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„Environmental Education in the EFL-Classroom
With Dr. Seuss's Picture Books"

Verfasserin

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Introduction

We all know it: the climate is changing, natural resources are vanishing, pollution is increasing, atomic energy is still serving as a major energy supplier, deforestation is continuing, meat consumption is exploding, fresh water is being wasted, and massive amounts of food are ending up in rubbish bins. In short, environmental alarm clocks have been ringing for a long time but still nothing seems to change. People in western societies continue to live unsustainable lives. They are manipulated by billboards, TV and internet, to consume, buy and possess as much as possible in order to reach the overall goal: a state of happiness, a paradox *per se*.

Despite the fact that it does not appear that the vast majority of people living in the western world will realize the urgency of the matter any time soon, there are more and more people who try to spread the word by starting initiatives, promoting alternative ways of living, or producing movies and documentaries which focus on environmental problems and possible solutions. Since the mid 1960s, environmentally aware scientists, politicians, and educators have been trying to promote environmental education and raise awareness for environmental concerns by providing information about the main causes for these problems, and encouraging people to start living more sustainable lives. Nevertheless, the knowledge deficit about causes, effects and possible solutions for environmental problems among members of western societies remains a key problem. Inevitably, this leads to the crucial question: how can environmental education become more successful?

First of all, environmental education is not a new invention, it has been around for decades. Further, it is neither an individual subject, nor can it be something that is taught only once and then simply put into action. Successful environmental education has to begin at a very young age and has to continue throughout every world citizens' life. In formal education, every subject should implement aspects of environmental education in order to foster environmental awareness, develop the skills and competencies needed to reject unsustainable practices, and live as sustainable as possible. This also holds true for foreign language learning. The overall aim of EFL-lessons is not only to foster language teaching and learning, but also to encourage cultural understanding and raise interest for global problems and accurate solutions.

In my thesis, I will show that the EFL-classroom offers many opportunities to implement various global and local aspects of environmental education. Further, I will focus on ways to help students develop essential skills and competencies such as critical thinking, appreciation and understanding for cultural differences, autonomous learning, and active construction of useful knowledge. Communicative language competencies in a foreign language help students to be able to read, listen to and interact with people from all over the world, and to expand their horizons across borders. Environmental education is a world wide phenomenon. One which is not only relevant in Austria, but also in all countries around the globe. Every country has different ways to deal or not deal with environmental issues and by sharing and exchanging our knowledge, a change for the better becomes possible.

This thesis will also provide some theoretical and practical insights into how teachers can use Dr. Seuss's picture books to enhance environmental awareness while practicing communicative language competencies in the EFL-classroom. The three major themes which serve as theoretical basis for further practical application in the language classroom and which will be analysed in detail will be: environmental education, ecocriticism and environmental children's literature.

The first chapter will provide essential background information on the historical development of environmental education and its local and global implications in a time of globalisation. It will provide information on what has been done in terms of environmental education so far, and in what ways Austria tries to contribute to the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014 declared by the United Nations.

The second chapter will discuss the connection between environmental literature, language, nature, and culture; as well as ecocritical pedagogy and its connections to ecocriticism, which is a recent type of literary criticism that arose from the examination of the environmental literature that grew out of and gained popularity due to the recent increase in environmental awareness.

The third chapter will provide information about the still rather new genre of environmental children's literature. In this section I will analyse how picture books and their unique features such as multimodality, their simple but sophisticated nature, or being

written for a cross-over audience can be used to enhance environmental awareness and, at the same time, the development of language competencies.

The fourth and the fifth chapter will focus on picture books and how they can be used in the EFL-classroom. Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax* was published in 1971 and is widely regarded as the first environmental picture book. Picture books written by Dr. Seuss not only include poetic language and vivid illustrations, but also address relevant key issues and social problems such as social justice, discrimination, and environmentalism. On this theoretical basis, I will add some practical suggestions for how

Fig. 1: Change the World

picture books can be used in the classroom in order to reach teaching objectives required by the Austrian Curriculum and the CEFR. Since the CEFR, also called GERS in Austria, was implemented in the Austrian Curriculum, the overall teaching goal has been to enhance students' communicative competence. Another crucial goal is to encourage students to develop skills and competencies which enable them to become autonomous learners.

Finally, the last chapter of this thesis will provide an example of how theory can be put into practice. The sample teaching sequence includes a selection of activities which can be used together with Dr. Seuss's picture books to create opportunities for students to experience what it means to be an environmentally aware world citizen. After all, even the Once-ler has understood it; now it is our time to realize that, "UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."

1. Environmental Education

The existence of environmental problems is neither a new, nor an unknown phenomenon. However, the fact that their impact on the environment, nature and, subsequently, our own lives is rapidly growing as the consequence of our own every day actions and decisions is not as widely known as it should be. Over the last seven decades, one can observe a constant increase of environmental problems. These are mainly seen in connection with population growth in various parts of the world, and also in relation to an extremely fast development of new technologies (Schleicher 258). This rapid progress has taken its toll by altering nature's perfect balance and by causing many environmental problems (see table 1).

Major Environmental Problems and Key Issues (Palmer 36-53)	
Population growth, poverty and inequality	global population explosion
Food and agriculture	growing demand for food; limits to increasing supply
Tropical forests	tropical deforestation
Biological diversity	extinction of biological resources (genes, species, populations and ecosystems)
Desertification and draught	human impact on the land is causing serious degradation, and increasing poverty and starvation
Fresh water	growing water demand, declining water quality
Oceans and coasts	degradation of marine resources
Energy	growing energy demand, unsustainable use, pollution of the environment
Atmosphere and climate	air pollution, acid deposition, ozone layer depletion and climatic change
Managing solid wastes and sewage	solid waste volume is exceeding disposal capacity
Hazardous substances (including nuclear waste)	management of unprecedented amounts of hazardous material, including radioactive wastes
Global security	warfare, which is destructive of sustainable development; excessive military spending diverts resources from other security priorities

Fig. 2: Major Environmental Problems and Key Issues

Looking at these environmental problems and related key issues, it becomes obvious that we human beings are part of the problem and we need to be part of the change. Palmer has pointed out that "as the significance of the threats to the Earth's resources, natural systems

and populace has become apparent, so too has the need for wide scale education relating to our responsibilities towards the environment" (35). The basis of such a wide scale education programme, with a focus on environmental concerns, can be seen in the concept of environmental education.

There are three major steps which have to be considered when talking about environmental education. First of all, the basis of every environmental education programme is to create environmental awareness. Second, based on this awareness, it is essential to provide adequate information and opportunities to acquire knowledge, values and skills, that help to change one's attitude towards the natural environment. Third, the final step and goal is to encourage a change of behaviours to develop a more or less sustainable lifestyle. All steps are equally important and are not just relevant for environmental education as an individual subject. They also have to be dealt with in subjects of both, such as the natural sciences and the humanities. In this chapter I will analyze the advantages and disadvantages of all three steps and show that, in order to successfully enhance environmental awareness among students, all three steps have to be considered.

In the past, the main focus of many environmental education programmes has been on providing specific information about environmental concerns and teaching facts about nature and its problems. This is an important part of environmental education which can help to build a basis. Nevertheless, without connection to students' personal experiences and their perception of natural beauty, these programmes remain ineffective. At the end of the day, information transfer-focused environmental education programmes miss their opportunity to change students' attitudes towards nature and the environment and, ultimately, students' behaviour (Schleicher 270). Consequently, isolated knowledge does not do the trick. Andrew Dobson clearly states that "[t]he idea seemed to be that once people knew how bad everything was, they would change their attitudes and behaviour accordingly. It is clear that this strategy has not worked: we continue to be assailed by environmental problems that will not go away" (276).

After all, informed knowledge about relevant environmental concerns in connection with personal experiences with nature still remains an important basis for environmental education. On the basis of this improved knowledge and gained insights, students have to learn that there are things that they can and need to do, in order to help reducing

humanity's impact on earth. To make informed decisions, people do not only need knowledge about environmental concerns, but also skills and competencies, such as critical or creative thinking. Furthermore, students need to learn to evaluate information about the environment provided by representatives of the government, environmental organisations, the economy, or the advertising industry (Dunlop 80). In the EFL-classroom, where teachers do not only focus on the development of language competencies, but also concentrate on global and intercultural learning, the acquisition of environmental, cultural, but above all, critical literacies has to be an integral part of the teaching process. Using this knowledge and connecting it with personal experiences is inevitably the basis for a change of our attitudes towards the things we need (or seem to need), our lifestyles, resource management, global justice and equal rights. This is easier said than done, but changing behaviour before changing the attitude or even without changing the attitudes towards an environmental awareness, does not lead to changing people's behaviour in the long run.

One interesting example regarding changing behaviour and attitude was described by Dobson in his article "Environmental Citizenship: Towards Sustainable Development". He shows that changing people's behaviour through external influence such as monetary punishment or financial benefits does not lead to a long term change. Once, supermarkets charge money for unsustainable shopping bags, people stop taking them, or when cities start to collect a parking fee, people stop driving their cars into cities. At first sight, these sanctions are very efficient, however, as Dobson explains, this does not happen because people are all of a sudden more aware of environmental issues, but aware of the personal effects and disadvantages their behaviour has on their wallet (277-278). The effect of such short term change of behaviour might be similar to the effect a change of attitudes towards environmental concerns has, but the later is much more efficient in helping to establish a sustainable lifestyle. In terms of teaching, it is important to make sure that students do not change their behaviour because of external rewards such as good grades, but because of their personal desire to become environmentally aware world citizens. Again, this is easier said than done. However, in the long run, establishing a sustainable future is definitely worth the effort.

Finally, a change of behaviour can take place if it is based on detailed information and knowledge about environmental problems and their effects on nature and humanity that is coupled with people's awareness for environmental problems. Therefore, young people,

who are tomorrow's grown ups and decision makers, should be encouraged to apply their environmental knowledge in order to become, what Dobson calls "environmental citizens". Environmental citizens are not only interested in their personal advantages. They are also aware of the global impact their local decisions have. Therefore, they do not act solely for their own benefit. They also try to contribute to the common good (280).

Even though it is a difficult task, one in which everybody involved in the formal education system has to think about creative and encouraging ways to implement an up-to-date environmental education in all subjects across the curriculum, the formal education system is still the place to lay the foundation for sustainable lifestyles (Dobson 283-284; Schneider 45; Dunlop 79). This also includes a proper preparation of school teachers in order to introduce environmental education successfully (Schneider 46) and to convey these complex issues in a manner that deals appropriately with all three steps mentioned above. Speaking of good teachers, one can fairly say that only inspired people who are convinced of the things they teach can inspire others. Dunlop believes that "[t]his calls for a massive campaign of public education directed at everyone, but especially at young people in school. Enabling people to become better informed about these issues is an increasingly important aspect of education. As consumers, producers and voters we all make professional and personal decisions about how we, and others use the environment and our own responsibility towards it" (79).

The following sections of this chapter will provide an overview of what environmental education has been, and what it has become on a global scale and in the local context of the Austrian school system. In the context of EFL, global and intercultural learning is not a new concept. Rather, it has the special function of showing how every local decision has a global impact; especially in connection with environmental concerns. Finally, it has to be mentioned that environmental concerns are very complex; which is why they are also very controversial. To show the full picture, it is essential to describe some of the drawbacks and potential pitfalls of environmental education as well. Concluding this introduction to environmental education, it has to be said that despite the fact that environmental education is only a small contribution, it plays an essential role to make life on this planet more sustainable. Not just for us now, but also in the interest of future generations.

1.1. Historical Developments

As already mentioned, environmental education is not a new phenomenon. Hence, it is important to pay attention to what has already been said and done in order to avoid a re-invention of wheels (Palmer 3). Many scholars have already dedicated their work to define environmental education's basic objectives. In doing so, they have come up with definitions and have established a very precise underlying concept. Nevertheless, this concept needs to be redefined regularly in the light of current environmental concerns and recent developments in various fields, such as pedagogy, ecology, biology or ethics.

The combination of environmental concerns and education started to gain popularity during the mid 60s of the past century. However, it has been argued among scholars that environmental education had been in use even before that. In 1968, the Council for Environmental Education (CEE) met for the first time, and was fully established in 1970. It dedicated its work to the development, promotion, and review of environmental education. The UNESCO Conference, which focused on environmental problems, was also held in 1968. One major outcome of the conference was the realization that there was a need to create adequate materials for schools with a special focus on environmental concerns in order to increase global awareness for these issues (Palmer 4-5). Two years later, the first and "classic" definition of environmental education was created at the IUCN[1] meeting in Nevada in 1970. It claims that

> Environmental education is the process of recognising values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and attitudes necessary to understand and appreciate the inter-relatedness among man, his culture, and his biophysical surroundings. Environmental education also entails practice in decision-making and self-formulation of a code of behaviour about issues concerning environmental quality"
>
> (qtd. in Palmer 7).

During the 70s, environmental education developed from being mainly discussed in the UK, to becoming a global concern. This rapidly spreading awareness of environmental concerns was reflected in inter governmental-conferences, by the end of the 70s. Historically significant was the Tbilisi conference, the first inter-governmental conference with a focus on environmental education, held in Tbilisi, Georgia, USSR, in 1977. The outcomes of this conference are still regarded as groundbreaking; especially in terms of major guiding principles of environmental education (Palmer 8). Another development

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[1] International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources found in 1949

worth mentioning is the so-called Brundtland report, which was written ten years after the conference in Tbilisi. This report is considered an attempt to bring environment and development back together by following the "World Conservation Strategy", which puts emphasis on the global aspects of world and nature protection (Palmer 15-16). The Brundtland report is often quoted in terms of its basic definition of sustainable development. It claims that "sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (qtd. in Breiting 21).

The concept of sustainable development as the bringing together of environmental and economical issues, was further discussed in 1992 at the first Earth Summit; which was a United Nations conference on environment and development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Parallel to this governmental meeting, interest groups and NGOs met in the so-called Global Forum. Two major documents were created at the Earth Summit: *The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*, and *Agenda 21* (Palmer 17). Chapter 36 of the latter addresses the idea of education, and promotes the change towards an education for sustainable development; which it considers to be an essential educational field which has to be an integral part of virtually every subject reaching children of all ages (Kahn 7). Since the Earth Summit, one could observe a significant change from environmental education to education for sustainable development (Rauch, Steiner 116).

Another milestone of environmental education was laid in 2005, when the United Nations declared the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014 (DESD), and "thereby challenged every nation to begin transforming its educational policies such that a global framework for ecological and social sustainability can be built in relatively short order" (Kahn 2). Education is considered a vital motor for change. So the major objectives of the DESD are to enable citizens to deal with present and future challenges, help them to acquire various skills regarding communication, conflict management, problem solving or critical and creative thinking. A further aim is to be respectful of the Earth in general, and of life in all its beautiful diversity (UNESCO). All of these objectives can be put into practice in the context of formal education. This is especially so with regard to cross cultural communication in the EFL-classroom. Therefore, environmental education ideally begins at the latest with formal education and does not stop with graduation day, but continues throughout our lives.

