

## Environmental Citizen

Adapted by The Southeast Michigan Stewardship Coalition from Earth Force Training & Curriculum  
<https://earthforce.org/general-process-resources/>

**Objective:** Develop an enhanced sense of students' personal role as an environmental citizen and introduce the concept of environmental citizenship.

**Character traits:** CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY, CONFIDENCE, INTERDEPENDENCE

**Skills:** COOPERATION, REFLECTION

*Environmental Citizen:* A proactive member of the community who understands the importance of being a steward of the planet's limited natural resources and is committed to going beyond private actions by using civic actions to sustain them.

I can understand how to address the myriad of challenges facing the environment.

### Set up:

Use two chart paper pads to draw two stick figures. You may need more than two pads if you have a lot of students participating.

Ask students to consider this question: what characteristics, skills, and traits does an environmental citizen need to have? Ask students to write down two of these which they feel would be important for being an environmental citizen.

### Process:

Have students work in two lines and cycle through one at a time (one student/pad) adding a symbol to represent their chosen trait, skill, characteristic. Depending on the amount of students participating in the activity you can have students cycle through more than once.

Reflect:

Ask students to each share about what they added to the drawing. This can be a prompt for an Interactive Notebook assessment.

*Reflection prompts*

- Do you feel young people can make a difference? Why or why not?
- Have you ever done service in your community before? Who came up with the project? What was the experience like?

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## Attributes of an Environmental Citizen

knowledge	skills	character traits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS</b> Awareness of current local environmental issues, needs, and resources.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>HISTORICAL AWARENESS</b> Understanding how the past ecological events, political decisions, and economy have affected the environment.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>POLICY &amp; PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT</b> Understanding that environmental issues might be influenced by public and private policies and community practices.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>STAKEHOLDERS &amp; INTEREST GROUPS</b> Awareness of the decision-makers who can influence public and private policies and community practices associated with an environmental issue.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>CIVIC ABILITY</b> Understanding of the roles that citizens can play in shaping policies or community practices to help the environment.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>PROGRAM KNOWLEDGE</b> Understanding the mission, scope and process of Earth Force.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>INCLUSIVITY</b> Understanding the importance of integrating diverse experiences and perspectives into all aspects of learning.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>RESEARCH</b> Ability to conduct a thorough and balanced investigation of the root causes of a local environmental and/or community issue.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>ANALYSIS</b> Ability to assess various sources of information for credibility and bias.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>COMMUNICATION</b> Ability to defend a position on an environmental issue both orally and in writing.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>COOPERATION</b> Ability to work cooperatively with peers and adults toward a common end.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>ADVOCACY</b> Ability to bring about a plan for sustainable improvements to the environment or community.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>PROBLEM-SOLVING</b> Ability to make wise decisions and plans to solve environmental and community issues through the use of sound research.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>REFLECTION</b> Ability to think critically about experiences so lessons can be learned.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY</b> Sense of personal responsibility for and commitment to the long-term well-being of the environment and the community.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>CONFIDENCE</b> Belief in one's abilities to make a positive change in the environment and community.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>INTERDEPENDENCE</b> Belief that it is both valuable and necessary to work together for a common purpose.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS</b> Sense of bonding with and respect for educators, community leaders, and other adults.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT</b> Personal sense of achievement and accomplishment in and out of school.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>SOCIAL RESPECT</b> Willingness to respectfully consider diverse points of view.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>PROGRAM AFFINITY</b> Sense of connectedness to a national movement of students involved in Earth Force.</li></ul>



[http://actioncivicscollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/EF\\_2013-curriculum-sample.pdf](http://actioncivicscollaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/EF_2013-curriculum-sample.pdf)

# Student Script for Environmental Citizen Activity

Tavon will begin with these questions and then they will be answered in small groups:

Do you feel young people/youth can make a difference in their community? Why or why not?

**First:** Discuss this question, asking why or why not, in your small groups. We will have **4 minutes to do this**.

**You say:** Hello everyone, we are going to play a game with all of you, called Environmental Citizen. We would like everyone to participate at least once, but you will have the chance to participate multiple times if you'd like.

## Some guidelines:

Everyone needs to participate

Please be appropriate with your drawings

Please be thoughtful when you contribute

## This activity is important because:

This will help you during your year-long project in our community.

It's important to know what's going on around you and this can benefit you in your life.

You live in this neighborhood and it's important to be aware of environmental issues, and the environment.

## Here are the directions:

First, think about what skills and character traits someone would need to be considered an environmental citizen.

What knowledge would someone need if they wanted to be an environmental citizen?

Write down 2-3 of these you think are good. You are going to draw your idea in the form of a symbol onto the stick figure we have here. This stick figure represents our group's environmental citizen.

Once you have an idea to draw you can line up to add your drawing to the stick citizen.

