



World Teachers' Day 2021

Ecoliteracy - What? Why? And How?

Katherine Bilsborough and Ceri Jones





WHAT?

What is ecoliteracy?

Literacy

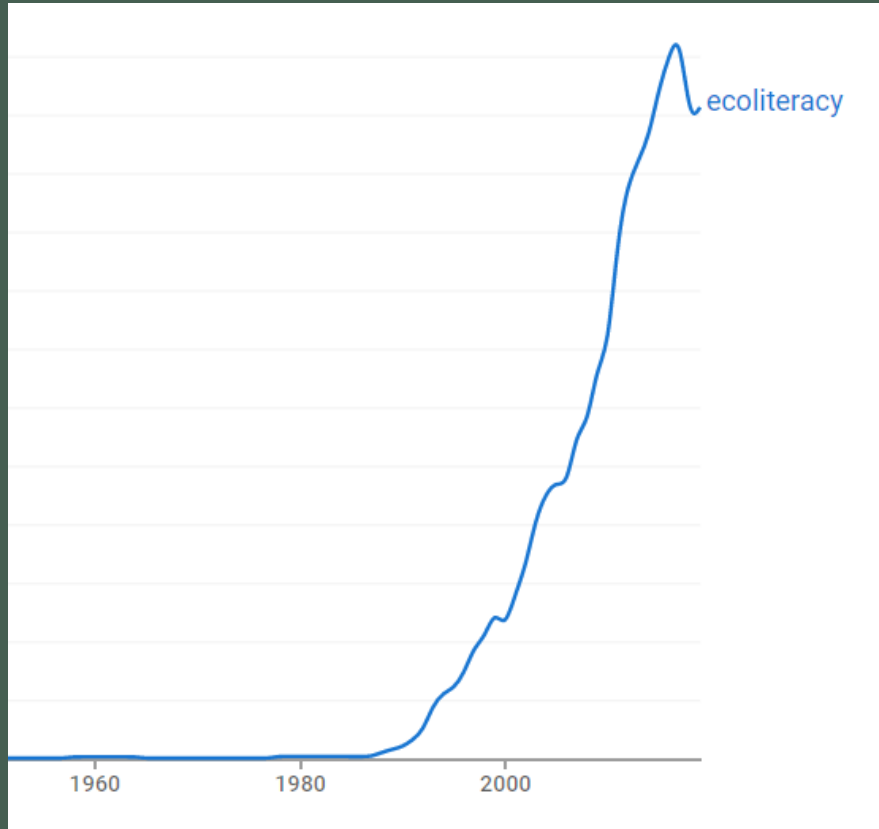
(1) the ability to read and write

(2) knowledge or capability in a particular field or fields

“A literate citizenry”

Over the last 50 years, expectations for a literate citizenry have been extended to include the ability to **understand, make informed decisions, and act** with respect to **complex topics and issues** facing society today.

(McBride et al 2013)



Google ngram viewer

An ecoliterate person is ...

An ecoliterate person is prepared to be an **effective member of sustainable society**, with well-rounded abilities of **head, heart, hands, and spirit**, comprising an **organic understanding** of the world and **participatory action** within and with the environment.

(McBride et al 2013)




WHY?

Ecoliteracy



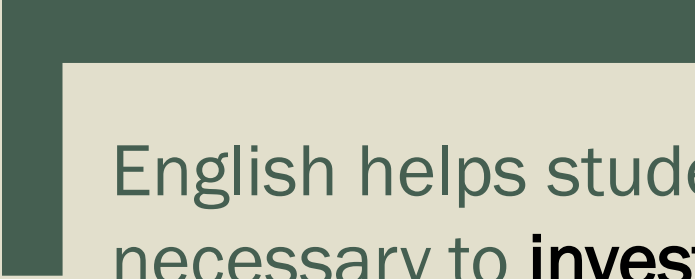
ELT



Englishes are used in a multitude of **contexts** to express a diversity of views and narratives in **global discourse**, and are the medium for **emerging ideas**.

(Crystal, 2003)






English helps students develop the skills necessary to **investigate, analyse** and **communicate** ideas and information related to sustainability, and to **advocate, generate** and **evaluate** actions for sustainable futures.

(Australian national curriculum F-10)





**ELT
Footprint
Community
Survey**



What do you hope to achieve by addressing environmental issues in your ELT classroom?



“to normalise it - make it part of the daily conversation rather than that throwaway unit on polar bears. Then the next stage is giving learners the tools and language they need to be able to engage with these issues outside of the classroom.”

“to raise awareness and give students, particularly teens, the tools to help make a real difference.”

“to make class activities more relevant to the issues important to my students, and to what's happening in society.”

“to foster a genuine respect and insight into the issues and to encourage awareness and positive action among the students (and other staff).”



What factors do you feel
inhibit teachers from
addressing environmental
issues in ELT?



“A **fear** that it is **irrelevant** to the goals of the course and the learner.”