1.2. Definition and Principles

Before the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio the educational focus on environmental problems was summarized under the key term environmental education. Since this conference there has been a shift towards education for sustainable development (Rauch, Steiner 116; Stables 41). As a consequence, the concept of environmental education has expanded. Under the new umbrella term "education for sustainable development," it focuses not only on ecological issues such as the exploitation of natural resources or pollution, but also on economical aspects. Further, it includes social, political and ethical topics. (Rauch, Steiner 116). In this part, I will briefly define basic features of both, environmental education and education for sustainable development[2].

The term environmental education was coined in the middle of the last century and its first definition was established at the IUCN meeting in Nevada, in 1970 (Palmer 6). However, in order to better understand the aims that environmental education wants to achieve, one has to look at the basic principles of environmental education, stated in the Tbilisi Report Recommendation 2, in 1978, which are still relevant today. According to this report, environmental education

- ❖ is a **life-long process**;
- ❖ is **inter-disciplinary** and **holistic** in nature and application;
- ❖ is an approach to education **as a whole**, **rather than a subject**;
- ❖ concerns the **inter-relationship** and **interconnectedness** between human and natural systems;
- ❖ views the **environment in its entirety** including social, political, economic, technological, moral, aesthetic and spiritual aspects;
- ❖ recognises that **energy and material resources** both **present and limit possibilities**;
- ❖ encourages **participation in the learning experience**;
- ❖ emphasises **active responsibility**;
- ❖ uses a **broad range of teaching and learning techniques**, with **stress on practical activities** and first hand experience;
- ❖ is **concerned with local to global dimensions**, and past/present/future dimensions;
- ❖ should be enhanced and **supported by the organisation** and structure of the learning situation and institution as a whole;
- ❖ encourages the **development of sensitivity**, **awareness**, **understanding**, **critical thinking** and **problem**-solving skills;
- ❖ encourages the **clarification of values** and the development of **values sensitive to the environment;**
- ❖ is concerned with **building an environmental ethic** (qtd. in Palmer 10-11).

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[2] Education for Sustainable Development will, henceforth, be written ESD.

Almost 35 years later, these principles are still relevant and form basic objectives for incorporating environmental education in formal education. As the second principle clearly shows, environmental education is a broad approach to education rather than an individual subject. This underlines the importance of incorporating environmental concerns in all subjects. Most of the principles printed above in bold letters could also be used to define and describe teaching and learning objectives for EFL-lessons. According to these principles one can define environmental education as "a permanent process in which individuals gain awareness of their environment and acquire the knowledge, values, skills, experiences, and also the determination which will enable them to act - individually and collectively - to solve present and future environmental problems" (Schneider 25).

Based on these principles, three overall goals of environmental education have also been stated in the final report of the Tbilisi Conference. These three goals are: to raise awareness for environmental concerns, to provide opportunities for everybody to acquire knowledge, values, attitudes and skills and, finally, to create new sustainable patterns of behaviour (Palmer 11). These three goals were mentioned above when discussing the three major steps of successful implementation of environmental education at the beginning of this chapter. Once again, in order to reach the overall goal of environmental education "to alter attitudes and values and thereby influence behaviour and action" (Dunlop 81) all three steps have to be taken into account.

The new term "ESD" was introduced in the early 1990s to renew the basic ideas and thoughts environmental education had created during the previous three decades. The *Agenda 21*, a document created during the Earth Summit in 1992, is the first official international document that declares the need for educational programmes to incorporate aspects of sustainable development. Since then the term "ESD" has been widely used to describe educational measures that encourage young people to participate actively the change towards sustainable development (Breiting 26-27). The idea behind sustainable development is to bring together protection of the natural environment and the need for economic growth. Keeping this in mind, on the one hand, each and every human being has to change their lifestyles; and on the other hand, the methods for attaining economic and technological progress need to be changed according to sustainable principles, so that it can continue without destroying the planets basic resources.

To visualize the complex issue of sustainability, the image of an apple tree might help to understand the underlying problem. The unsustainable actions and measures, which are so widely used nowadays, are not taking just the apples from the apple tree. They are taking everything. At the end of the day, there is no tree left. Simply put, sustainable development focuses on using only the apples; thereby ensuring that the tree can produce new apples every year. If we look at the tree as a symbol for our planet, we have to admit that right now humanity is not consuming and using just the fruits. It is consuming the entire planet and this cannot go on forever. In theory, it now seems very easy to explain what sustainable development is about and what it tries to achieve. However, on a practical level it quickly becomes a very complex and controversial issue (Dunlop 92).

One general definition of education for sustainable development by the UNESCO says that education for sustainable development "means including key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning (…). It also requires participatory teaching and learning methods that motivate and empower learners to change their behaviour and take action for sustainable development [and] consequently promotes competencies like critical thinking, imagining future scenarios and making decisions in a collaborative way" (UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable Development*).

Greg Garrard describes two major advantages ESD has over environmental education. First, he claims that ESD has a much more realistic, dynamic and future oriented character. Second, he adds that it puts emphasis on the fact that environmental problems are inevitably connected with economical and social aspects such as global justice, consumerism, and warfare (*Education for Sustainability* 375). In general, the focus of environmental education is on environmental problems and practical ideas to raise awareness for these issues; whereas the focus in ESD is on the connection between environment and economy. This connection between environment and economic development is definitely part of the problem. However, it remains unclear whether continuous growth under the protection of "sustainability" can really help to reduce the impact humanity has on the planet, or whether environmental education ends up becoming a supporting actor of economical interests (Bengtsson 3). Nevertheless, in light of the current debate regarding ways to stop this ecological crisis and the UN Decade of ESD, one can hope that this new direction in terms of environmental education is "the boost that education desperately needs in order to finally begin to adequately deal with the

apocalyptic demands now being wrought upon society by planetary ecological crises" (Kahn 8).

Despite the fact that ESD is gaining popularity, its aim to connect environmental concerns with economical ideas has created a very controversial picture. In my thesis I will use the term environmental education because of its historical roots, and its basic but clear principles and ideas to promote environmental awareness in the classroom. These are aspects which are still highly relevant today, and which should also find their way into language lessons.

1.3. Global & Local Aspects of Environmental Concerns

In a more and more globalized world, environmental concerns cannot be dealt with as isolated issues in each country. Rather, they have to be seen in a global context. When we look at the green maxim "[t]hink globally, act locally" (qtd. in Kerridge 6), we can clearly recognize the need for a global perspective without losing sight of our immediate environment and the problems waiting in front of our own doors.

Furthermore, in a time when multiculturalism and globalisation are a highly relevant part of our everyday lives, especially in Western parts of the world, language competencies play a vital role in gaining insights into other cultures, and understanding problems which people in other parts of the world have to deal with. Thereby, English as a "lingua franca" (ELF) helps to foster international communication and the exchange of ideas and concepts between persons who do not share a common language or culture. Additionally, the ELF concept also means communication between native and non-native speakers (Seidlhofer 211). This concept of intercultural communication is a valuable contribution to spreading the word and increasing a wider understanding of the underlying problems.

The international problems regarding the environment, natural resources, consumerism and economy threaten the health and well-being of present and future generations and, therefore, "justify an urgent need for an informed global citizenship" (Palmer 35). As Annie Leonard pointed out "[e]vidence of the environmental crisis is now so abundant that only those committed to serious denial continue to contest the facts" (xiv). However, even though numerous credible scientists, researchers and scholars have dedicated their work to

research this field and to find possible solutions, there is still an extensive need to raise environmental awareness of the broader society, as well as with politicians and economists.

Many politicians and researchers argue that formal education offers many opportunities across all subjects to raise awareness for these issues. Nevertheless, it has to be emphasized that environmental education is much more an attitude toward life than a subject that can be learned and applied from that point on. This environmental attitude relies on constant re-evaluation and continuous contestation of ecological problems and possible solutions to reduce these problematic issues. It further implies that each and every human being should have access to adequate information to use as the basis for changing his/her attitudes and behaviours toward a more sustainable lifestyle.

The concept of global, environmental citizenship goes back to ancient times, when citizenship was seen as backbone of every society. Being a citizen and, at the same time, being part of a community gave every member of this community rights and responsibilities to contribute to the well being of all members and their surroundings (Hellstern 16). Looking at people's rights and responsibilities, Dobson emphasises the importance to overcome national borders and to see this global connection in the light of global justice and equality. Nowadays, we consume and use resources from all over the world, not just from our own country. This inevitably implies a global responsibility which requires all human beings to evaluate whether they use their fair share, or an unjust amount of the available resources (282). As a matter of fact, humanity is very far from a fair distribution of resources. A very good way to visualize our environmental impact and the current, unjust distribution of natural resources can be done by calculating one's Ecological Footprint.

The Ecological Footprint Calculator is a tool to measure the amount of natural resources and space individual people use and compare it to the amount everybody deserves in terms of a fair distribution of the resources available. In general, it measures how much land is necessary for a person's current use of resources and waste production (Wackernagel, Rees 5). The Ecological Footprint helps people visualise humanity's environmental impact. Therefore, it is especially useful in environmental education lessons that concentrate on understanding humanity's environmental impact. The outcomes help to show students the need for a change in terms of lifestyle, and point out concrete areas of our everyday lives

where one can easily implement changes towards sustainability. Some areas in which everybody can easily live more sustainably are mobility, food, waste, or energy. In the end, the Ecological Footprint's purpose is not primarily to show how bad things are, but to show that it is important to realize many people use an unfair amount of this planet's resources, and that it lies in their own power to change. Finally Wackernagel and Rees came to the conclusion that "[t]he present Ecological Footprint of a typical North American (4-5 ha) represents three times his/her fair share of the Earth's bounty. Indeed, if everyone on Earth lived like the average Canadian or American, we would need at least three such planets to live sustainably" (13).

Once again, this clearly shows the need for environmental education programmes which spread knowledge about environmental problems, show the urgency of the matter, and encourage young people to become actively involved in the change. Ultimately, an environmentally informed society can adequately adjust their actual needs and their behaviour.

1.3.1. Globalisation and Global Learning

In terms of the global impact our everyday lives have, and in times of globalisation the nature of teaching and learning has changed. Regarding this change, the pedagogical concept of global and intercultural learning can be seen as response to the demands of a more and more globalized world. In order to see what globalisation means, we only need to look around us. In every bigger city, people from various parts of the world interact with each other on a daily basis. The media presents us with visual and verbal information from all over the world, and every supermarket has a wide range of products from far away countries for sale. We can buy plastic from China, coffee from Brazil, bananas from Costa Rica, kiwis from New Zealand or oranges from Spain just by walking into the store next door. We listen to music from various parts of the world and watch TV shows produced on other continents. On our holidays, modern and fast forms of transportation offer many opportunities to explore far away places in a relatively short time (Hartmeyer 16). In the end, the planet has not become any smaller, but humanity has found many ways to make it seem like a 'small village'. This fairly recent dynamic can be seen as a result of the technological progress during the last couple of decades which resulted in humans,

consumer goods, money and information now travelling all around the globe faster than ever before (Hellstern 14).

Globalisation itself has taken place for a long time, but the speed at which it has increased its intensity over the past 70 years is new. At first glance, this development seems to have many advantages; such as economic growth, improved living conditions, and better intercultural exchange through modern technologies, higher productivity, and an extensive choice of consumer goods all over the world. But upon looking closer, one realizes that this ties in with many environmental and social problems we currently face. Some of these major problems are the "exploitation of workers in poor countries, the outsourcing of jobs and unemployment in industrialized countries, and that the power of multinational companies destroys traditional structures and values, causing ecological disasters and conflicts" (Hellstern 13).

Necessarily, this has an impact on today's youth and, in this respect, also on education, which has the difficult task to explain and discuss these issues. Major tasks are, on the one hand, to equip today's youth with the knowledge needed to critically examine the vast amount of information available; and, on the other hand, to teach practical skills which can help them to deal with the multitude of local and global influences and problems which make growing up so challenging. In this respect, global learning provides an umbrella term for many approaches which try to conquer issues such as multiculturalism, global justice and inequality or environmental concerns, which are relevant all over the world. Neda Forghani also claims that global learning has to be seen as a collective term for many pedagogical approaches which are strongly connected with the before mentioned process of globalisation. She argues that there is no common definition of global learning, but that the basis for any approach related to global learning is to acknowledge the necessity to encourage students to become global citizens who think and interact globally, and are locally responsible with other people and with the natural environment (1). Another crucial aspect of global learning is to promote "abilities to apprehend the importance of global problems, to acquire competencies for the work on complex questions in dialogue with others" (Hartmeyer 18). Rauch and Steiner compare global learning to environmental education and explain that

> [q]uintessentially, global learning is not about conveying factual knowledge, but
> is a critical approach to concerns, interests and experiences. Global learning per

se cannot serve to create a better world, but encourages self-determination in a global context. Similar to environmental education, global learning presupposes competencies which individuals need to acquire if they want to actively shape the development of world society (121).

Another similar approach to deal with global issues is intercultural learning. In her thesis "Global and Intercultural Learning (GIL) in the EFL-Classroom", Sandra Reisenleutner has argued that, when it comes to English language teaching, there is a need to combine aspects of global and intercultural learning. While global learning, as already mentioned, focuses on fostering an understanding for the interrelationship of local and global issues, intercultural learning strongly encourages learners to evaluate their own cultural attitudes, beliefs, and values before moving on to the global level (45-46). These aspects of GIL constitute the basic context of environmental education in the EFL-classroom. In order to raise awareness for these concerns it is, first and foremost, essential to look at our own local culture and the environmental issues we have to deal with. On this basis, we can look closer how these issues are addressed in other cultures. Finally, this can help us to see in what way many things have to change on a global level, and what contribution each and everybody in his/her own surrounding can make.

