



## Student Action Projects

O'Neill Sea Odyssey (OSO) is committed to offering free-of-charge programming to eligible 4-6th grade and special needs students. Each class that participates in our program is required to complete a Student Action Project (SAP) to earn their trip. We have identified five approved SAPs that teachers/group leaders can choose from. These projects are intended to build on the OSO curriculum and encourage students to take actionable steps toward protecting the coastal environment. Student action and community service are very important to us at OSO, and we are proud of the work that our students have accomplished over the years.

Suggested timeframe to complete SAP: 4-6 weeks after OSO trip  
Firm deadline: End of the academic year

**Please note: Future participation in the OSO program is contingent upon completing a SAP and uploading the required documentation (identified below) into your school's Google folder by the end of the academic year.**

### 1. Beach/Watershed/School/Neighborhood Cleanup (All grades)

*PURPOSE: Raise awareness about marine pollution, contribute to the reduction of garbage and plastic in the ocean, and protect sensitive wildlife.*

Action Steps:

1. Option to work with a local non-profit ([Save Our Shores](#), [Surfrider](#), or the [Coastal Watershed Council](#)) to help organize a beach or watershed clean-up day.
2. Identify a clean-up site.
3. Gather supplies (trash bags, first aid kit, sanitizer, gloves, etc.)
4. Plan how to handle the recyclables.
5. Track your trash using a [Trash Log](#).
6. Present the findings at your school or to another class as a way to educate others and help spread the impact.
7. Upload the completed Trash Log to your school's Google folder.

### 2. Waste A-Weigh (All grades)

*PURPOSE: Students weigh and record their lunch waste every day for one week and learn about how conservation efforts can reduce the total amount of trash generated.*

### Action Steps:

1. Develop and implement ways to create less waste during lunchtime.
2. Record and analyze data on the [Waste A-Weigh worksheet](#) to determine the weight of waste produced during a week, and the amount of waste saved as a result of conservation efforts.
3. Identify ways as a class or school to continue waste reduction efforts.
4. Students write a 2-4 paragraph reflection (e.g. trends that emerged, a surprising finding, an important takeaway, etc.) from this exercise.
5. Upload the completed Waste A-Weigh worksheet your school's Google folder.

### 3. Write a letter to an elected official regarding an environmental issue of concern (Recommended for 5th & 6th grades)

*PURPOSE: Elected officials rely on us, their constituents, to tell them how they should vote and what issues they should work on during their term in office. One of the best ways to tell an elected official what environmental issue you care about is to write them a letter!*

### Action Steps:

1. Explore a local, state, or federal environmental issue of concern.
  - National environmental legislation: [National Legislative Information](#)
  - California environmental legislation: [California Legislative Information](#)
  - Find your local, state, or national representative [USA.gov](#) will help you find your city's website. On your city's website, you will find the names of your local elected officials and their contact information. [Open States](#) will help you find the names of your state representatives and state senators and their contact information based on where you live. You can also find information for statewide officials like the governor and secretary of the state.
  - [The United States House of Representatives](#) website will help you find your Representatives in Congress.
  - [The United States Senate](#) website will help you find your Senator.
2. Upload the student letters to your school's Google folder.

### Sample letter

Here is a sample letter to help students write their own letter to an elected official. Students can fill in the blanks where they see words in [brackets]:

*Dear [Mayor/Representative/Senator/Governor] [NAME],*

*My name is [NAME] and I am a 5th grader at [SCHOOL] in [CITY]. I live at [ADDRESS] in [CITY]. I am writing to you today because I am concerned about [ISSUE]. This is an issue that affects me, my family, and my community because [HOW IT AFFECTS YOU]. I believe that this issue is important because [WHY IT IS IMPORTANT]. I hope that you can help me find a solution to this problem in our community, and I hope that you will consider bringing this issue to our [CITY COUNCIL/STATE LEGISLATURE/CONGRESS].*

*Thank you very much for your attention to this issue. With your help, I believe that we can find a solution.*

*Sincerely,  
[NAME]*

**4. Students organize a plastic-free campaign for their class or school.** (All grades)

*PURPOSE:* Students commit to not using single-use plastic for up to one week (including bottles, take-out food containers, utensils, bags, and wrappers). Students bring awareness to their campus community and families about the harmful impacts of plastic waste on our health and the environment.

