important?



- How can environmental education contribute to having a positive impact on local and/or global environmental issues?
- What role can young people play in environmental education?
- Where does environmental education happen?
- What sorts of activities are considered environmental education?
- Once everyone has had a chance to write something down, have everyone in the group stick their piece of paper up on a wall somewhere around the room.
- When all of the answers are up, have the participants walk around the room and look at other participant's statements.

Debrief:

- Were there any common themes amongst the statements?
- Was there a particular statement that you were surprised about?
- Did any of these statements make you think about something that you hadn't thought of before?
- How do you think EcoMentoring relates to these statements?
- How do you feel that you, as a young Canadian, fit in with environmental education? What strengths or unique qualities do you bring?



2.2 The River - “Upstream/Downstream” Environmental Action

Suggested Time:	15 minutes
Preparation/Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chart paper/blackboard/whiteboard • Markers/chalk

Background:

This activity uses a well known parable about people drowning in a river that’s often said to have been told by famous community organizer Saul Alinsky. While it might be a bit grim to think about drowning people floating down a river, the story in the following activity points out an important principle for environmental educators. The "River Story" is a common way to describe how, in order to create positive sustainable change, communities need to work together to address both the individual incidences of a problem, but also to address the systemic or “root” causes of that problem.

Instructions:

- Tell participants that you are about to tell them a story and ask them to close their eyes and picture the story in their heads as if they were in it themselves.
- Read or recite the following story...

The “River Story”

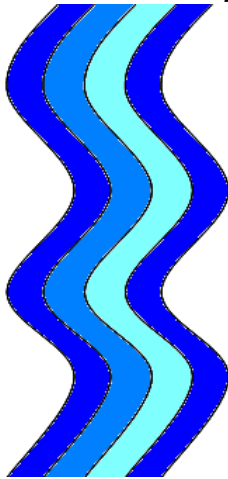
You and a friend are standing next to a river, and you see someone drowning as they float downstream. You and your friend jump into the river and pull them ashore. As soon as you've done that, you see another person in trouble, again floating downstream, and you both rescue this person as well. Every time you've saved one person, you see another, and another. After you've dragged yet another drowning person out of the river, you realize that your (much stronger) friend would be able to rescue the drowning people alone, so (being the smart cookie you are) you decide you must go upstream to find out what is causing these people to end up in the river. You want to address this problem at its source. You get upstream, and see a bridge. Upon careful inspection, you find that there is well-concealed, yet sizeable hole in this bridge that is causing people to fall in. What do you do? You do what makes the most sense – you work to repair the bridge!



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- Ask the participants to open their eyes.
- Explain that as an EcoMentor their goal is to raise awareness and promote positive action around a range of environmental issues, but that just like in the river story, while it's important to work "downstream" to deal with the aftermath of an environmental problem (e.g. cleaning-up after an oil spill), we also need to take action "upstream" to deal with the sources of a problem (e.g. government policies and industry standards around transporting oil) to prevent problems from occurring in the first place, or to stop something bad from continuing to happen.
- On a chalkboard or flipchart paper, draw the shape of a river vertically (top to bottom).
- Along the side of the river create the following 3 headings (from top to bottom): Upstream Action, Environmental Issue, Downstream Action
- Provide the group with an example of each (see below).
- Start with the middle column – Environmental Issue. Ask the group to come up with a short list (3-4 issues).
- Based on the list of issues, get the group to think of one or two "downstream" or "upstream" environmental actions for each issue.

Here's an example...



Upstream Action

- Lobbying of government officials and oil industry for improved oil transport policies and standards
- Awareness-raising/education around alternative energies and fuels to decrease dependence on oil!

Environmental Issue

Oil spill in an area inhabited by wildlife.

Downstream Action

- Clean-up of affected area
- Rescue and rehabilitation of animals

Debrief:

- As an EcoMentor, how do you think you could contribute to both upstream and downstream environmental actions?
- How might you incorporate the idea of upstream/downstream action to your EcoMentoring activities?