1.3.2. Environmental Education and ESD in Austria

Moving from a global to a local perspective, I will now describe the situation in Austria. According to Franz Rauch, the term environmental education (Umwelterziehung) has been in use in Austria since the 1960s (qtd. in Hartmeyer 38). Back then, it predominantly dealt with very practical, local issues such as recycling, thoughtful use of water and energy, or using re-usable alternatives to plastic bags, just to name a few. In 1979 environmental education as a general teaching objective for all subjects was officially implemented in the Austrian curriculum; thereby aiming environmental education at students who are between 10 and 19 years. In practice, teachers alone and in cooperation with external organisations organised various interdisciplinary and action-oriented projects with a special focus on environmental issues (Rauch, Steiner 115-116). In 1994 a circular letter was sent to all teacher-coordinators in Austria restating a claim made in 1985 that "die Erhaltung und der Schutz der natürlichen Umwelt ist, gemessen an den in den letzten Jahrzehnten bedrohlich zunehmenden Umweltbelastungen, eines der wichtigsten gesellschaftlichen Anliegen unserer Zeit" (BMUKK *Rundschreiben* 1). It further says that "Ökologische Einsichten bereits bei jungen Menschen auszuprägen und so zur Entwicklung umweltorientierten

Verhaltens beizutragen, ist als ein Anspruch an Bildung und Erziehung neben dem Elternhaus im besonderen Aufgabe der Schule" (2). So, obviously, Austrian teachers have known for a while the importance of implementing environmental education in their lessons. But, at the end of the day, how successful this is done will always depend on each teacher's knowledge, behaviour and attitudes towards the environment and its preservation.

In order to successfully promote environmental education and ESD, Austria has several programmes and governmentally supported initiatives that promote sustainability and organize many projects that foster the development of environmental awareness. I will introduce two major initiatives, which are governmentally supported, and work with students and teachers to emphasise the role formal education plays in order to create environmentally aware world citizens. The first initiative is called ENSI (Environmental School Initiatives) and the second one is the Climate Alliance.

1.3.2.1. ENSI - Environmental School Initiatives

The idea for an ENSI-project was born in 1984, when at a Minister's Conference in Paris the Austrian Minister Moritz proposed the idea to include environmental education in the educational programme of the OECD. This idea was further developed and partner countries selected, and in 1986 the first conference was held (Posh 2).

Since 1986 ENSI has focused on international research and development with a special concentration on environmental education and school development, as well as ESD. Its major focus is to support schools and teacher training institutions as a means of establishing a learning environment where ecological learning becomes possible. It also supports research in sustainable development and encourages the re-evaluation of environmental conditions from a sustainable development perspective. Furthermore, as an international initiative, one of ENSI's goals is to enhance communication between cities and their political and economic representatives, and educational institutions on both the national and international levels. For ENSI environmental education is an interdisciplinary approach which should support the development of special skills and competencies. Therefore, for ESNI, the focus of environmental education does not rest solely upon preservation of the natural environment. It also takes aspects of the cultural, technological and social environment into account. By doing so it strongly ties in with the basic concept of the UN Decade for Sustainable Development (BMUKK *Über ENSI*).

In cooperation with ENSI, Austria has created several programmes for teachers to become experts in environmental education. In 1995 a group of Austrian teachers working for ENSI was delegated by the Austrian federal minister to create a programme which gives precise advice to successfully incorporate environmental education in schools. One year later ECOLOG (the ecologisation of schools) was created, material developed, ideas collected, and a network was established (Pfaffenwimmer 7). The declared aims of ECOLOG are to encourage ESD in connection with school development in Austrian schools, and to make environmental education a core element of the curriculum. Topics such as water, waste, energy, health, school grounds and school environment, and active participation are used to reach the stated objectives (Forum Umweltbildung).

Another programme initiated by ENSI in cooperation with ENITE (Environmental Education in Teacher Education) is KOM-BINE ("Competences for Education of Sustainable Development"). Located on the grounds of BINE[3], this project established a conceptual basis for teachers and educators. The overall aim of "[t]his KOM-BiNE competence concept can be seen a process-oriented, dynamic, conceptual framework and presents itself as an alternative to indicator-based, quantitative models" (Rauch, Pfaffenwimmer 9).

1.3.2.2. Climate Alliance

The second governmentally supported association which organises education-related projects is the Climate-Alliance. It is an international association, founded in 1990, which tries to protect the world climate by forming partnerships between many European cities and indigenous peoples of the rainforest in the Amazon Region (Rauch, Steiner 122). The basis of this partnership of cities, educational institutions and companies is the commitment to stop the ever increasing CO_2 emissions and the deforestation of the rainforest which promote climate change. The climate alliance organises events and offers further education programmes, as well as information about related issues such as mobility, renewable energy, and fair trade products (Klimabündnis). In terms of education, "entire schools subscribe to the climate alliance based on the principle of voluntary self-

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[3] BINE is the German equivalent for ESD

commitment. The overall aim is to strengthen cooperation between schools and local communities" (Rauch, Steiner 122).

Austria's active participation and creative contribution to both initiatives, the ENSI and the Climate-Alliance, show that the Austrian government has realized the importance and relevance of incorporating environmental education in the Austrian curriculum. Through a strong collaboration between schools, teacher education institutions, and cities' governmental representatives, environmental education fosters both environmental awareness, and the development of skills and competencies. These may enable grown-ups and children alike to deal appropriately with the challenges of globalisation, multiculturalism, or the problems which arise from the environmental crisis. Consequently, incorporating environmental education in the curriculum and making it a relevant issue in all subjects is an important step. The successful realisation of these ideas requires well trained teachers who are aware of environmental concerns. Teachers also need adequate materials which encourage students to develop various skills, such as critical thinking or cultural understanding. Finally, teachers also need to be familiar with approaches which do not moralise, but invite students to come up with their own solution towards becoming environmentally aware world citizens.

One can say that the EFL-classroom is not only a place for language teaching and learning, but it also offers many opportunities for the development of cultural and regional understanding. On that score, EFL-lessons can be used to incorporate and encourage the involvement with environmental concerns, and develop a critical environmental literacy. Even though it is widely agreed that environmental education plays an essential role on both a personal and, as we have just seen, political level, it has not been uncontested. The following chapter will briefly outline some of the problems and challenges environmental education has to face. In this respect, possible ways in which the educational context can help to raise environmental awareness, and promote intercultural and global understanding for these issues will be the central focus of the following discussion.

1.4. Problems and Challenges of Environmental Education and ESD

Environmental education and ESD may sound very easy and simple in theory, but these approaches deal with very complex environmental problems which have not been reduced

over the last couple of years, but instead have become worse. Critical voices might challenge the power of environmental education and ESD.

One of the major problems we face is the criticism that environmental education " is based on a philosophy of economy and society that is not sustainable" (O'Riordan 34). The focus on economic growth remains one of the most controversial issues of ESD. Considering the fact that the economy and society are far from operating in a sustainable manner, environmental education can make a major contribution by raising awareness among young people; thereby encouraging sustainable development. However, this evokes another crucial problem. According to some critics, the concept of sustainability is not clearly defined; in particular, the concept of ESD remains ambiguous. Stables argues that ESD is even more problematic than environmental education "because it is a more sophisticated, and thus potentially ambiguous, compound term, and because it currently enjoys even less popular appeal in schools and colleges" (42). Garrard, who argues for ESD, highlights that environmental education fails to encourage students to enjoy nature and collect positive experiences on which they can ground their determination to protect the environment. He claims that "we seem to be able to inculcate or encourage ecocritical skills to a high degree, and even environmental ethics to some extent, but without overt, sustained reflection on their relationship to students' pre-, extra-, and posteducational lives, such concerns will remain academic in the pejorative sense" (*Education for Sustainability* 373).

One major controversy arises out of the paradox that development and sustainability, at least on the surface, seem to evoke. Bengtsson sees the problem in the fact that economic ideologies seem to find their way into the field of education. In this respect, he outlines four major trends. First, he argues that through programmes such as environmental education and ESD, education itself becomes an instrument for the realisation of further economic development. Second, in terms of profit and progress, he claims that development is becoming the "central credo" of ESD. Third, the environment is only seen in terms of the resources it provides. Dealing with environmental problems is mostly understood as managing the use of natural resources appropriately, and not as changing the original cause of these problems. Finally, the fourth trend shows that environmental education tends to fill the wide gap between solving present problems and, at the same time, trying to ensure sustainable development, which is clearly a problematic approach (3).

All four trends uncover challenging aspects of environmental education and, even more so, of ESD. Thereby underlining once again that environmental education programmes need to be continuously renewed and critically examined regarding their effectiveness. Furthermore, environmental education also still needs to find a widely agreed definition and its proper place in society.

As already mentioned, another problematic element is its moralizing character. This means that environmental education is sometimes criticised for moralizing. Thereby, discouraging young people from becoming environmentally aware or changing their behaviour. Regarding this issue, one major claim has been that "the moralizing approach of EE could not stand up to the overwhelming persuasive force of consumerism outside education" (Garrard *Education for Sustainability* 367). Speaking of the force of consumerism and of economic development and profit, another problematic issue which has arisen within the field of sustainable development during last couple of years, is "greenwashing".

Greenwashing describes a method which, unfortunately, is in use by many companies to make environmental aware consumers believe the products the company sells are produced according to specific guidelines that guarantee the thoughtful use and protection of natural resources. This method is characterized by the use of the colour green in the design of its packaging, or by the use of words and phrases such as 'all natural', 'environmentally friendly' or 'green'. These words suggest environmental awareness, but in the end they are not governed by laws that determine how they are used and, therefore, can be used by every company without fulfilling any prerequisites to protect the environment (Kapalko 317). In times when companies try to gain profit by tricking people who are trying to be environmentally aware citizens to buy certain products, it might be discouraging for some people to pay attention to environmental problems.

Furthermore, this also shows that there is a need for spreading information about how products are produced, what resources have been used, and how far the products have travelled before they ended up in various stores. However, in terms of education, it has been recognized that despite the fact that environmental education has been around for more than 50 years and even though there is a growing awareness of environmental problems, there is still a knowledge deficit among young people (Garrard *Education for Sustainability* 370). This shows that it is essential to continue providing up-to-date

information about environmental issues in formal education. Garrard also highlights the urgency of the matter by claiming that "[g]iven the serious knowledge deficit we identified, it is possible that even an English module should involve students collecting and discussing basic environmental knowledge" (*Education for Sustainability* 375).

This brings us back to the fact that even though there are many critical issues, environmental education will continue to play an essential role in the educational context. Following Garrard's suggestion, this is also a task which has to be tackled in the EFL-classroom, where students should be exposed to material which encourages them to critically engage with environmental concerns, and learn to develop their own appreciation for nature and the environment. In this respect, students "surely need high levels of both cultural and critical environmental literacies" (Stables 43) which can be developed in the EFL-classroom where students are confronted with adequate literature that deals with various environmental issues in various cultural contexts and relates to their own experiences with nature.

I have attempted to provide an overview what has been done and what still needs to be considered when talking about environmental education. It is a complex and controversial issue, but nevertheless has to become essential part of formal education, not as an individual subject, but as part of all subjects. As has been repeatedly mentioned, the major aims of environmental education which have to be kept in mind when exploring ways to enhance environmental awareness consist of the following three steps:

- ❖ raise awareness for environmental concerns,
- ❖ provide adequate information and opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and skills, and
- ❖ encourage the development of a sustainable attitudes and behaviour.

In the context of foreign language learning, literature plays a central role. I will analyse in what way it also makes sense to use literature as a basic material to introduce environmental education in the EFL-classroom. In the following chapter, I will discuss in detail the ways nature and literature are connected, what ecocriticism means, and how certain literature can be considered as valuable contribution to enhance students' understanding for environmental concerns. I will also have a closer look at children's environmental literature, such as picture books dealing with environmental topics, can be used to successfully implement environmental education in an English language lesson.

2. Environment and Literature

Environmental literature plays a vital role when talking about environmental education in the classroom. At first sight the environment and literature, like culture and nature, seem to be opposites. In recent years, however, an entire field of research has dedicated its work to analysing the ways in which the environment is represented in literature, how it influences our understanding of the so-called environmental crisis, and how we can use environmental literature as a source of inspiration to promote what William Rueckert calls being active and responsible "planet stewards" (114).

Several sub branches of ecocriticism have evolved and helped to shape the versatile picture of ecocritical theory, which does not follow one single definition, but is regularly re-defined depending on various linguistic and cultural contexts. The main concerns of ecocriticism are the connection between nature and culture, green cultural studies, as well as the educational purpose represented in ecocritical or environmental pedagogy, and applied ecocriticism. The latter, applied ecocriticism, is a new enterprise dedicated to rather practical issues, and seeks to inspire a sustainable lifestyle in order to protect the environment from the unrestricted exploitation of natural resources.

2.1. Environmental Literature: Nature, Culture and Language

Literature has always played an essential role in language teaching and learning. In the EFL-classroom literature can be considered as a medium to convey certain complex issues, and enhance cultural understanding. When it comes to environmental education, it seems obvious that environmental literature offers a good opportunity to encourage students to critically engage with environmental concerns and to analyse connections between nature, culture and language.

In general, literature itself is an important cultural creation. Literature which deals with various environmental themes such as nature, place or environmental problems, caused by humanity, has frequently been referred to as environmental literature. However, environmental literature itself does not have one common definition which the entire academic community has agreed on. It is much more than can be captured with a single definition. It is a literary genre which puts emphasis on the interaction between human

beings and nature. Its major difference to other genres lies in the much more active and influential role nature plays throughout these narratives (Grewe-Volpp 23). Nature is not passive and oppressed by humanity's rationality any more. Instead, it has its own way of showing its powers and potential threats to humanity.

In order to better understand the connection between and, at the same time, the separation of nature, culture and language, one has to look at these aspects both individually and in connection to each other. The Oxford Online Dictionary defines nature as "the phenomena of the physical world collectively, including plants, animals, the landscape, and other features and products of the earth, as opposed to humans or human creations." Human creations, on the contrary, are cultural. Culture itself is "the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively and the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society," and language is defined as "system of communication used by a particular country or community" (Oxford Dictionaries).

In general, one could argue that nature is everything that has not been created or shaped by human beings. It is everything that our planet is or was before humanity interfered. Culture, in its widest definition, represents everything invented by human beings. These inventions range from technology to art, from traditional rites and behavioural aspects to individual languages. And languages are an essential tool to communicate the difference or the similarities between nature and culture. In this respect, it is sometimes suggested that culture and nature are exact, binary opposites. Laurence Coupe evaluates the dualism between culture and nature from various perspectives and starts his analysis with a definition that claims "[d]ualism sets up a contrast between, for example, higher and lower, or ruler and ruled, according to its own tyrannous and dubious logic" (119). He argues in this section that, even in the course of time, within binary pairs there has always been one part which has been discriminated against the other.

A widely discussed example can be found in gender studies, where the male still rules over the female, reason is valued more highly than emotion, the civilized is preferred to the uncivilized or wild and, finally, culture seems to control nature. As Frederick Turner mentions, this specific distinction between nature and culture, especially as drawn by Lévi-Strauss, cannot stand on its own but has to be seen in the context of a specific society (41). This awareness of cultural and regional differences is one important aspect which has to be

kept in mind when introducing environmental education in the classroom. Even though it seems inevitable that humans tend to categorize into good and bad, the more interesting question would be to find out in what way culture, nature and, further, language intersect. This ties in with Howarth's proposition that "although we cast nature and culture as opposites, in fact they constantly mingle" (69).