Action Steps:

1. List the single-use plastic waste students commonly use throughout the day.
2. Identify alternatives students can use (reusable bottles, metal/bamboo/paper straws, reusable lunch bags, etc.)
3. Speak to the principal and staff about the campaign
4. Create posters to inform the school campus community and recruit other classes
5. Hold a campaign launch day
6. Complete the [Plastic Free Action Plan](#).
7. Upload the completed Plastic-Free Action Plan to your school's Google folder.

**5. Public Service Announcement (PSA) about an environmental issue of concern** (Recommended for 5th & 6th grades)

*PURPOSE:* Create a short PSA video, audio recording, or poster that informs classmates or the school about an important environmental issue of concern and how to help.

Action Steps:

1. Identify your topic

2. Develop the key messages
3. Research the topic
4. Identify your audience
5. Develop a hook (why should we care?)
6. Create an outline (identify major points you want to cover in the PSA, structure the flow or layout of the video, audio recording, or poster)
7. For the video and audio recording, decide on an appropriate length (aim for 30-60 seconds)
8. Produce the video (cell phone cameras work great!), audio recording, or poster
9. Showcase to the class or school
10. Upload the student PSAs (videos, audio recordings, posters) to your school's Google folder.

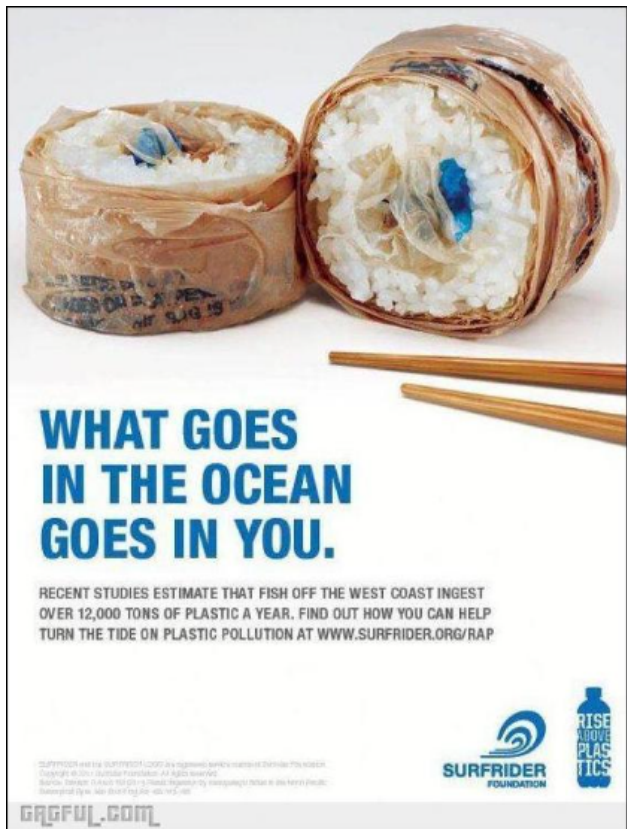
**Sample film PSAs:**

- Break up with plastics: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6butzqRy6dg>
- End Plastic Pollution: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-CAMC8saDc>
- Food Waste: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5Us69fSM9M>
- Time for Nature: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8AammaJqHeE>
- Clean Water: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kj88niHbVE0>

**Sample audio PSAs:**

- [What you can do about climate change at home](#)
- [Ensure the Environment](#)

## Sample poster PSAs:



Source: Surfrider Foundation  
Association to Save the Sea Turtles



Source: Mediterranean

### 6. Option to pitch a project that is not on this list

- Feel free to pitch an alternative Student Action Project to [program@oneillseaodyssey.org](mailto:program@oneillseaodyssey.org)
- In your request, please include the following information:
  - 3-5 sentence description of the project
  - For quantitative projects, provide metrics for how your students will measure impact (be specific).
  - What are the deliverables you plan to share with OSO staff (e.g. impact worksheet, photos, art, etc.)