

## ***Melissa's Book List***

These are some suggestions for English teachers who want to incorporate environmental issues into the curriculum.

Jensen, Derrick, and Stephanie McMillan. *As the World Burns: 50 Simple Things You Can Do to Stay in Denial*. New York: Seven Stories, 2007. Print.

This book is a graphic novel, making it accessible for all students at the secondary level, whether it is Grade 9 Applied level or Grade 12 University level. The story centers around a girl who is trying to do the right thing by recycling and changing light bulbs, and her friend who challenges this, saying that the corporations are the problem and that the little things won't be able to make a difference. It's a good book to get the class thinking about what needs to be done to fix the pollution problems. It would also be a good book to begin a class debate, getting students to argue the side of either one of the characters.

Seuss. *The Lorax*. New York: Random House, 1971. Print.

*The Lorax* is a timeless tale that is good for all ages. Getting students to revisit it in higher grades could get them thinking about the issues the book deals with on a more sophisticated level than when they were younger. It could also be good to use if you wanted to teach students how write comparison pieces, as you could compare the book to the movie. Even this activity would still get students thinking about the issues discussed in *The Lorax* simply because the issues were reintroduced to them at an age that they can better understand them.

Silverstein, Shel. *The Giving Tree*. New York: Harper & Row, 1964. Print.

Again, a children's book loaded with meaning. *The Giving Tree* is a book that students at the secondary level could read fast, leaving lots of time for meaningful class discussion. It could even be used as a little introduction into environmental literature if you were to choose to do a unit on the subject.

Alexius, Vitaly S. *Romantically Apocalyptic*. <http://romanticallyapocalyptic.com/> . Web.

This is a web-based comic that updates once or twice a week. The story takes place in a post apocalyptic setting, where the characters must try to survive in the world that humans helped to create. It's very comical and up to date, making it easier for students to relate to.

Scott Crocker. *Ghost Bird*. Small Change Productions. 2009. Film.

This documentary about the ivory-billed woodpecker is perfect for a secondary school classroom. It's open-ended, allowing students to come to their own conclusion on the extinction of the bird, or the illusion due to guilt. It also points out something very important, which are the role humans play in the extinction of animals. Even scientists are able to produce drawers of species samples, making us question if people are more responsible than we think.

Weyn, Suzanne. *Empty*. New York: Scholastic, 2010. Print.

Although I have not had the chance to read this book, it sounds like it would be good for the secondary classroom. It is just under 200 pages long, making it a good length for grade 11 or 12 students, and it takes place in a town at a time when fossil fuels have run out. Now, the people of this town are trying to adapt to survive in this new world where things such as gas no longer exist.

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