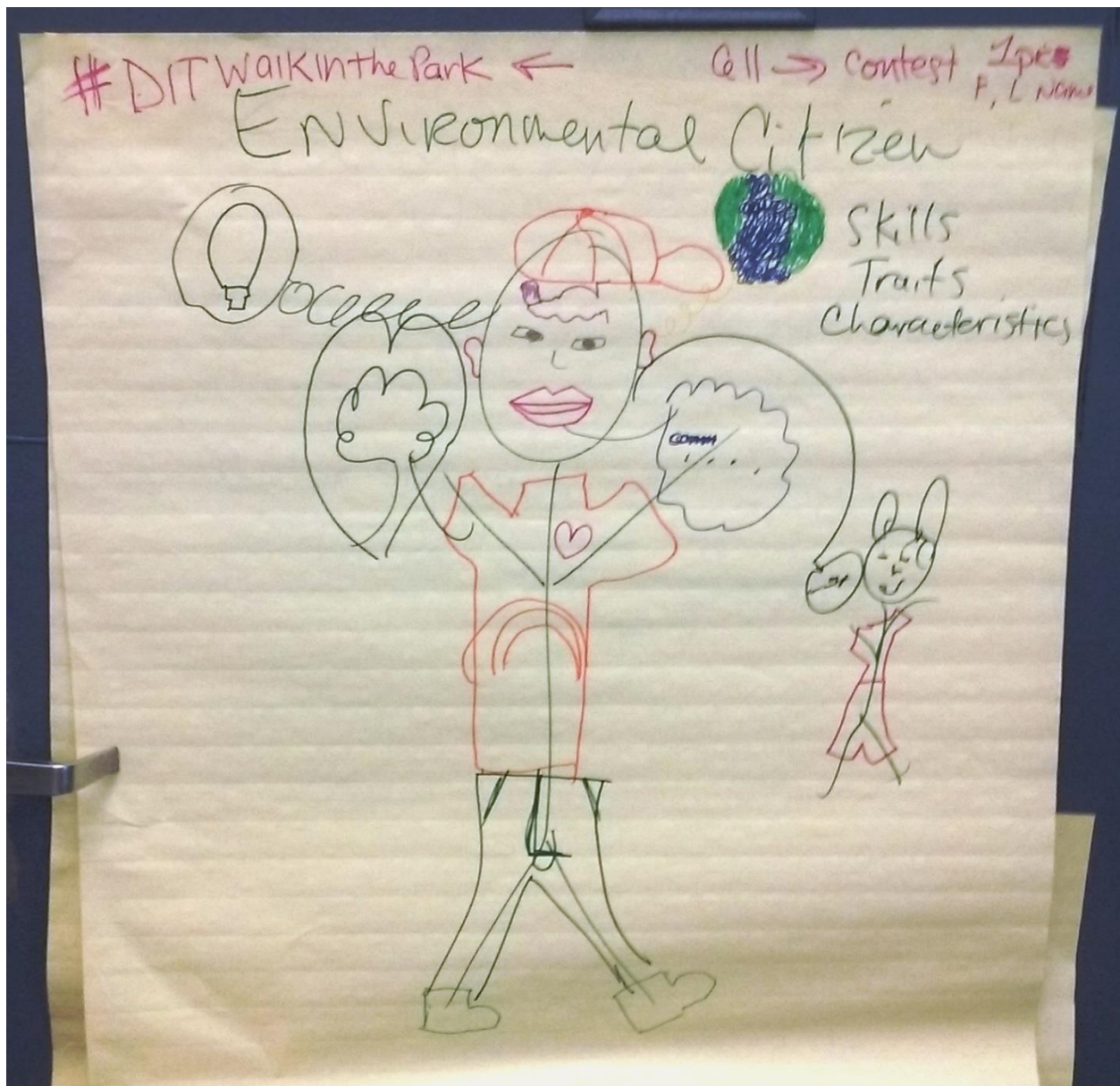
## Reflection and share-out:

Once everyone has gone at least once, Lisa will call a 1-2 minute warning and then each small group should take part in a reflection on what they drew.

Ask each group member to one at a time tell the group what they drew and what it means to them, and how it shows the skills, knowledge, or character traits of an environmental citizen.

## Whole Group Citizen!

Each group has 2 minutes to discuss which 2 symbols they drew are the ones they want to share and add to the whole group citizen. One of the Youth Ambassadors will be in front of the large group drawing the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade DIT Environmental Citizen.



An Environmental Citizen is:

- One who is a member of a community, not the legal use of the word.
- A community problem solver
- Someone who understands the importance of taking care of the environment and our natural resources like water, soil, minerals, land, and more.
- Simply put, a way of thinking and acting responsibly for the environment and the community within that environment.