2.3 Education to Action

Suggested Time:	20 minutes
Preparation/Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chart paper/blackboard/whiteboard• Markers/chalk• Education to Action Worksheet (Appendix C) – 1 per group

Background:

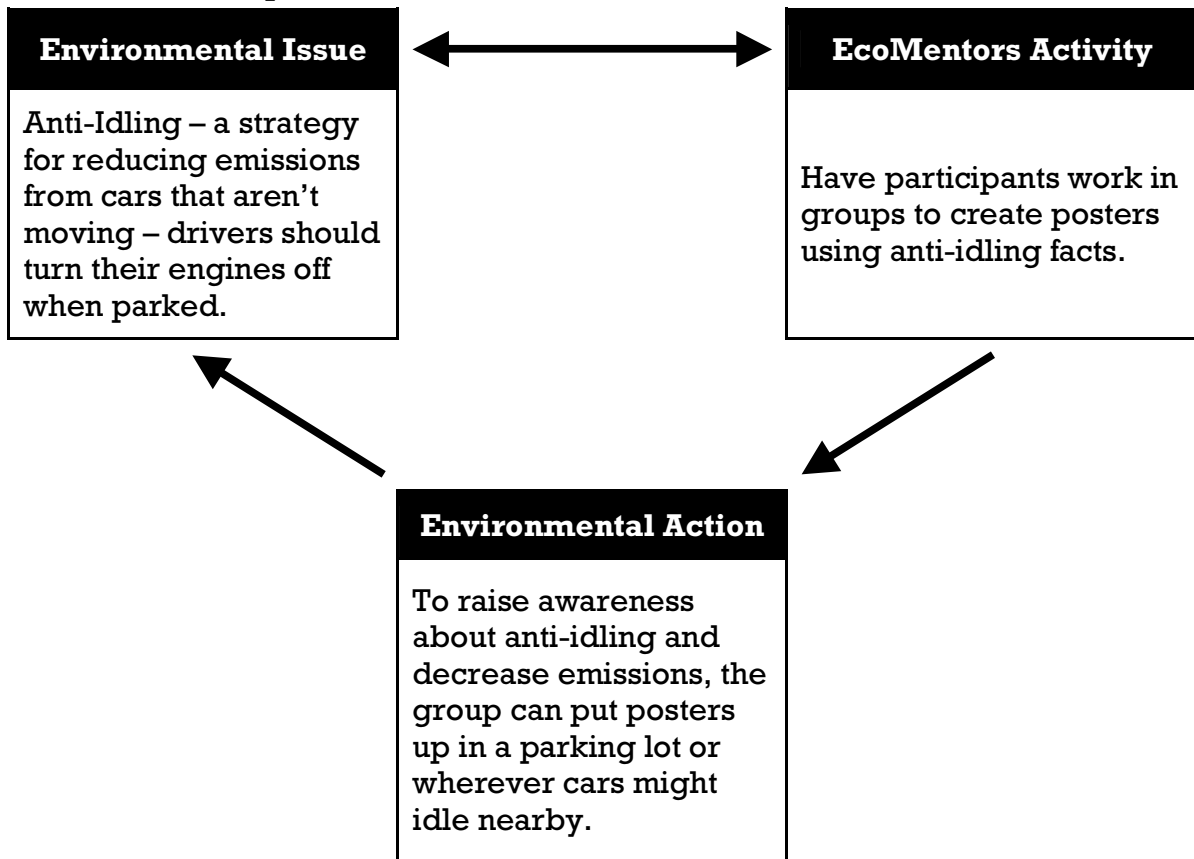
The previous activity introduced the EcoMentors to the idea of “upstream/downstream” environmental action. In this activity participants will build on this idea by more specifically considering how they can use EcoMentoring activities, games, and discussions (etc.) to contribute to positive environmental change by raising awareness and encouraging action (upstream and downstream) among groups of young Canadians... An important part of the larger environmental movement!

Instructions:

- Divide participants into pairs or small groups
- Distribute a copy of the Education to Action Worksheet (Appendix C) to each group
- Each group will need to assign a “recorder” to take notes for the group and a “reporter” who will report back to the larger group (the “reporter” role could also be divided among the group members)
- Explain to the groups that this activity is meant to build on what they just learned in “The River” activity (upstream/downstream action) and is meant to get them thinking about how they can use EcoMentors environmental education activities to promote positive environmental action among the young people they work with.
- Ask the groups to jointly fill-out the worksheet by brainstorming/discussing the following connected elements:
 - an ‘Environmental Issue’ – e.g. acid rain, waste disposal, energy conservation, etc.
 - an ‘Environmental Action’ – An upstream/downstream action that would have positive effects on the issue
 - an ‘EcoMentors Activity’ – An educational game/activity that would both inform people about the issue and promote the positive action
- Provide an example on the board or chart paper (see next page).



Here's an example...



Debrief:

- Ask each group to report back about their discussion and what they wrote down on their worksheet.
- What were some issues that the group discussed?
- We're you able to think of more than one environmental action for each issue? Which actions are "upstream"? Which are "downstream"?
- How did you come up with your ideas for EcoMentoring activities? Who was the "audience" that you had in mind when you were coming-up with the activity? Is the activity fun and interactive?