On the one hand, a positive example of this constant mingling is reflected in the field of creative arts, such as gardening, music, fine arts, or literature and language. Here the interaction between the two seemingly binary opposites creates something which encourages the onlooker, listener or reader to see a harmonious connection between culture and nature (Turner 48). Literature and language which are used to create a vivid and inspiring image of nature as a cultural creation form another central element of environmental education and also of foreign language teaching. Positive experiences with nature and a joy in its variety and beauty across various cultures and regions help create a desire to protect and preserve it for future generations. On the other hand, there are many examples of how culture has influenced and changed nature in a rather negative way. Cheryll Glotfelty argues that "[t]he answer lies in recognizing that current environmental problems are largely of our own making, are, in other words, a by-product of culture" (xxi). This creates a fundamental basis for ecological criticism which assumes that human culture affects the natural world and is also affected by it. Both, the positive and the negative aspects, cultural creations and problematic repercussions, and their relevance to the field of ecocriticism will be analysed in the next chapter.

2.2. Ecocriticism: Definition, Principles and Functions

Even though nature writing, both as environmental literature and as general aspects of an environmental crisis reflected in works of literature, has been around for a long time, specific literary studies were not been done in this field until the mid-1980s (Glotfelty xvi-xvii). Some scholars were writing in this field, but a common umbrella term remained missing until, in 1979, William Rueckert published his essay "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism". Since then the term ecocriticism has been in use and the concept it expresses has started to evolve. However, like environmental literature, a common definition of ecocriticism has not been defined (Grewe-Volpp 23).

Ecocritical awareness in literary studies in North America began with the foundation of the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment (ASLE) in 1992. ASLE organizes regular conferences and publishes the ISLE, a journal which features articles related to environmental issues, and literary analysis. The main objective of ASLE is "to create a diverse but friendly community of people devoted to exploring and demonstrating the implications of environmental thought in the arts and humanities" (Branch, Slovic xiv-xvii). Since 1992 there has been a growing interest in this field of research, which is clearly shown in the creation of many branches of ASLE in many other parts of the world such as Korea, Canada, India, Japan, Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand, as well as Europe (Garrard *Ecocriticism* 4).

The absence of a common definition has encouraged many scholars to try to find principles and guidelines for this newly identified field of research. One of the first and most quoted definitions of ecocriticism was provided by Cheryll Glotfelty in the introduction to *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. She claims that "ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment," and described ecocriticism as an "earth-centered approach to literary studies" (xviii). Another way of defining ecocriticism is by word analysis, which has been done by William Howarth. According to his word analysis, the term ecocriticism can be divided into two separate words which derive from ancient Greek: *oikos* and *kritos*. *Oikos* means housekeeper of nature, as our wider home, and *kritos* represents a judge. Howarth describes an ecocritic as "a person who judges the merits and faults of writings that depict the effects of culture upon nature (…)" (69).

Both ways of approaching a definition of ecocriticism show that the essential focus of this critical theory lies in the critical analysis of the nature, culture, and language relation dealt with in literary works, as well as the evaluation of how a certain representation of nature in literature has effects on our everyday lives. However, in 2008, the most to the point definition of the work of ecocritical scholars was provided by Greta Gaard, an ecofeminist writer from the US. She claims that ecocriticism follows four fairly simple aims according to which one can analyse environmental literature. First, ecocriticism provides an umbrella term for a community of academic scholars who were analysing, talking about and interpreting environmentally themed texts. Second, ecocritical scholars look specifically at values of nature and environment described in literature. Third, ecocritical analyses

explores in what way nature culture are connected and related. Fourth, the most essential and relevant issue in an age of environmental crisis is to respond to environmental concerns and problems (11-12). These four guidelines for analysing environmental literature create a basic frame for analysing literary texts dealing with environmental concerns. Therefore, using environmental literature in the EFL-classroom does not only promote a cultural understanding of the importance of being an environmentally aware citizen, but also helps students to develop environmental literacy and ecocritical reading skills.

Other ways of putting these theoretical definitions into a practical context have been examined by various scholars and, over the years, several principles and approaches to ecocriticism have evolved. Once again, one of the first approaches to put ecocriticism into a context was stated by Glotfelty. She sees in ecocriticism many parallels to feminism and Marxism, and used Elaine Showalter's three developmental stages of feminism to create an analogy to ecocriticism (xxii). For her, the first stage of ecocriticism is to look closely at the representation of nature in literature, including the way nature and everything that belongs to it is shown or described in a literary text. The second step is to raise consciousness for nature writing and the impact environmental issues represented in literature have on our everyday lives. For Glotfelty, it is clear that "[i]n an increasingly urban society, nature writing plays a vital role in teaching us to value the natural world" (xxii). The third, and final phase, is called theoretical and should encourage the raising of fundamental questions; for instance, the question about the dualism of nature and culture, which has already been discussed (Glotfelty, xxii-xxiii). All three phases together show another possible approach to analyse environmental literature in an ecocritical way.

That ecocriticism can be more than just ecocritical analysis of environmental literature was shown by William Howarth. He extended the field of ecocriticism in order to see this form of literary criticism in a broader context. Therefore, he suggested that when looking at a text from an ecocritical perspective, one should try to use a "set of informed, responsible principles, derived from four disciplines: ecology, ethics, language and criticism" (71).
The first discipline mentioned is ecology. Principles regarding ecology are used to describe the connections between nature and culture. When we look at the often quoted first law of ecology by Barry Commoner, which claims that "everything is connected to everything else" (qtd. in Rueckert 108, Glotfelty xix), we can clearly see the global and

interdisciplinary aspect of this concept, which is an essential part of ecocritical thinking and teaching. It also supports the green injunction to act locally and think globally. Basic ecological thoughts are based on humanity's problem of consumerism and the need for continuous growth which inevitably lead to further destruction of natural resources.

Rueckert started applying ecological concepts to the study of literature and suggested that, even in literary studies, there is a need to be aware of ecological potentials and problems. Additionally, he argued that only a change in intellectual thinking and discourse might lead to a change in human actions (107-108). This contradicts Greta Gaard, who claims that "when assessing ecojustice problems, students seem to rely more on their emotions than on their intellectual knowledge of environmental science" (20).

What leads to a change in humanity's behaviours? Is it more important to possess intellectual knowledge about what actually causes environmental problems, or is it having a lot of positive personal experiences with nature? For a most successful outcome, I would argue it is a mixture of both. On a basis of wonderful, fun filled experiences with nature students might encouraged to preserve nature's beauty more easily than without the experience of seeing joy in nature.

The second discipline which is important for ecocritical analysis is the field of ethics. When ecology meets a social discourse, ethical principles become a necessary part of the discussion. These ethical principles help to raise awareness for problematic issues, assist in mediating historic or social conflicts, and help to evaluate the repercussions nature writing has on a certain reader in a certain context (Howarth 74).

Furthermore, when dealing with literature, one cannot ignore the essential role language itself plays. Language is the backbone and the medium of information transportation in every literary text. However, the way we interpret a written text, or if we are even able to understand and comprehend the inferred meaning at all, depends on several factors, including background knowledge, attitude, education or language proficiency. Scott Slovic, one of the founding members of ASLE, describes language as something we have to examine critically because it can be something like a false friend, saying one thing and sometimes meaning something completely different. He claims that "[t]he relationship between language and the world is regarded as inexact, fundamentally imperfect" and,

therefore, every language has to be examined critically based on its specific cultural background (Yang 69). When considering the global aspect of environmental education, being able to speak foreign languages and to read news papers, journals or literary texts opens up many opportunities to be a more independent, critical and, after all, environmentally aware world citizen. This strongly ties in with the last principle mentioned by Howarth, which deals with the discipline of criticism. One important aspect of criticism in relation to language is to critically judge the quality and integrity of words. Not every word that has been written in the name of environmental awareness really supports the underlying concept. Hence, as a goal for environmental education in the EFL-Classroom, it is not only important to help students understand environmental literature, but also to critically examine words, images, and their context to comprehend and question the underlying message.

The aspect of the diversity of languages and cultural backgrounds leads us to the assumption that there cannot be one single view or approach to an ecocritical analysis. First, every literary text has to be analysed in its own linguistic context with special regard to its local dimension in a globalized world. Second, one has to keep in mind that every ecocritical approach that is used every day by various scholars around the globe, contributes to a broader and richer understanding of what ecocriticism can actually achieve (Slovic 161). For example, Slovic mentions in an interview that "[t]he more [he] travel[s], the more [he] meet[s] scholars in other parts of the world who are using their own particular viewpoints to do the work of ecocriticism (…) the harder it is for [him] to imagine a unified, universal theory of ecocriticism (…)" (Yann 69). This statement clearly shows a very recent understanding of a localized dimension of ecocriticism, which shows that the main aim of this concept is not to find one universal law, but much more to appreciate the various approaches which make it such a rich field of research.

Finally, with regard to these principles taken from the four disciplines ecology, ethics, language, and criticism, and keeping in mind the urgency of being an environmentally aware world citizen, ecocriticism obviously plays a vital role in the landscape of literary analysis in the 21st century. The complex concept of ecocriticism is not merely an umbrella term for critical reading. Rather, it "is primarily a critical and literary tool, a kind of reading designed to expose and facilitate analysis of a text's orientation both to the world it imagines and to the world it [shapes]" (Kern 260). Therefore, ecocriticism has

both a descriptive function, and the power to inspire and change the way cultural progress influences nature in different ways in various parts of the world.

Over the last few decades ecocriticism has gained importance and scholarly attention. Hence, various branches have developed that are strongly connected with the field of ecocriticism but have a focus on very specific aspects of the field. Examples of these branches are green cultural studies with a stronger cultural focus, as opposed to a focus on literature, ecocritical pedagogy with a focus on the aspect of teaching environmental literature, and the very recently created term "applied ecocriticism", introduced by Scott Slovic. All three branches of ecocriticism mentioned above, enhance a better understanding of why and how environmental education in a language classroom can take place.

2.2.1. Green Cultural Studies

Ecocriticism at its early stage had a strong focus on literary studies with a special interest in romantic poetry such as Wordsworth's work and North American Nature Writers, such as Emerson or Thoreau. However, over the last couple of years, the focus has been expanded to include a wider range of writers from all over the world, and grown from a pure literary approach to a more general cultural criticism. The major change has been from an exclusive literary analysis to trying to put a stronger focus on the transformative opportunities of ecocriticism (Garrard *Ecocriticism* 5). This new cultural focus is meant to encourage critics and readers to not only analyse the world we are living in and how the world and nature itself is represented in cultural artefacts, but also to see that in all these cultural creations, nature and culture interact and that human beings are the ones who shape and influence this interaction on a daily basis.

From its beginning it has been argued that ecocriticism had been the literary studies part of the broad field of "green cultural studies". Currently, one can observe that ecocritics do not restrict themselves to pure literary studies any more. They ecocritically analyse other cultural fields, such as art, science, politics or education. As Jhan Hochman suggests, green cultural studies "is the examination of nature through words, image, and model for the purpose of foregrounding potential effects representation might have on cultural attitudes and social practices which, in turn, affect nature itself" (187). The shift takes place from

analysing the way nature is represented in literature or, further, in each individual culture, towards showing how this specific representation affects society and finally, the behaviour of human beings.

Analysing cultural aspects in literature and drawing practical conclusions regarding how we can broaden our horizons and learn from it is integral part of this aspect of ecocriticism. This reflects the idea of EFL-teaching which shows that language lessons may not focus on language learning only, but also on helping students to broaden their cultural horizon through getting to know English speaking countries and their culture, by examining cultural representation in literature (Lehrplan English AHS).

2.2.2. Ecocritical Pedagogy

The second subcategory of ecocriticism is pedagogy, which in relation to ecocriticism is the art of teaching environmental concerns. From the very beginning of ecocriticism, the aspect of environmental or ecocritical pedagogy and the concept of teaching environmental literary studies have been essential parts of ecocritical work. Nevertheless, when looking for information about ecocritical pedagogy, it quickly becomes obvious that there is not a wide range of specific hands-on literature available. Garrard even claims that "ecocritical pedagogy has remained both theoretically underdeveloped and empirically unresearched" (*Problems and Prospects* 233); thereby underlining the fact that even though the importance of being aware of environmental issues in terms of teaching is increasing, not a lot of materials have been developed.

While there is not a lot of specific literature about ecocritical pedagogy available, some of its overall purposes and aspects have been discussed by various authors. For example, when he coined the term ecocriticism in 1979, William Rueckert mentioned that teaching an ecocritical approach to literary works can be intensified when a positive, learner-friendly environment is created in the classroom (111). He puts a strong focus on using the classroom itself as an interactive place for critical exchange and for the development of innovative ideas. For him, a classroom can offer many opportunities to create a fertile environment which gives room to progressive discussions. The first collection of specific articles about ecocritical pedagogy *Teaching environmental literature: materials, methods, resources* by Frederick O. Waage, was published in 1985. The main ideas behind this book

were to present a collection of models and ideas in order to successfully introduce environmental literature in a college classroom, and to combine aspects of humanities with the field of environmental research in order to promote an understanding of environmental literature and writing skills (Carlson 119). In 1996, Glotfelty suggested that students should be encouraged to think seriously about the relationship between human-beings and nature, and about the ethical and aesthetic problems evoked by the repercussions of the environmental crisis. In this respect, it is also important to let students themselves have a closer look at language and how it is used as vehicle to present ideas and to transmit certain values with an ecological focus (xxv).

The term ecopedagogy, however, has already been defined during the Rio Global Forum, held in 1992. There, aspects of environmental education, as well as education for sustainable development, were widely discussed and the term ecopedagogy was coined based on ideas of both (Antunes, Gadotti 136). The major goal of ecopedagogy is to bring together theory and praxis; teachers have to provide informed knowledge about related concerns and show what this means in a practical context. In this matter, Antunes and Gadotti also argue that "the preservation of the environment depends on an ecological conscience and shaping this conscience depends on education" (135). Education here means not only knowing about these issues, but also having the skills and competencies to act according to this knowledge. This is not an easy task, but in a time of environmental crisis this is a major message for teachers of all subjects since "[s]ustainability does not imply only biology, economy, and ecology. Sustainability has to do with the relationship we have with ourselves, with others, and with nature" (Antunes, Gadotti 137), and this is clearly a mission in foreign language teaching as well.

In addition, a very important aspect, discovered in a study by Greg Garrard, shows that it is crucial to offer students the opportunity to make their own experiences not only with literary texts inside the classroom, but also with nature and the environment itself, outside the classroom. These personal experiences help students to see the significance of being an environmentally aware human being. Furthermore, it is enormously important to establish a connection between insights gained in the classroom and students' everyday lives outside the school context: How can students make use of ecocritical skills they have developed over the course of a semester, what does knowledge about environmental ethics mean, and how can all these insights gained help them to become, on the one hand, better educated

individuals and, on the other hand, also responsible residents of this finite planet (Garrard *Education for Sustainability* 373)?

