

**Environmental Issues**

**Approach:** One to one

**Level:** Year 4 and year 8

**Focus:** Judge the relative importance of seven environmental threats and justify these decisions.

**Resources:** 7 pictures showing environmental disasters.

**Questions/instructions:**

I am going to give you 7 pictures of things happening on the earth that may be of concern to people. You are to put these pictures in 3 rows on the table.

In the **top row** put the picture or pictures which you think people should be most concerned about; the things that you think have the worst effect on the environment of the world.

In the **middle row**, put the picture or pictures that show problems that are not quite so bad.

In the **bottom row** put the picture or pictures that you feel are not as important as the rest.

**Give the student the pictures.**

Here are the pictures. Put them into the 3 rows I have described.

**Read instructions again if the student needs it.**

1. Let's look at the top row. You have put [read titles of pictures] in the top row. I want you to tell me why you think these are the most important concerns.

**Encourage use of picture titles in spoken explanations.**

2. Let's look at your bottom row of pictures. You have put [read titles of pictures] in the bottom row. I want you to tell me why you think these are not as important as the other concerns.



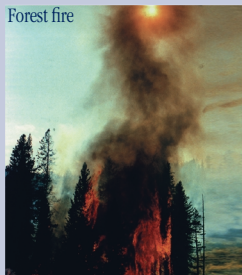
Plastic rubbish on sea animals



Factory smoke



Oil spilled from big boat



Forest fire

**Plastic rubbish on sea animals**

	% responses	
	1999 ('95)	1999 ('95)
	year 4	year 8
top row	54 (55)	41 (46)
middle row	34 (30)	40 (37)
bottom row	12 (15)	19 (17)



Atomic bomb exploding

	% responses	
	1999 ('95)	1999 ('95)
	year 4	year 8
top row	65 (71)	69 (79)
middle row	25 (19)	19 (14)
bottom row	10 (10)	12 (7)

**Atomic bomb exploding**

**Factory smoke**

	% responses	
	1999 ('95)	1999 ('95)
	year 4	year 8
top row	40 (44)	43 (44)
middle row	33 (34)	33 (35)
bottom row	27 (22)	24 (21)



Clearing the rainforest

	% responses	
	1999 ('95)	1999 ('95)
	year 4	year 8
top row	29 (38)	34 (46)
middle row	36 (32)	35 (28)
bottom row	35 (30)	31 (26)

**Clearing the rainforest**

**Oil spill**

	% responses	
	1999 ('95)	1999 ('95)
	year 4	year 8
top row	47 (45)	56 (56)
middle row	37 (36)	37 (37)
bottom row	16 (19)	7 (7)

**Dumping rubbish at sea**



Dumping rubbish at sea

	% responses	
	1999 ('95)	1999 ('95)
	year 4	year 8
top row	52 (49)	54 (49)
middle row	36 (37)	40 (40)
bottom row	12 (14)	6 (11)

**Forest fires**

	% responses	
	1999 ('95)	1999 ('95)
	year 4	year 8
top row	73 (66)	48 (41)
middle row	19 (23)	35 (31)
bottom row	8 (11)	17 (28)

**TOP CONCERNS 1999**

YEAR4	YEAR 8
Forest fires 73%	Atomic bombs 69%
Atomic bombs 65%	Oil spill 56%
Plastic on sea animals 54%	Dumping at sea 54%
Dumping at sea 52%	Forest fires 48%
Oil spill 47%	Factory smoke 43%
Factory smoke 40%	Plastic on sea animals 41%
Clearing rainforest 29%	Clearing rainforest 34%

**Commentary:**

The environmental concerns of year 4 and year 8 students were quite similar, except that year 8 students placed substantially less importance on forest fires (the top concern in 1999 of year 4 students, but only fourth concern of year 8 students). Year 8 students showed greater change from 1995 to 1999, with reduced concern about atomic explosions and clearing the rainforest, but more concern about forest fires. In their reasons both year 4 and year 8 students gave greatest weight to the danger to animal life, then to the danger to human life. Year 8 students gave much greater weight than year 4 students to global (as opposed to local) effects.