“Most people understand that the climate crisis is a serious problem but are **not certain how to address it.**”

“The [linguistic] competencies that need to be taught. It takes time to think of ways ... **to integrate environmental issues** and still target the [language] competency.”

“**Fear** of the “**size**” of the topic.”

“No clear **framework.**”



HOW?



EXPLORING FRAMEWORKS

An ecoliterate person is someone who has the ability to...

- **understand** significant environmental problems and their causes
- **articulate** what unsustainability and sustainability are and their importance
- **evaluate** the relative sustainability and unsustainability of practices
- accurately and honestly **assess** the moral dimensions of unsustainability
- **identify** and **diagnose** obstacles to ecological sustainability (including greenwashing, and ideologies that support unsustainability)
- **imagine** actionable ways to address issues of unsustainability

Can-do statements



Can **understand** and **explain** the concept of sustainability and **give concrete examples**



Can **express appreciation** of the natural world in their immediate surroundings



Can **advocate** for protection/conservation of local ecosystems/species



Can **understand** and **explain** the concept of “greenwashing”



Can **identify** simple examples of “greenwashing”



Can **describe** the connections and relationships within a local ecosystem



Can **identify** and **describe** potential local sustainability issues



Can **outline** actionable solutions to address local issues of unsustainability

Can-do statement 1

Can **express appreciation** of the natural world in their immediate surroundings





PLACE-BASED ECOPEDAGOGY



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Can-do statement 2

Can **understand** and **explain** the concept of “greenwashing” and **give examples**.

What is greenwashing?

Greenwashing is a PR tactic that's used to make a company or product appear environmentally friendly without meaningfully reducing its environmental impact.



GREENPEACE

We're living in a golden age of greenwash

From 'carbon neutral' flights to 'net zero' bacon, dishonest green PR is on the rise.



- Reimagining energy
- Every drop is green
- Don't let fashion go to waste
- Lowest fares - lowest emissions

A white rectangular tray is shown on a blue surface. On the tray are three wooden utensils: a fork, a knife, and a spoon. The tray has a message printed on it in blue, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The message reads: "WELCOME FIRST TO THE USE FREE SINGLE PLASTIC IN THE FLIGHT IN THE WORLD". The words "WELCOME FIRST" and "FLIGHT IN THE WORLD" are on the left side, while "TO THE USE FREE" and "SINGLE PLASTIC" are on the right side. The "HiFly" logo is visible in the bottom right corner of the tray. In the background, there is a white cup with the "HiFly" logo and a stack of aluminum foil containers.

WELCOME FIRST
TO THE USE FREE
SINGLE PLASTIC
IN THE FLIGHT IN THE
WORLD

HiFly

Can-do statements



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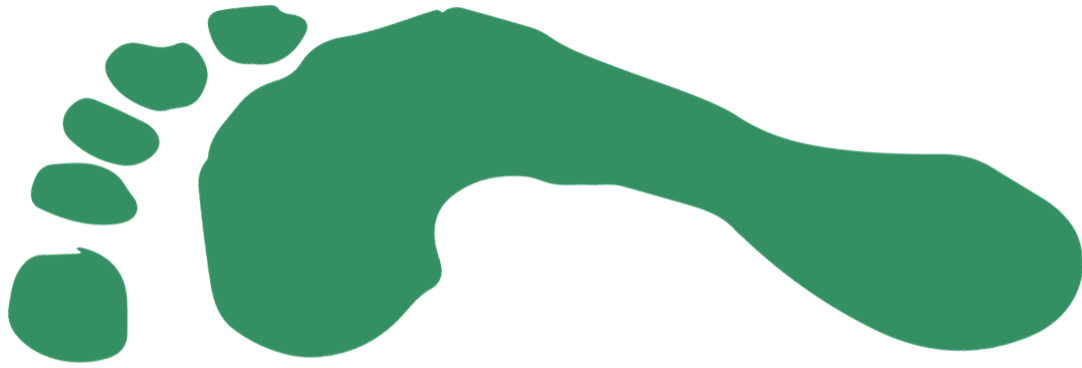
Can **identify** and **describe** potential local sustainability issues



Can **outline** actionable solutions to address local issues of unsustainability

A large green L-shaped graphic is positioned on the left side of the image, consisting of a vertical bar and a horizontal bar that meet at a right angle. A second, smaller green L-shaped graphic is positioned on the right side of the image, also consisting of a vertical bar and a horizontal bar meeting at a right angle. The background is a solid dark green color.

#ELTCanDoECO



ELT Footprint

Sharing projects, initiatives and materials
from across the world of ELT

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find us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn Website: eltfootprint.org



LINKS & REFERENCES

https://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs_other/rmrs_2013_mcbride_b001.pdf

<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/cross-curriculum-priorities/sustainability/>

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269106508_Assessing_Sustainability_Literacy

<https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/golden-age-of-greenwash/>

<https://hifly.aero/media-center/all-hi-fly-flights-single-use-plastic-free-become-reality/>

<https://eltfootprint.org/eltcandoeco/>



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Thank you!

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