In this respect, as Garrard highlights in his article "Problems and prospects in ecocritical pedagogy", it is important to critically distance oneself from the familiar practices used by almost all literature teachers, and move on to a wider range of student-centred and rather experimental than conservative teaching methods, as well as "service-learning" pedagogies (237). This would help to create a versatile range of opportunities for students to make their own experiences, and to enhance their competences when dealing with environmental aspects of literature and culture by connecting previous environmental experiences with new concepts and ideas about literature and the environment.

Finally, one very recent contribution pro ecopedagogy comes from Richard Kahn, who argues in his critical article "From Education for Sustainable Development to Ecopedagogy: Sustaining Capitalism or Sustaining Life?" that there are three types of ecoliteracy which could help to establish a more "just, democratic and sustainable planetary civilization" (9), and which have to be kept in mind when talking about environmental concerns in the classroom.

The first and most basic ecoliteracy is *environmental literacy*, which is based on creating basic knowledge about nature, and an understanding of how human's actions affect ecological systems in a good or in a bad way. The second one is *cultural ecoliteracy* which underlines that it is also essential to look at different cultures and the ways they interact with each other and also with nature. The third and final is *critical ecoliteracy*, which highlights the importance of not only talking and thinking about environmental issues, but also becoming actively involved in changing peoples way of living unsustainable and even exploiting and nature (Kahn 9-11).

2.2.3. Applied Ecocriticism - Sustainability

Quite recently, one can observe a new development within ecocriticism called applied ecocriticism. The term, coined by one of the founding members of ASLE, Scott Slovic, focuses on how ecocriticism can move from theoretical analysis to action oriented principles of how to apply literary and cultural studies in a practical context. Following

ecopedagogy's basic principle to create a unity between the theory behind environmental concerns and practical application of these theoretical concepts, applied ecocriticism actually underlines the importance of action and praxis.

In the first decade of the 21st century, scholars started to see a connection between theoretical concepts established on the basis of environmental literature and practical issues taken from fields such as politics, justice, health and education. The result has been a slow shift towards applying ecocritical ideas to our daily lives. Literature has always had a variety of functions, such as to challenge critics, entertain readers, inform society, and inspire and help us understand our own lives a little better (Yang 73). Scott Slovic sees applied ecocriticism as a way

> how literature can inspire readers to think about sustainability, about green ways of living: using water and food carefully, thinking about efficient modes of transportation, trying to live in a green home with low energy, using little energy in various other aspects of our daily lives - whether we take the bus or drive our own car or ride a bicycle, these are all issues of sustainability. We can use literature to help us think about reducing our ecological footprint, living more lightly on the planet (Yang 73-74)

In every human being is a desire to enjoy life, understand its meaning better, and maybe, for the highly idealistic, leave it a better place. This is where applied ecocriticism starts to play an essential role.

Even though this field of ecocriticism has just started to evolve and has not been researched fully, it highlights highly relevant aspects of ecocriticism in times of increasing awareness of the environmental problems humanity has caused. Hence, this branch will continue being an important part of both literary studies and showing us a way how to follow a sustainable lifestyle. On that score, it also manifests another goal in the EFL-classroom: the development of the student's personalities, with a special focus on developing a sense for values and a disposition for social responsibility, communication, and cooperation (Lehrplan English AHS).

2.3. Criticism and Future Perspective of Ecocriticism

Even though ecocriticism and its various branches are highly relevant fields of research and education, they have limitations which have to be mentioned for a balanced representation.

One of the major problems with the overall concept of ecocriticism is that it is not primarily directed towards actual social change like other fields, such as feminism or Marxism, which it is compared to. Garrard challenges Glotfelty's approach when he argues that the ecocritical focus has been on an individual and rather ethical level and not on a systemic or political one, as it is the case in feminism or Marxism. As a result, in the long run, ecocriticism will continue to lack the power to actually change anything and it might end up in what Garrard calls "a politics of self-denial rather than liberation". In accordance with Garrard's criticism, Richard Kerridge further claims that "environmentalism has a political weakness in comparison with feminism: it is much harder for environmentalists to make the connection between global threats and individual lives. Green politics cannot easily be, like feminism, a politics of personal liberation and empowerment" (6). This obvious impotence to change the status-quo in terms of relevant environmental issues creates a real challenge for teachers and literary critics, especially in terms of teaching ESD (Garrard *Education for Sustainability* 360).

Furthermore, this strongly ties in with the problem that occurs when ecocritics tend to focus in literary texts exclusively instead of on what is environmentally incorrect. Robert Kern mentions that when literature is not read as literature any more but becomes some sort of a doctrine to search for the environmentally incorrect, it looses connection to its various purposes and it hinders the process of gaining deep insights rather than enhancing it (260).

A third restriction to ecocriticism is that from its beginnings it focused on natural environments in rural parts of Northern America, and omitted all aspects of urbanity found in densely populated areas. Only recently has there been some thought about the concept of urbanity. Michael Bennett raises the question by asking "what happens when ecocriticism crosses the Mississippi or heads for a night on the town?" (296). Urbanity, aspects of culture, society and politics all need to be taken into consideration to analyse the complex interactions between human beings their cultural and technological inventions, and influence, interaction, and constant change in the environment which surrounds them. Therefore, this social aspect of ecocriticism is something which is strongly connected to the previously discussed field of applied ecocriticism, and asks the question of how ecocritical principles can be used to improve our lifestyle towards a more responsible and sustainable way of living.

Finally, this is the direction in which future ecocritical studies seem to head. Environmental literature read as a call for action that moves from analysis towards active engagement with the subject matter. Literary studies aim to move away from a problem-oriented to a solution-focused critical perception of literature. Consequently, the field of education seems to be an apt place to utilize environmental literature to encourage students to focus on possible solutions and to become environmentally aware world citizens. Rueckert asked the question "how do we become responsible planet stewards?" He then suggested that we have to promote an ecological vision, to change established visions of economy, politics, technology, and society in general and, over all, to realize that the problem is not restricted to a nation or a country, but is much more global (114). As mentioned before, this should be the goal of environmental education through environmental literature. In the next section, I will have a closer look at environmental children's picture books, which are, based on their multimodality and appealing appearance, considered a valuable source for the EFL-classroom.

3. Children's Picture Books and Ecocriticism

The formal beginning of ecocriticism is often associated with the founding of ASLE in the USA, in 1992. Back then, ecocritical work mainly dealt with environmental literature written for adults, not for children. Only slowly have ecocritical scholars started to notice environmental children's literature and its potential for ecocritical analysis. In the mid 1990s, a few articles focused on environmental children's literature, and some essays on Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax* (1996) were published. However, it took almost ten years before, in 2004, the actual milestone, *Wild Things: Children's Culture and Ecocriticism*, a collection of articles specifically dealing with environmental concerns found in children's literature, was published by Sid I Dobrin and Kenneth B. Kidd (Gaard 14).

But why did it take so long to realize that children's literature has a lot to offer? When, in fact, it has not gone unnoticed that "[n]onhuman nature has always played a significant role in children's literature, particularly as a device for conveying social and political goals" (Lebduska 170), and that the "connections between the 'child' and 'nature' go back to, and are densely intertwined with, the very origins and developments of the concept of 'children's books'" (Lesnik-Oberstein 209). This clearly shows that children's literature has the potential to support at least three of Greta Gaard's simple objectives of ecocriticism: children's books offer many opportunities to examine the representation of nature, broad environmental values, and the connections between nature and culture. Finally, there are also many ways to encourage the reader/viewer to respond to environmental problems (11-12).

Today's youth will grow to become tomorrow's citizens, but what kind of future is waiting for them is not clear. In any case, it is known that we have to make major changes in terms of our global lifestyles if we want to prevent "an irrevocable social and ecological crisis" which "will grip the world by 2032 (United Nations Environment Programme, 2002) (qtd. in Kahn 6). This is not a local problem of one culture, but an intercultural, cross generational, global concern. Thus, it is clear that environmental issues have been a major concern for teachers of all subjects for a long time. In the context of language teaching, aspects of environmental education have to be seen in the context of global and intercultural learning. In order to recognize global repercussions of our local actions and

lifestyles, it is essential to look beyond our own culture, which requires language competencies.

Modern technologies make it very easy to access a wide range of materials which can be used to incorporate environmental education in the language learning process. One more traditional, but nevertheless, interesting way of approaching this topic is by using environmental picture books. These books have the overall aim to encourage the reader to become aware of environmental problems, and to realize that there are ways to live a more sustainable life. As Larsson claims, environmental picture books have the power to show that it is essential for everybody "not only to become self-disciplined and caring, ethical 'ecological selves', but also to partake in producing local eco-knowledge and monitoring eco-discipline in their families, schools and local communities (199). It is, therefore, important to communicate that not everything presented in a picture book has to be accepted uncritically. Even though it is important to promote a sustainable lifestyle, one has to be careful to avoid moralizing. The environmental crisis is a real problem and everybody has to change his/her lifestyle drastically, but there are negative side effects as well. Problematic issues, for instance, arise when picture books which criticise the eradication of trees are not printed on recycled paper, or the more general problem of "greenwashing", just to name a few.

Nevertheless, picture books, as one type of children's literature, not only tell a story, but are also able to engage the reader on various levels. The narratives of picture books, as Greta Gaard correctly claims, "have the capacity to build cultural literacy as well, encouraging children to make connections across cultures and across differences" (20).

3.1. Picture Books As a Specific Example of Children's Literature

Picture books belong to the genre of children's literature. They have very specific characteristics and are used in many western cultures both to entertain children, to encourage the active reader to think about a certain topic, or to learn about something previously unknown. The readers or viewers of picture books are predominantly children, but this does not mean that these books do not address grown-ups. Rosenberg and Schwenke Wyile even argue that it takes special reading skills to understand the visual and the textual information properly, and that it is paradox that the most inexperienced readers

are presented with these books, while grown ups who have a broad range of reading techniques, strategies and experience ignore them completely (82). In order to successfully decode a picture book, the reader has to engage with the book and infer meaning from pictures as well as from words. This active engagement with a book, as well as the development of certain reading skills in terms of visual and verbal literacy, is a major idea behind picture books. In this respect, one can say that one major purpose of picture books is educational. When it comes to language acquisition or second language learning, picture books are considered very useful material (Nikolajeva and Scott 2).

Picture books work very well, because they are mostly colourful, short and written to the point. These are qualities which help to make them interesting for a broad audience. Furthermore, almost everybody has some experience with picture books, since almost everybody has read or looked at them as a child. Therefore, certainly everybody has experienced the enjoyment of listening, reading and looking at picture books. These basic experiences with picture books, as well as their qualities, help to explain why picture books can be considered useful material in the language classroom. Interesting pictures and witty words about relevant topics can help to increase students' motivation, and encourage them to think about the ideas presented. Further, the pictures provided next to a text can also help language learners to understand the meaning of new words because of their visual context. Overall, this can help students to understand how they can make use of their visual literacy in order to increase verbal literacy.

Of course, not all picture books are the same, and not all can be used in the classroom the same way. Nikolajeva and Scott distinguish various types of picture books according to the way in which images and words interact. Here, they divide picture books into three major types: symmetrical, consonant and complementary. In a symmetrical picture book the narrative of the picture is symmetrically supported by a few words, mirroring what can be observed in the picture. A complementary picture book, however, works with gaps between picture and image. The picture shows something which cannot be found in the text, and the text tells something which cannot be seen in the picture. Finally, in a consonant picture book image and text correspond, support and enhance each other in a harmonious way (12-14). For young and inexperienced learners of a foreign language, symmetrical picture books might work very well and help them to get to know the meaning of words and sentences by looking at the pictures. For more advanced learners consonant

or complementary picture books will offer more challenges, and encourage the readers to see more than the obvious.

3.1.1. Multimodality - Words and Pictures

One of the major characteristics of picture books is multimodality. According to Frank Serafini's definition, multimodality in picture books means that "they draw upon multiple modes of expression - namely written language, visual image and graphic design - to tell a story or offer information" (11). This means that not only verbal literacy is required to understand the full story, but also visual literacy. Furthermore, one has to keep in mind that picture books have two separate ways of communicating. These two levels of communication, verbal and visual, are the backbone of picture books.

In this respect, Nikolajeva and Scott speak of two separate sign systems: the iconic and the conventional. On the one hand, the iconic (also called representational) sign system means that there is no special knowledge required to infer meaning from a picture. The picture clearly represents the object it refers to. The conventional sign system, on the other hand, shows no direct relationship between the picture and what it refers to. An example would be words which refer to an object. In order to decipher it, we need to be both literate and able to speak the language the text is written in. Both sign systems have existed for a long time, and most picture books use both. Pictures, on the iconic level of communication have the representative function of showing, whereas the text, on the conventional level, has the narrative function (1-2). Nodelman endorses this claim by adding that all pictures in picture books also have a narrative function. He claims that all the colours, shapes, and the individual style of pictures contribute to the mood of the story and, hence, have a narrative function. This becomes clear when looking at wordless picture books, where the entire narrative function lies within the pictures (98).

But pictures have several other functions or purposes as well. One important function is to illustrate a story and offer clarification by providing necessary information to complete the meaning of the words. Other functions of interesting pictures is to attract attention, to raise awareness among readers, and to create interest for the topic of the story. This helps to gain the attention of students who might be intimidated by a lot of plain text, especially when it is written in a foreign language. Through pictures one can also encourage students to

develop a certain interest for a text or a certain topic. Pictures are the visual aid, which helps inexperienced listeners and readers to understand what could not have been understood by trying to read the words alone (Nodelman 3-4).

The words of a picture book also need to be well chosen. Normally, the sentences are rather simple, and the language chosen is descriptive to underline what the pictures are showing. It is essential that the text has a certain rhythm and can be read aloud easily. Most picture books consist of a rather small number of words, which sometimes seem like the lyrics to a song or like the lines of a poem. As Nodelman suggests some are "made up of fairly equal segments, all clearly divided from each other in the way that the stanzas of a poem are divided from each other" (249). Another feature, often found in poetry, is rhymes. This also makes a picture book easy to read aloud and interesting to listen to.

After all, words and pictures have their individual way of telling a story, but they are most powerful when they enhance each other and interact with each other, without filling one another's gaps completely. When words and images provide different bits of information, or even contradict each other, the reader is challenged to interpret the story according to his/her beliefs. This opens the door for a variety of readings, interpretations and interesting book discussions, and invites the readers/viewers to use their own imagination. Nikolajeva and Scott call this cooperation of words and images to create a better story "counterpointing". A counterpoint can be found in terms of address, style, genre, point of view or characterization (23-25). An example of counterpoint in terms of characterization would be the verbal account of a beautiful princess next to a picture of a princess who does not possess any of the described features.

