

Green Schools Network



ACTIVITY SHEET

April 2008

Why talk about

Magazines/ Newspapers?



Because they inform us-entertain us and make us think- on issues we are concerned about. So, we have magazines on sports, politics, fashion, cars and others.

But if environment matters to us- shouldn't there be more magazines on environment on the stands- informing us and making us think about environmental issues. The truth is that there aren't enough. As magazines play a key role in generating public opinion, isn't it high time we have environmental magazines to make environment a key issue in the public arena.

On the 10th anniversary of Gobar Times, CSE's monthly magazine on environment, lets explore the environmental magazines scenario and perhaps start one of our own.

Name.....

School Name

Class..... Date.....

Gobar Gyan: Magazines and newspapers play the role of generating public opinion in all societies across the world. The issues they focus on, at one level reflect what the people are thinking and at the other mould public opinion visa-vis these issues- and in the long run try and influence government policies. So, more magazines focussing on environment would mean more public debates, more widespread content and hopefully more progressive government policies.

Activity: Go to the nearby magazine stand or talk to your newspaper person. Find out if he has any magazines on 'environment'. There may some related to issues like health, science, sports,lifestyle etc yet with parts dedicated to environment. Find out.



Magazine's Name

Publisher

Ask the vendor, how popular is the magazine?

What kind of environmental issues are featured in the magazines?



*Hi! I am Pandit Gobar Ganesh.
You will find me in Gobar Times—a magazine
that tells you how your everyday life is linked to the
world around you. Hooked, huh? If you want to
know more about me and Gobartimes visit us at:*

www.gobartimes.org

Activity: Catch hold of at least two newspapers daily. You may buy one and borrow the other from your neighbour. Observe the new items carefully for one week and find out how many pertain to environment. See whether the coverage is done on the front page, middle or at the back of the publication.

Newspaper	No. of News items
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____

Do you think enough coverage is given to environmental issues to generate public opinion?

If possible, visit a local newspaper or call up its office and find out if they have a reporter exclusively dedicated to cover environmental news? It would be a good idea to get in touch with the reporter and interview him about his experience of being an environmental reporter.

Gobar Gyan:Down to Earth, CSE's fortnightly magazine on environment was created by Anil Agarwal, CSE's founder director because he felt environment deserved greater more indepth focus than mainstream media was ready to give. Similar was the case when Gobar Times started to fill the void of environment for beginners.

If you, as a school student or citizen of the country feel that you need to write about environmental issues of your concern- why not start an environmental magazine of your own.



Activity: The first step to start a magazine would be to get like-minded people together. If you have an Eco-club, the like-minded people are already together, but still it would be worthwhile to put up a poster on the school notice board.

The team:

To put a magazine together the team needs to be multi-skilled - the team members need to identify the current issues of interest, go out and report on them, understand the actual focus of the story and then communicate it in lucid and readable fashion.

Some people interested in photography can click photographs for the magazine. Get some people who are good at drawing because there are a lot of things, which cannot be put into words or clicked. So what's your team

Name	Expertise/Speciality
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____

The forums available:

If you have the resources, you can start a magazine of your own. If not then start with a few pages or by reserving space in your school magazine- perhaps do a section on environment. Starting a magazine of the eco-club is also a good idea.

In this information age, the internet provides a good platform to put forth your work. You may think of starting it out as a blog and may be think of a web based magazine later. The best part is - it saves paper. Depending on the resources and time available, you can start a bimonthly, quarterly or annual magazine.

So what forum did you choose for your magazine? Why?

The content:

The content would be dependent on the issues you want to raise or want to write about. Its a good idea to sit together and thrash out the issues you want to discuss in the magazine. Begin with local issues because then you have the opportunity to visit the place and talk to people. Hence, identify some local environmental issues, which you want to raise or want to know about (then you can go out know more about it and share it with the larger community). Assign responsibilities as to who is reporting on which issue.

Environmental Issue

To be reported by

1. _____

2. _____

The editing and designing:

Editing and designing are crucial elements for any magazine. While you may have an excellent interview at hand but if it is not put forward in a manner that makes enjoyable reading, the reader will simply turn the pages over. An editor will package the copy attractively and compel readers to continue reading. - Requires someone, who not only has good command over language but is also a creative writer and an avid reader.

So you have a story, you also have photographs and illustrations, now you need some one who can put it all together in a manner that draws teh reader to it. thats where the designer pitches in. - requires someone, who is good at creative art and is good at making boring stuff look interesting.

Who are going to be your editors and designers?

The production and marketing:

Once you are ready with the processed content. You would get it printed. If you have done the processing in your PC, you may want to take print outs and give it to people. Or you can give it to a formal press for printing. Count the costs seriously. If you go for an e-magazine, however, you need not do all this.

Also remember a magazine runs as long as it is read. So, make sure that everybody in the school knows about the magazine. You can even sell it for a rupee or two to interested people. Try and market your magazine in a neighbourhood school or at least at the school festival.

And do remember to send us a copy of the magazine.

If you know of an environmental magazine in your city/town. Contact their office and express interest in knowing more about how the magazine is produced. As Gobar Times completes 10 years of publication this May, we welcome students to our office to know more about the making the Gobar Times.



If you found the activity sheet interesting, E-mail us at eeu@cseindia.org or write to:
Activity Sheet, Centre for Science and Environment, 41 Tughlakabad Institutional Area,
New Delhi-110062 or Call 29955124 Extension 219