

'Environmental Memoirs' – guidelines and tips

Guidelines and tips

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Project background

The National Centre for Sustainability (NCS) at Swinburne University invites students to participate in the Environmental Memoirs project.

This project began in early 2006 as an overseas project which extended to 14 countries including Indonesia, Malaysia, China, Iran and Turkey. A researcher from NCS conducted interviews with community elders to find out how they have seen environmental conditions change over time and to document their experience of living and working in those countries. These stories are known as 'Environmental Memoirs'. This work was supported by UNESCO (United Nations Educational and Scientific Organisation).

The results of the project can be seen on the Environmental Memoirs website

<http://www.swinburne.edu.au/ncs/environmentalmemoirs/memoirs.htm>

Students who wish to participate should read through each item of 'Guidelines and Tips' and seek assistance from a teacher/parent/guardian.

The task

To collect and submit stories of environmental change first-hand, from parents, grandparents and/or other adults in the community. Stories need to be of 150-250 words. In addition, we encourage you to submit any relevant photos of the people and places associated with the story. After appropriate assessment, stories that meet the criteria will be published on the Environmental Memoir website.

Topics and tips

Focus on environmental change (better, worse or both) and choose a topic:

- Water (lakes, rivers, fishing, drinking water, dams etc)
- Energy (power types and sources)
- Land use (farming practices, crops etc)
- Pollution (air, water etc)
- Waste (litter, packaging etc)
- Animals and plants (increase or decrease diversity)
- Human population (increase or decrease)
- Transport and travel (bikes, cars, walking etc)
- Development and construction (housing, buildings etc)

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Ask questions about the PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE:

- Describe what the environment looked like when you were young?
- What has changed since that time?
- How and why has it changed? What caused the change?
- How does it make the person feel (upset, happy, proud etc)

Optional questions:

- Age of the person (if unknown please try to estimate age eg 50+ years)

Resources

People in your local area are probably your best resource. Your local library or historical society may be able to recommend people to be interviewed.

We recommend you look at the stories on the Environmental Memoirs website as an example of the type of information you can collect

<http://www.swinburne.edu.au/ncs/environmentalmemoirs/memoirs.htm>

In particular, we suggest you read the memoirs of the following people:

Medetboy Berdimuratov on the topic of life near the Aral Sea in Uzbekistan

<http://www.swinburne.edu.au/ncs/environmentalmemoirs/memoirs/uzbekistan/memoir2.htm>

Miss D, a farmer in Indonesia on the topic of rice cultivation in Indonesia

<http://www.swinburne.edu.au/ncs/environmentalmemoirs/memoirs/indonesia/memoir3.htm>

Igor Nicolavith Nadeliaev on the topic of Lake Baikal in Russia

<http://www.swinburne.edu.au/ncs/environmentalmemoirs/memoirs/russia/memoir1.htm>

Entry requirements

Appropriateness of content

- The material must be suitable for an audience of children, parents and teachers and the general community. Obscene, sexist or racist language must be avoided.
- Unsuitable entries will not be published.

Identification of entries

- Identify the geographical region (state or territory, suburb/town, name of river, mountain etc)
- Name of the interviewer (your name) and if possible that of the person being interviewed (optional)
- Age of person being interviewed (optional – provide an estimate if possible)
- Identify the environmental issues (water, pollution, energy etc)

Acknowledgements

- each entry should briefly acknowledge any people or organisations who assisted

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Intellectual property

Images

- All material should be the work of the student
- Where other material (such as photographs) have been used, the student or teacher needs to ensure that the picture has appropriate copyright free status or you have obtained permission from the source of the material.
- All non original images or words must be acknowledged.
- If your entry includes recognisable images/footage of individuals, then permission must be obtained from each individual.
- Permission must be obtained from the parent/guardian of individuals recognised in pictures who are under the age of 18 years of age.
- Recommended file type is jpg or gif.

Assessment of entries

NCS Swinburne will publish much of the material submitted, however, NCS Swinburne reserves the right not to publish entries, or to edit material for the sake of conciseness or space. Decisions on whether or not to publish material may depend on issues like:

- How clearly the environmental message(s) are conveyed
- Suitability for the dissemination to the wider community
- Production quality
- Originality

How to enter

- Fill out the 'Submission and consent' form and sign the declaration as required. This must be received by NCS Swinburne before consideration can be given to publication. It should be submitted along with electronic entries (if scanned to show signatures) or mailed separately.
- Ensure you keep back-up copies of your work.
- If submitting entry by e-mail: send to ncs@swin.edu.au
- If submitting entries by mail, send to:

Environmental Memoirs
National Centre for Sustainability
Swinburne University
Mail H91, PO Box 218
Hawthorn Vic 3122

If you would like photos returned please include a stamped, self addressed envelope.

Who to contact if you have questions?

- Ask your teacher/parent for assistance. Contact the National Centre for Sustainability ncs@swin.edu.au or phone 03 9214 5997.