Finally, there are also some difficulties which might arise from this multimodality. Problems might occur when someone does not speak the language, as it is the case in an EFL-classroom, or lacks the required (cultural or general) background knowledge, or if the reader is inexperienced. Most picture books are short, but this does not necessarily make them easier to read. Complexity in terms of multimodality or the use of a very sophisticated language may challenge the reader intellectually and cognitively (Evans 4).

3.1.2. The Crossover Genre

Traditionally, picture books were created for children and, hence, regarded as children's genre. Over the last couple of years, the line between adult and children's literature started to blur and a new genre called "crossover" was created. Even though the term "crossover" mostly refers to the fact that grown-ups read children's or young adult's novels, it can also be observed in connection with picture books. According to Beckett, it is not at all a new phenomenon, and it even "pre-dated the landmark Harry Potter series" (1).

In 1997, Judith Rosen was one of the first authors who discussed in her article "Breaking the Age Barrier" the division between adult and children's literature, and highlighted the difficulties in creating such a division. She quoted Regina Hayes, president and publisher of Viking Children's Books, who claims that "[w]e're living in such a visual age, so it's logical that the picture-book format extends to an eight-year-old or a 16-year-old or a college student. I think it's not so much that sophisticated picture books cross over, but that they appeal to many levels" (qtd. in Rosen 28). Many picture books offer interesting visuals and a sophisticated text, which make these books a pleasure to look at and to think about, for children as well as for grown ups. Many aspects and references found in original picture books can be read in many different ways, depending on experience, background knowledge or attitudes toward certain topics. Nikolajeva and Scott even suggest that "[m]any picture books are clearly designed for both small children and sophisticated adults, communicating to the dual audience at a variety of levels" (21).

The reason why picture books cross over and work for a dual audience is because they deal with topics which not only affect children, but also grown ups. At first sight, "cross-generational topics" (Beckett 209) might sometimes appear to deal with so-called adult themes, but, in fact, most of the topics can be of interest to readers of various ages. The main challenge for the author/illustrator is to find simple and understandable words and pictures for these complex issues. Beckett also argues that today the "adult" topics do not exist any more. Picture book authors and illustrators have gotten rid of restrictions regarding moral codes and taboo topics which previously governed picture book (212-213). Contemporary picture books deal with a wide range of controversial topics which provide food for thought, initiate discussions, and invite various interpretations depending on age and background knowledge. When it comes to language teaching, such picture books can

help to encourage students to think critically about certain issues, to interpret pictures and words, and to discuss various readings and own ideas with others. Another essential aspect of reading and working with picture books in the EFL-classroom is that "these multilayered books can [be] read over and over, providing new meaning with each reading" (Beckett 16).

Many of Dr. Seuss's picture books, for instance, tell stories for children, using rhymes, and original and colourful pictures, but under the surface they talk about highly relevant and complex topics such as discrimination, racism or greed (*The Sneetches*, 1961), political issues concerning authority and human rights (*Yertle the Turtle*, 1958), philosophical questions about life (*Oh, the Places You'll Go,* 1990), or environmental concerns (*The Lorax*, 1971 and *Horton Hear's a Who*, 1954). These books are written for children, but with a dual audience in mind. They address readers who critically look at words and pictures and, depending on age, attitude and background knowledge, they can engage further with the matters addressed in each individual picture book.

The major pleasure found in picture books does not depend on age, but lies in the challenge to be able to discover something meaningful in the visual and verbal information provided. This can be little jokes or a wise remark, a symbol or some insight into characters or the setting. Regarding this, the fact that the childlike and the sophisticated interact and mingle makes reading a rewarding adventure for all audiences, the well trained and the young and inexperienced alike (Nodelman 20-21).

Overall, living in a visual age, picture books play an essential role in our society. With original picture books, it does not matter whether the reader is a child, a teenager or a grown up, but what he or she is able to see in the pictures, to read from the text provided, and to learn from it. Therefore, one can say that "[t]he phenomenon of adults reading [picture books] seems to mark the ultimate transgression of the conventional age borders that have been arbitrarily created between children's books and adult books" (Beckett 13).

3.2. Ecocritical Analysis of Picture Books

There are several aspects one has to pay attention to, when ecocritically analysing a picture book. Like in literature written for adults, the reader can analyse how place, nature and the

environment are presented in children's literature. Many recent picture books also talk about the environmental crisis and its effects on the earth. When looking at these picture books from an ecocritical perspective, it is very helpful that complex problems are presented in a way children find them interesting to think about and can understand the problematic issue. As already mentioned, both sign systems, the iconic and the conventional, are used in picture books to create a bigger image of the underlying story. This multimodality provides various ways of reading and interpreting a specific issue, and invites the reader to actively get involved in the reading process.

Many of these picture books dealing with environmental problems caused by humanity, also invite the reader not only to think about these problems, but also to become active "planet stewards" (Rueckert 114) or "environmentally aware world citizens" (Larsson 200). Hence, environmental picture books have a great potential to encourage students to become aware of the problems we have to face and to think about possible ways to deal with these problematic issues.

3.2.1. Features of Environmental Picture Books

Environmental children's literature, and environmental picture books as a subcategory, is a relatively new genre, created to promote environmental education. Some people argue that "the environmental movement in children's literature began in 1971 with Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax*. The book, apparently Seuss's own favourite, has become the canonical text of literary environmentalism and thus also the object of study in educational settings ranging from third-grad classrooms to university programs." (Dobrin, Kidd 11). Many picture books dealing with environmental themes have been published and used to promote ideas of environmental education, ESD and ecopedagogy since 1971.

These environmental picture books provide an environmental message through text and images and usually can be analysed according to three analytical categories: environment, nature, and place (Grewe-Volpp 22). A further characteristic is their dual purpose: on the one hand, environmental picture books have to be entertaining; on the other hand, they also should have educational value. On that score, the overall goal of environmental picture books is enhancing environmental education and helping children, teenagers and grown

ups to further develop their environmental, cultural and critical ecoliteracy, as described by Kahn (9-11).

Since picture books are primarily written for a young audience, they need to be created in a way that they can hold the interest of a young reader and also engage children's shorter attention span for an extended period of time. In an era in which nobody seems to have a lot of time to engage with long and complicated texts about environmental concerns, picture books and children's literature in general offer a great opportunity to present complicated issues in an understandable, engaging, and, most hopefully, activating way. Cherry Lynne, a famous author of environmental children's literature, said in an interview that "[a] lot of parents wouldn't sit down to read a 350-page book like Al Gore's, but they would sit down and read a 32-page children's book" (qtd. in Meyer 278).

This simplification does not mean that environmental picture books lack sincerity. According to Greta Gaard there are three major questions an environmental picture book needs to deal with in order for its readers to develop environmental, cultural, and critical ecoliteracy. The first question deals with the ontological question "Who am I". In what way is humanity and the self identity of human beings described. Is humanity seen in relation, or in opposition to nature and wildlife? The second question moves on to a more active level. "What can I do?" asks whether the narrative actually proposes strategies for the reader to become active in terms of responding to the problems presented. Finally, the last question "What role is nature playing?" addresses nature and asks whether nature is passive and has to be saved, or whether it plays an active role in defending itself against humanity (15-18).

3.2.2. Some Problematic Issues and Challenges

Even though it has been agreed that environmental education should be an integral part of the education of our youth, there has always been some criticism as well. As already mentioned, one general criticism focuses on the phenomenon of "greenwashing". This occurs when companies try to increase their profit by tricking environmentally aware consumers into believing that a certain product has special "green" features (Krieg 58). When spreading the knowledge of the importance of becoming an environmentally aware world citizen, one should not forget to provide accurate information about environmental

issues and problems humanity has to face. Since environmental picture books are not encyclopaedias and their primary audience is children, these books certainly tend to simplify environmental concerns in their effort to make them easier to grasp. This can be an advantage, but there has also been criticism claiming that one overall problem of environmental education is that it "rarely portrays more than one side of an issue" (Meyer 278).

Another problem occurs when the environmental message of a picture book contradicts the context of its production. Environmental picture books that challenge consumerism as one major environmental problem have been criticized for making a huge profit by using huge amounts of water, timber, chlorine and other resources to produce and sell books. Nathalie op de Beeck argues that "most U.S. and European picture books, for instance, are printed in Asia or South Asia, and their production is linked to deforestation in places like Indonesia, where environmental protection standards go un-enforced in the name of (and human need for) economic development" (274). Unfortunately, environmentally friendly production is still avoided widely because of its cost and inconvenience. And when picture books which are not printed on recycled paper argue for recycling and an environmentally friendly everyday behaviour, it obviously is a paradox. Peter Friederici describes the problematic case by explaining what Cherry Lynne's response was when her readers addressed the problematic issue:

> Cherry's readers were confronting her with one of the paradoxes of publishing: though the printed word is one of the best ways to inform and inspire people about environmental concerns, its production is problematic at all stages. Virgin paper pulp requires the felling of forests - sometimes, in practice, ancient forests - or the silviculture of managed tree farms that often support little biodiversity. Bleaching paper white with chlorine introduces dioxins and other organochlorines into the environment, chemicals that damage the neurological and endocrine systems. Many widely used printing inks contain toxic heavy metals. And the impact of children's books, though small, is disproportionate; they make up only about 1 percent of the total U.S. book-printing market, but they use some 20 percent of the high-grade paper consumed in book publishing (Friederici 32).

This clearly shows the problematic and controversial role environmental picture books play. Nevertheless, if they encourage today's youth to think about environmental issues and show them in ways they can change the world for the better, these picture books, at least, fulfil their purpose. If people are not informed about environmental concerns, they might not even recognize when companies are changing towards more sustainable productions.

Unawareness of environmental issues on the side of consumers makes it easy for companies to maintain unsustainable production methods (op de Beeck 279).

Another critical aspect that strongly ties in with the somewhat hypocritical aspect of environmental picture books is the use of moralizing characters who tell the reader what he/she is supposed to do. Ian Marshall says that "we need not be nature's advocate in the classroom". In order to really encourage a change towards environmental awareness, he argues with Scott Slovic's words saying that we need to "expose our students to texts in which the environment occupies a central place, in which the natural world is regarded respectfully" (Marshall 91). On that score, the key is to create opportunities for students to establish a self-identity connected with appreciation and love for nature, based on positive experiences in the natural environment that are not limited to one cultural background, but across various cultures. This suggests that environmental picture books alone cannot do the trick. It is necessary to create opportunities for students to think about positive experiences they had in natural environments. Thus, an intellectual knowledge of environmental concerns can be grounded successfully on the foundation of personal nature appreciation (Gaard 20).

4. Environmental Concerns in Dr. Seuss's Picture Books

Even though environment, place, and nature have been portrayed and talked about in many picture books for a long time, it has been argued that Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax* was the first picture book that specifically dealt with environmental concerns. Therefore, I have chosen this author and his work to use as material for implementing environmental education in the EFL-classroom with the far reaching aim of encouraging students to become environmentally aware world citizens.

The three aims of ecocriticism, which have been defined earlier, are to look at the representation of nature, to analyze its connection with culture, and to encourage readers to respond to environmental problems. When looking at picture books, these three functions of ecocriticism clearly show parallels to the major steps of environmental education. Looking at pictures which depict nature and its beauty can be seen as starting point for raising awareness for the beauty of the natural environment and its preservation. By analyzing nature's connection to our individual culture and, further, in relation to other cultures, we can improve our knowledge about humanity's impact on the earth in both a local context as well as on a global scale. And finally, a change of behaviour can take place by becoming environmentally aware world citizens, who appreciate nature and know about the environmental problems humanity has caused over the last decades.

The Lorax is not the only picture book written by Dr. Seuss which can be looked at from an ecocritical perspective. Throughout his life Dr. Seuss wrote books which deal in one way or another with certain aspects of environmentalism. The most famous is, without any doubt, *The Lorax*, but other books such as *Horton Hears a Who* and *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* can be read and used in order to promote environmental, critical and cultural ecoliteracy.

In order to better understand how and under what circumstances Dr. Seuss's picture books were created, I will briefly outline his life and work, and finally I will focus on the characteristics of his children's books. Dr. Seuss put much thought into the creation of his picture books, and he never wanted to moralise his readers. In an interview in 1985, Dr. Seuss pointed out that he thinks that he "can communicate with kids because [he] [doesn't] try to communicate with kids" (qdt. in Nel 5). The fact that Dr. Seuss always saw his

readers as equals is one reason why his books belong to the previously mentioned cross-over genre. This is another reason why many of his books are very useful in the EFL-classroom. Ways in which Dr. Seuss's picture books can be used in a teaching context will be further described and discussed in chapter five.

4.1. The Life of DR. Theodor SEUSS Geisel

Theodor Seuss Geisel was born on March 2nd, 1904, in Springfield, Massachusetts and is the writer/illustrator of 189 books. While many of these books have been translated into various languages, Dr. Seuss's work remains most successful in the USA (Nel 1-3). After World War II, he addressed many of the major issues of the century, such as pollution, greed, discrimination, consumerism, and many others in his books. Another focus was on promoting the development of children's literacy, which he successfully managed by creating many beginners books for young and inexperienced readers. Philip Nel explains that "[g]iven his success in teaching children to read, it is not surprising that, of all the many different things he did, Theodor Seuss Geisel is best known for his children's books" (3). Some of the other things he did during his life include the creation of political cartoons during World War II, or humorous advertisement cartoons such as the one including the catchy phrase "Quick, Henry, the flit," which was very successful and has been remembered by a wide audience for a long time (Nel 6). Throughout his life, Dr. Seuss used many pseudonyms to sign his work. In 1925, he first adapted his second name "Seuss" as his penname and, two years later, added the "Dr." to "Seuss" (Nel 3). Because of his German heritage he pronounced it the German way, "Seuss" rhyming with "choice". Only later did he start to use the English pronunciation "Seuss" rhyming with "goose" (Morgan, Morgan 88). Another pseudonym used by Ted Geisel early in his career was "T.S. LeSieg" which simply represents his last name spelled backwards and had previously been used by his father (Morgan, Morgan 23).

Dr. Seuss's work was honoured in many ways, but most noteworthy is the winning of a Pulitzer Price in 1984. He earned a special citation "for his contribution over nearly half a century to the education and enjoyment of America's children and their parents" (Morgan, Morgan 255). Additionally, he received an honorary doctorate on the thirtieth anniversary of this graduation from Dartmouth, thereby legally justifying the "Dr." of his pseudonym (Morgan, Morgan 152).

