Finding Our Voice
Lisa Santandrea’s Grade 7 Class
London, Ontario
November 2008
GreenLearning

- Envisions a generation of young Canadians who are enabled and inspired to actively create a sustainable and just world.

- Our Mission is to create innovative teaching resources and rich educational experiences that empower young Canadians to create positive social and environmental change in their own lives, schools and communities.
Innovative Programs

- eCards
- EnerAction
- Re-Energy
- Redfish School of Change
- COOL Community on Climate Change
eLearning

- Motivates learners
- Models effective use of the Internet
- Connects learners to the real world
- Provides a differentiated environment for all learners
- Harnesses social networking to effective pedagogy
eLearning should be . . .

- A place for authentic learning and assessment
- Interactive and student-centred
- Creative and problem-based
- Collaborative
- Participatory—“outside” the classroom
Our Classroom’s Premise: “Every child has the inherent right to life and all states shall ensure, to the maximum extent possible, the survival and development of the child.”

Q: How many grade seven students does it take to change the world?

A: Just one, but the world has to want to change.

When communicating messages about the environment and other issues we care about, we are asking people to change—change the way they think and change the way they behave.

Our job as writers and graphic artists is to motivate our audiences to want to change. Our words and images need to convince them to see things differently, to make different choices, to set different goals, or to take different actions.
eCards enables young people to do real research, exploring the kinds of energy that in the future will power their work, play and lives.

It gives them the opportunity to form and express their opinions, and in a small way help shape the kind of energy future they want.

eCards is a very positive, hands-on approach to learning, and I’m very excited about working with the class on it.
What We Focused On:

1. Think About Your Audience.
2. Focus Your Message.
3. Motivate the Reader.
4. Be Passionate.
5. Use Facts.
7. Be An Example To Others.
Some Thoughts from the Students’ Teachers:
The class originally began this project by focusing on the specific expectations of collecting, organizing and evaluating information when writing. We wanted the students to do something other than paper and pencil and we thought that the format of the e-Card activity on the Green Learning web page was perfect for what we were trying to accomplish.

As the students began to read and gather specific information on an environmental topic, we began to realize as a class, that the work we were doing could have a real impact. Our students began to consider the idea of having a VOICE - having a say in helping to raise awareness about the environmental concerns in the world that they are living in.

This idea truly motivated the children and the activity quickly shifted from a simple research/writing activity into something that they TRULY cared about and began to become invested in. It was amazing to observe children become impassioned and engaged as they began to realize that THEY could make a difference.
You think that climate change is not a big deal, and that it'll just go away. Climate change is a huge deal though, and we don't know how to stop it. It's not just something to scare us, climate change is really happening! The Arctic Glaciers are melting and if they melt too quickly, the sea levels will rise, causing flash floods and landslides. The glaciers have so much power, and they can determine our futures.

Some animals need ice and cold weather, so when it melts and becomes warmer the animals will be in danger. Think of all those polar bears that live in the Arctic. They need ice to go travel on, and to go fishing on.

We all need to take a stand and find a way to end climate change for good. You can take part by putting your computer on "stand by" when you aren't using it, or even turning off your lights when you walk out of a room. If you don't our world might begin to suffer sooner than we think. Also, if we start putting an end to climate change, the polar bears might get their homes back. What can you do to help?

Lauryn F
Another Student’s Voice:
The arctic is a beautiful place.
This is beginning to change…..
We are damaging our earth because of our choices.
We are beginning to experience extreme global warming!
Animals are losing their battle for life because of our actions!
They are being driven to extinction!
In 20 years some of our arctic wildlife will be gone forever!
We can make a change.
It is not too late.
So stop this melting meltdown!
So stop the madness!
Send this message to whoever you know that might care.
Explain it to others.
We are running out of time….

Cory and Lucas
Educating and empowering the children to have a strong sense of self is important.

It is imperative that children know that their opinions matter and that they, even at a young age, have something positive to offer to others.