4.2. Seuss's Work and Its Characteristic Features

Many of Dr. Seuss's books have been inspired by his travels around the world. Most widely known are his children's books including many simple books for beginners and sophisticated books for readers of all ages. His work shares some very distinctive features which helped to make his books stand out from the mass of picture books published in the last century. In order to successfully implement Dr. Seuss's picture books in the EFL-classroom it is essential to know a few things about Dr. Seuss's distinctive style, so I will give a brief introduction to the features which can be found in many of his picture books.

Even though he was inspired by the things he saw during his travels, all of his books reflect the cultural background of the USA. Philip Nel clearly points out the American context highlighting that "[t]hey speak American and they speak it with great gusto, often announcing their enthusiasm with a generous helping of exclamation marks" (10). This distinctive cultural aspect of his books makes them a valuable source not only for language learning, but also for cultural studies.

Another feature of his books, especially those published after World War II, is that they focus on problematic issues of the time, and thereby help the readers to see the issues from a critical perspective and to think about possible ways to change their behaviour. In this respect, one can see many similarities to the objectives of environmental education, which should enable students to develop ecocritical literacy. Since they have to think critically and re-think cultural values in order to follow the story, many of his books encourage the reader to become a better person. The overall purpose of many of Dr. Seuss's picture books is well defined by Philip Nel stating that "[i]n granting children the license to think freely, Seuss shows them that the world is what they make it. Children and adults, Seuss suggests, should use this ability think creatively, participating in the world, learning from it, and when necessary doing what they can to make it better" (195).

Furthermore, one can again observe a very unique and distinctive style when looking at the visual and the verbal modalities of his picture books. One of the most distinctive features of them is his way of using rhyme and rhythm. Many of his books are written in a similar verse pattern, using a combination of anapaestic (two unstressed and one stressed syllable) and iambic (one unstressed followed by a stressed syllable) feet. This meter creates a

certain dynamic rhythm which carries the reader from one line to the other and keeps the reader interested in the story (Nel 16-17). In this example taken from *Oh, the Places You'll Go* the reader is directly addressed and encouraged to realize that he/she has both the power and the responsibility to decide where his/her journey should go:

> You have brains in your head.
> You have feet in your shoes.
> You can steer yourself
> any direction you choose.
> You're on your way. And you know what you know.
> And YOU are the guy who'll decide where to go (2).

The rhyming scheme, the stress pattern, and the short and simple structure clearly show a similarity to limericks which are written in rhymes and use anapaestic feet as well (Nel 20). In this respect, it is worth mentioning that Dr. Seuss also made extensive use of invented nonsense words such as the "Jungle of Nool" (*Horton*) or the "Oncel-ler" in his "Lerkim" or the "Truffula Trees" (*The Lorax*). He also used highly creative word creations such as the "Thneed" playing with the word "need", referring to humans' needs, the "Once-ler" as the average American consumer who uses things just once, or the "Whos" of "Who-Ville," representing little creatures who need to be treated respectfully. Overall, Seuss's use of his own limericks and his "interest in humorous nonsense extends well beyond laughter, literacy, and inspiring children's imagination. Seuss makes reading fun, but he also wants to make his readers into better thinkers and even better citizens" (Nel 38).

Dr. Seuss's distinctive style does not only consist of poetic texts, but also of dynamic pictures, which sometimes look like sketches which have not been finished. The impression of being a work-in-progress helps to create the feeling of being in motion (Nel 77). Like rhythm and rhyme found in his texts, the dynamic pictures carry the reader through the story and help to create what Perry Nodelman calls "an accelerating intensity" (255). This intensity can be observed in Dr. Seuss's use of colour. He uses bright colours to show positive scenes and dark colours when something troublesome happens. Specific examples would be the change from the Once-ler's lurkim to the valley full of truffula trees in *The Lorax,* or the positive and negative parts of life's journey shown in *Oh, the Places You'll Go* (Nel 69).

These are only some of the features found in Dr. Seuss's picture books. Even so, they have already shown that his picture books have many qualities that not only help to promote

language acquisition in the EFL-classroom, but also may be used to enhance cultural understanding through critical examination of the individual, underlying message.

In the following part, I will briefly introduce three major picture books by Dr. Seuss which can be used to introduce environmental education and to encourage the development of creative and critical thinking: *Horton Hears a Who* (1954), *The Lorax* (1971) and *Oh, the Places You'll Go* (1990).

4.3. Horton and the Lorax Pleading For Environmental Awareness

Horton the elephant and the Lorax, "a stumpy creature with a walrus mustache" (Morgan, Morgan 210), are two main characters of Dr. Seuss's picture books that he uses in different ways to try to show that it is important to become aware of the preciousness of the environment.

The story about Horton protecting the "Whos" is a sequel to *Horton Hatches the Egg* (1940), and was published by Random House in 1954. Due to the fact that it was one of his earlier books, the colours of *Horton Hears a Who* are restricted to shades of blue and red. The book tells the story of the elephant Horton who tries to protect a complete civilization, living on a small speck of dust, from destruction. With the help of every "Who", small or tall, he is able to show the others that the speck of dust is more than it seems to be. Overall, the story about Horton's mission is not "only a plea for the rights of the 'small,' but also an acknowledgement that even the 'small' have an obligation to contribute to the general welfare" (Jenkins qtd. in Nel 58).

In literature, the phrase "[a] person's a person, no matter how small" is quoted very often and has been interpreted in many ways. Some saw it as a reference to Dr. Seuss's hope for the establishment of democracy in Japan, in the early 1950s, saying that every person's vote is an important contribution to the common good (Boyd 201-202). Others used this phrase as a speech to support antiabortionists, which Dr. Seuss heavily rejected (Morgan, Morgan 277). Thus, there are many ways to read and interpret this picture book. In order to promote environmental education in the EFL-classroom, reading *Horton Hears a Who* from an ecocritical perspective, the following ideas can be used as a starting point for an ecocritical analysis.

- ❖ **The appreciation for natural environments and other cultures**. How do individual characters of the story show their appreciation for nature?
- ❖ **Depiction of nature and natural surroundings**. In what way is nature and the natural surroundings portrayed? How do we perceive nature in this story about Horton?
- ❖ **Protection vs. destruction**. There are many ways in which these two concepts are dealt with throughout the story. This leads to the question what is worth being protected and why do some creatures promote the destruction of the environment?
- ❖ **Rights and Responsibilities.** Every right comes with a responsibility. How do the creatures of the story deal with this and what are the implications for our everyday lives?

Overall, it is essential to highlight that the main environmental message of this picture book is to become aware of the fact that the planet we are living on depends on our protection and preservation. Like the little "Whos" living on their small planet, in the long run, all human beings have to work together in order to stop the growth of environmental problems. But in order to reach that goal, every step counts and it has to start with one person, like Horton, who believes in something, whether or not he can see what he is protecting. Even though we do not see other parts of the world, this does not mean that they do not exist, or that they are less worth protecting. Everybody, tall or small, has the right and the responsibility to protect and to be protected by others.

The Lorax was published in 1971, in a time when environmental education just started to evolve. It is more explicit with its environmental message and, according to Morgan and Morgan, was "ahead of its time and its popularity began to soar only a decade later when the environmental movement exploded" (211). The fact that it is still widely used in various classrooms with children of all ages shows its educational potential which has not remained unnoticed by many educators (Henderson et al. 128)

The story is told in retrospect by the "Once-ler". When a young boy visits him, he recalls the story of the Lorax who tried to protect the trees and animals living in the colourful Truffula forest, while he, the greedy Once-ler, followed his plan to increase his own profit and chopped down all Truffula Trees to make Thneeds. He did so until there was nothing

left except one Truffula seed and the hope that future generations would restore the natural beauty of the forest.

The concentration on only one aspect of the story, namely the idea of saving trees, led to a major criticism of the book by the lumbering industry in the late 1980s. This criticism was rejected by Dr. Seuss himself explaining that "[t]he Lorax doesn't say lumbering is immoral. I live in a house made of wood and write books printed on paper. It's a book about going easy on what we've got. It's antipollution and antigreed" (qtd. in Morgan, Morgan 278; Nel 178).

Even though the environmental message of *The Lorax* seems obvious, critics have criticized the moralizing nature and the ineffectiveness of the Lorax. In his article "The Lorax and the Ecopolice" Ian Marshall has argued that "[a]s a spokesman for nature (…) the Lorax is ineffective" (90). It is true that this story does not offer any clear strategies or solutions to stop the increase of environmental problems related to pollution and greed, but this is not its primary intention. It is much more the task of pedagogical responses to *The Lorax* to try to come up with ideas on how to transform its basic environmental criticism into a practical concept for change.

Again, the openness to various interpretations shows the effectiveness of this picture book for educational purposes. Looking at *The Lorax*, Dr. Seuss manages to keep all of its symbols and characters as abstract as possible. The Once-ler is only shown as a pair of hands, representing perfectly the concept of greed, and the Lorax is a furry manlike creature with a walrus mustachio who does not reduce environmental awareness to any gender or ethnicity (Nel 178). Therefore, an ecocritical analysis of this picture book offers many opportunities to evoke various examinations regarding the development of its characters, the underlying environmental message, and the implications of human actions on the natural environment. The following aspects of ecocritical examination should also serve as a basis for its use in an environmental education lesson in an EFL-context and, based on the lessons learned from Horton, show how *The Lorax* can become an even "more effective spokesman for nature" (Henderson et al. 129).

- ❖ **Appreciation for the natural environment**. In what way is natural beauty represented in the verbal and in the visual story? How can the story be used to encourage the appreciation for biodiversity and the faunal richness.

- ❖ **Ontological questions** such as "who am I" or "who am I becoming" (Henderson et al 129) mark interesting discussion questions based on the story. What role does the little boy who encounters the Once-ler play? How can a change of attitudes towards the natural environment be reached?

- ❖ **Development of factual knowledge**. There are many reasons why we have to face so many environmental problems. In what way can some of the problems presented within the story be related to greed and human needs, consumerism, the exploitation of natural resources, and waste creation? Furthermore, what role does the cultural context play?

- ❖ **Change of behaviour**. Finally, environmental awareness requires a change of behaviour as well. In what way can a fictional story encourage an actual change of behaviour? And what role does the concept of sustainability play? Could it help to build sustainable paths into the future based on the concept that favours protection over destruction?

Looking at its educational potential, one has to say that it definitely is a "powerful story for teaching and learning, as a story that can promote transformational ideas in educational practice" (Henderson et al. 143).

Finally, I will turn now to the third book mentioned as useful for promoting environmental education in the EFL-classroom: *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*, which was published in 1990. It tells the story of a little boy's journey. He visits various places and experiences all the joys and challenges life has to offer. This is Dr. Seuss's final book, reprising many elements he used in previous publications and focusing on one message all of his books share, namely *hope* (Morgan, Morgan 279-280). There is hope that environmental awareness will grow, that humanity's impact on the environment will be reduced, or that global justice will be achieved. All of these examples are strongly connected to the hope that people will find the courage to stand up and actually perpetuate this change. It is not for nothing that for years this book has been used as the perfect graduation gift (Beckett 15), sending off graduates and encouraging them to become better world citizens.

In terms of environmental education, it helps to show students that everyone has the potential to change his/her behaviour not only in order to succeed in his/her own life, but also to leave the world a better place. The book is about both following your own dreams

and believing in yourself, and taking responsibility for your life and the cultural and natural environment you are living in. At the end of the day, in order to succeed, it is up to each and every individual to become active and to overcome hopelessness, most especially the thought that one person is not able to change something. This strongly ties in with the mission Dr. Seuss left his readers with: "The best slogan I can think of to leave with the kids of the U.S.A. would be: "We can … and we've *got* to … do better than this" (Morgan, Morgan 287)."

5. Picture Books in the Austrian EFL-Classroom

As the introduction to Dr. Seuss's picture books has shown, there is more to them than just the aim to entertain the very young. Even though picture books are slowly starting to develop a reputation as crossover genre in schools, picture books are still only rarely used as teaching material. Only recently have some teachers and researchers started to try them out and analyse how to take advantage of the potential picture books have, in order to encourage first and foreign language literacy development, cultural understanding and, most important, show students that reading can be fun.

In this section of my thesis I will focus on the actual use of picture books in the Austrian EFL-classroom. First, I will provide some insights in the Austrian curriculum, its major objectives and the role of the CEFR. On this basis, I will analyse why I think that picture books are an excellent source for the development of language skills and competencies, as well as cultural understanding. In the final part of this section I will connect relevant aspects of teaching concepts and learning theories, and provide some practical suggestions for reading activities.

5.1. The Austrian Curriculum and the CEFR

Even though teaching EFL has undergone many changes towards comparability across Europe during the last couple of years, every country still has its own teaching objectives, lesson plans and curricula. In Austria, educational fields, teaching objectives, and explicit guidelines for what has to be done in EFL-lessons are explicitly stated in the Austrian curriculum (Lehrplan der AHS-Oberstufe). In addition, I will explain the impact the CEFR and the need to make learning outcomes comparable had on the Austrian curriculum, and discuss the extent to which environmental education has become a cross curricula teaching principle.

The Austrian curriculum for foreign language teaching in the upper secondary level is divided into three major parts: the overall teaching assignment (Bildungs und Lehraufgabe), individual educational fields (Bildungsbereiche), and didactical guidelines (Didaktische Grundsätze). The overall teaching assignment concentrates on the development of three essential competencies or skills. First and foremost, students should develop practical skills including reading, writing, listening and speaking. They should also develop a wide range

of social skills, including the intercultural skills through which students should become aware of the diversity of languages and cultures. And finally, to the development of competencies which enable students to become life-long and independent language learners. In addition to focusing on fostering the development of competencies, teachers have to cover various educational fields. The four given below are the most essential for language teaching. Again, they include many aspects which can be featured in lessons about environmental concerns in the EFL-classroom:

❖ **Language and Communication:** Foreign language learning serves as an essential basis for the development of language competencies which should enable students to develop practical skills to communicate and evaluate their own ideas and express their feelings, or values and attitudes.

❖ **Human Beings and Society:** The selection of useful and up-to-date topics and themes should encourage the open-mindedness of students and an understanding for cultural differences. A further goal is to enhance peaceful conflict management and gender equality.

❖ **Nature and Technology:** Foreign language teaching and learning should include texts which require a critical analysis of social, scientific, technological or economical developments.

❖ **Creativity:** Creative activities to enrich the learning experience by implementing creative methods to deal with and reflect on a specific content.

The third major part of the curriculum includes several practical educational guidelines, which I will briefly summarize. The most important guideline is promoting communicative competencies and, since 2004, is considered the central element of foreign language teaching. The following principles are also mentioned, and at the same time are highly relevant when introducing environmental concerns in EFL-lessons. According to the curriculum, teachers are required to

❖ … put an equal focus on all four practical skills

(reading / writing / speaking / listening)

❖ … make sure that the target language is predominantly used in the classroom

❖ … encourage a reflective comparison of languages

❖ … use a variety of methods, interaction formats and learning strategies

❖ … introduce how to access and use dictionaries, authentic materials and other helpful tools

❖ … provide authentic learning experiences

❖ … apply an interdisciplinary approach

❖ … include a variety of topics and themes

❖ … and introduce students to other countries and cultures.

(Lehrplan AHS Oberstufe)

When the Austrian curriculum was renewed and revised in 2004, the curriculum for foreign language teaching underwent major changes, which were finally effectuated in 2006. Prior to these changes the in-put oriented teaching of grammar and lexical knowledge was the major goal. Now, teachers should focus on and enhance individual learners' communicative competencies (Brock 348). The change towards focusing on communicative competencies was strongly influenced by the CEFR, published in 2001. According to its own words, the CEFR should provide "a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe" (1). In this respect, it includes an extensive description of the skills and competencies language learners have to develop in order to use the language proficiently. In order to sufficiently describe and compare the development of students' skills and competencies, proficiency levels have been developed which should help students to measure their progress (*CEFR* 1). The proficiency levels A1 and A2 are used to describe beginners with basic knowledge, B1 and B2 for intermediate learners, and C1 and C2 for students who proficiently use the target language. These abstract proficiency levels are closer defined by so-called descriptors which are written in "can do" statements. These statements should help students to identify with their learning progress and focus rather on things they can do instead of focusing on things they cannot do. Thereby, self-assessment grids should enable and encourage students to become independent and autonomous language learners, not only in the language classroom, but also in their everyday lives. Students who are confronted with environmental concerns in a foreign language classroom should have acquired a proficiency level of B1. According to the CEFR, at the level of B1, students

❖ can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.

❖ can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken;

❖ can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest;

❖ can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans (*CEFR* 24*).*

Summarizing the main aspects of the Austrian curriculum, I would like to focus on what environmental education in the EFL-classroom can be, and how it is anchored in the curriculum. Environmental education as a cross curricula teaching principle has been part of the Austrian curriculum for AHS since 1 September 1979. Furthermore, in the afore mentioned "Rundschreiben" (1994) by the Austrian Government, it is explicitly mentioned that "[z]ur Entwicklung von Umweltbewußtsein kann ferner die Leseerziehung einen bedeutenden Beitrag leisten. Indem Leseerziehung auch eine aktive Kommunikation und eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit der realen Umwelt anstrebt, wird sie Verständnis und eine positive Einstellung für den Schutz der Naturgüter durch den Bildungserwerb aus der Lektüre zu Umweltthemen fördern" (9-10). The presence of environmental concerns in foreign picture books show that other cultures and countries have to face similar problems. Picture books are a very versatile, authentic material written for the youngest members of the target culture and, as such, offer a number of ways to encourage a critical analysis of the underlying social or economical developments and related problems. Furthermore, picture books invite the use of various creative activities, including playful simulation of real-life situations, role-play, creative writing, presentations and projects. Following the didactical guidelines stated in the Austrian curriculum, students will be offered opportunities to develop language competencies in a highly relevant and up-to-date context. Since environmental concerns have an influence on everybody's lives, it is essential that students learn to express their own thoughts and feelings about environmental problems, and present their own solutions to these issues. As stated above, one major goal is to help students to become autonomous, independent language learners who are able to critically apply their knowledge on the mass of information they might encounter throughout their lives. In order to reach these objectives, well selected picture books may offer interesting opportunities to combine language learning and developing environmental awareness. The following chapter will discuss in detail the advantages and challenges of picture books in the EFL-classroom.

5.2. Why Picture Books?

The simple answer to this question is because they have great potential on many levels. Of course, this does not hold true for all picture books on the market. Nonetheless, there are many valuable picture books available that have the potential to fulfil their purpose in language lessons. In the following part I will focus on the potential of picture books, their purpose, and potential problems. This should help to see why it makes sense to use picture books not only for language teaching, but also to become actively involved with various topics.

Nikolajeva and Scott encourage the "consideration of picture books as educational vehicles" (2) in terms of first language acquisition and socialization in general, whereas Appelt specifically underlines the quality of picture books in EFL-lessons by using them as "vehicles for teaching and learning" (68). Beyond doubt, picture books are educational vehicles and help both when read by parents to their children and when used in the classroom to achieve certain objectives. When used in the classroom, the purpose of these picture books ranges from teaching vocabulary and grammar structures which repeatedly appears, to practicing reading skills. Another essential purpose of picture books in the classroom is to get students to talk or write about themes such as environmental education, and thereby develop the competences and skills which they should develop according to the CEFR. A third purpose which justifies the use of picture books lies in the fact that they are authentic text produced for native speakers of the target language. These authentic texts help foreign language learners to explore real language use, gain cultural insights, and develop cultural understanding for the characteristics, differences and similarities between their own and the other culture (Moffitt 15). For example, Demet Seban, who argues that picture books are a great material for teaching peace, claims that "[t]hrough critical examination of these selected books, children may have a chance to challenge widely accepted stereotypes, values, and perspectives, which they may not have been able to think about elsewhere" (116).

These three purposes of using picture books mainly rest upon the fact that picture books have great potential on many levels. When speaking of the potential or effectiveness of picture books in any language classroom, one has to consider the following typical

characteristics: length and simple structure, multimodality and authenticity. In fact, I would argue that the potential of picture books clearly derives from these characteristic features.

Picture books normally consist of a limited number of words (sometimes no words at all) and rather simple sentence structures or grammatical patterns. In many cases they focus more on action and conversation than on description of surroundings or reflection (Moffitt 17). In language lessons, the short and simple structure offers the big advantage of being easy manageable. This may prevent some students from being frustrated or demotivated, which might be more likely to happen if they encounter a 200 page young adult novel without any visual input. Moffitt mentions that "[p]ictures lower the affective filter as they draw the students effortlessly into the story" (18). This refers back to Krashen's Monitor-Model, created in 1982, which has been widely acknowledged as a valuable basis for communicative language teaching. His learning theory consists of five hypotheses which primarily suggest that there is a difference between learning and acquisition. Students may learn the rules, but this knowledge remains useless if they do not fully acquire language competencies and the knowledge how to apply these rules. As can be seen by this, Krashen's focus lies on comprehensible input of the target language, which definitely can be found in picture books. Finally, he argues that when the affective-filter is up, a student is limited in what he/she notices and acquires (Lightbown, Spada 38-40). Therefore, it is essential to provide material which helps to lower the affective filter, in order to encourage language acquisition. Again, this underlines the fact that when one wants to talk or introduce a certain topic or theme the length and accessibility of certain picture books qualifies them as excellent reading material (Appelt 73).

When I talked about the characteristics of picture books I also mentioned multimodality, which refers to the combination of pictures and words in order to create multimodal ways, visual and verbal, to interpret the underlying text. This multimodality is a great advantage when it comes to teaching, because it helps to make abstract topics easier to grasp. The pictures can be used to activate back ground knowledge, or to provide the visual content necessary to help students guess the meaning of words that are unclear. Moffitt points out that "[w]hile textual narratives access the left side of the brain, picture books draw on both sides and thus support increased understanding and retention. Research has shown that most students are visual learners and need visual clues for processing and retaining

information" (Moffitt 17). This shows another potential of picture books: to help to make dry, factual topics become interesting and fun.

Finally, the fact that picture books are not designed for language learners, but consist of authentic language produced to assist the youngest members of a society become socially and intellectually educated, they offer excellent opportunities for foreign language learners to engage with real language in context (Moffitt 15). Speaking of the authenticity of material used in the EFL-classroom, I would like to use Morrow's definition (1977) claiming that "an authentic text is a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of some sort" (qtd. in Gilmore 98). According to this definition of authentic language, picture books clearly can be considered authentic material. In terms of teaching a certain topic or theme, picture books offer nice insights into how native speakers see general problems in the light of their own cultural background. Such a creative presentation of complex issues can activate background knowledge in the students' minds, and raise their interest in and encourage the active engagement with the topic.

Furthermore, since these books are written from the children's perspective and show their point of view, it might be easier for students to identify with the subject matter (Appelt 69). As Moffitt also highlights, there are two different ways foreign language learners perceive the story of a picture book: First, on the one hand, students respond to the story emotionally like children would do, while, on the other hand, they also react rationally as grown-up readers of the narrative. The second educational way of reading a picture book is based on students' critical examination of the story and its underlying problems, and their analysis of the artistic features of the visual elements (Moffitt 18).

Nevertheless, it has to be kept in mind that it is still highly important to use picture books in combination with motivating activities as well as in a legitimate context (Appelt 67). Consequently, one has to be careful to avoid putting an exclusive focus on the analysis of text and picture in order not to ruin the pleasure of reading. Another critical aspect can be the fact that students try to be grown up and might reject children's books as childish. This is a challenge, but well selected picture books in combination with well designed activities can help to avoid such problems. Since we are living in a visual age, many students might have a very well developed visual literacy, which can help them to enhance their verbal

literacy when working with picture books. In addition, Moffitt emphasises a change of function of picture books during the 1970s, arguing that picture books "no longer were (…) supposed to provide a 'Schonraum' in which children were shielded from the harsh realities of life; rather, children's books were to prepare the young to become active participants in an imperfect world working for social change" (16).

5.3. Pedagogical and Didactical Implications

In the preceding chapters, I have presented several aspects ranging from environmental education to ecocriticism, and from environmental children's literature to Dr. Seuss's picture books. All these topics share cultural features and environmental thought and, thereby, create a basis for the combination of foreign language learning and environmental education in the EFL-classroom. In order to reach this overall aim, several pedagogical and didactical considerations have to be taken into account.

To help students to become independent, critical thinkers who do not depend on the teacher but can explore the mass of information available on their own, they need to be equipped with necessary skills and competencies which help them to separate the wheat from the chaff. This clearly shows that environmental education in the EFL-classroom has to be more than the presentation of environmental concerns. In order to acquire the skills mentioned above, students need to have opportunities to practice and actively participate in the language acquisition process. In this respect, I agree with Shelby Barrentine who claims that "children do not learn from demonstration by passively absorbing information. To learn, children must become engaged with the demonstration" (38). Picture books should be used in a way that encourages students to engage with the topic, to figure out the underlying problems, and to relate these problems to their own cultural context. Based on this analysis, it is essential that students have the opportunity to come up with creative ideas and find their own solutions to overcome these problems. In environmental education we want to enable students to become independent, critical, and environmentally aware world citizens. This is a demanding aim and might seem at some points difficult or even impossible to reach. Nevertheless, based on the fact that environmental problems continue to increase and have effect on our lives, it is essential to keep trying. Following George Jacobs' and Kip Cates' optimistic argument, I agree that "as our tiny globe spins round the

sun, we second language teachers can play a role in making it a better place at the same time that we improve our students' language proficiency" (44).

5.3.1. On the Notion of Teaching and Learning

It is well known that what teachers teach is not always what students learn. There is a big difference between the things taught and the aspects learned or acquired. Every student has individual interests and preferred learning styles. Plus, every teacher selects activities, topics, and tasks according to his/her knowledge, interest, and experience. A general problem which still occurs quite often is that "[t]he packed curriculum leaves little time for students to acquire a deep understanding of the subject or to develop life-long skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and communication. However, learning is not committing a set of facts to memory, but the ability to use resources to find, evaluate and apply information" (Lujan, DiCarlo 17). Good teaching requires a broad knowledge of different methods, approaches, activities, and techniques which can motivate students to become actively involved in the learning process. Therefore, it is essential to know about the learning process and related theories, in order to provide an appropriate learning environment which encourages students to learn by actively participating in meaningful tasks and activities. In the following sections I will shed some light on various useful teaching approaches and theories which can help teachers to successfully use picture books in combination with appropriate tasks and activities. I will then move on to learning theories and explain selected examples which promote autonomous learning, and the development of skills and competencies in more detail.

5.3.1.1. Teaching Approaches and Useful Theories

When talking about teaching approaches and methods, Jack Richards and Theodore Rodgers mean "a set of core teaching and learning principles together with a body of classroom practices that are derived from them" (viii). They explain the difference between an approach and a method quite explicitly. On the one hand, approaches are based on a collection of theories and beliefs regarding language itself, language learning, and language teaching. Methods, on the other hand, are based on a specific concept of language teaching, and, therefore, are much more specific in terms of their instructions and their system (Richards, Rodgers 245).

For a successful implementation of the major aspects of environmental education in foreign language teaching and learning, I believe that communicative language teaching (CLT) serves as a good theoretical basis. Additionally, aspects of the related approach task-based language teaching (TBLT) are strongly connected with the CLT approach and will be considered as well. In terms of teaching theory, I will also include some arguments taken from critical pedagogy, which offers a new and innovative approach to language teaching which helps to create independent learners. In the light of critical pedagogy, independent learners are able to critically examine their social context, define underlying problems and come up with possible solutions. Learner autonomy increases when students' critical awareness of their social and political surroundings grows (Benson 22-24).

As already mentioned, in teaching theories there has been a change from passive to active learning, from teacher to student-centred lessons, and from teaching grammatical structures and linguistic features to language learning in order to communicate with people from all around the world. According to the CEFR, the main focus of contemporary language teaching and learning should be to help students develop communicative competencies. The most influential teaching approach for promoting communicative competencies has been CLT (Communicative Language Teaching), which was developed in the 1970s, and was strongly influenced by Dell Hymes influential article "On Communicative Competence". In this article, he argues that language competence depends on both, knowledge and the ability for use. Other authors, such as Henry Widdowson, also realized that students "who have received several years of formal English teaching, frequently remain deficient in the ability to actually use the language, and understand its use, in normal communication, whether in the spoken or the written mode" (15). CLT includes both a focus on speaking and a variety of activities which promote the development of communicative competencies in terms of all four practical skills. Communication does not exclusively mean to talk to another person. It also means reading a book or an article, listening to a conversation on the radio, or writing a letter to a friend. Students will most likely develop communicative competencies and take risks to try out ways to get their message across if they are not afraid of making mistakes. In order to become confident language users, students need to overcome the widely spread fear of making mistakes (Brock 348-349).

Another successful approach to language teaching is Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT). This approach "proposes the notion of 'task' as a central unit of planning and teaching" (Richards, Rodgers 224). At the core of TBLT are many aspects which can be found in CLT as well. This implies that tasks should be meaningful and comparable to a real life situation, process oriented, and involve communication skills necessary to solve realistic problems (Brown 50; Richard, Rodgers 223). Therefore, well chosen communicative tasks or activities are essential when it comes to working with picture books in the EFL-classroom. They help to prepare students for real life situations outside the classroom and foster the development of communicative competencies. However, it is also important that these tasks are well designed to reach a specific, predefined objective. This helps to ensure that students have actually profited from the tasks and acquired new knowledge, or advanced their skills and competencies (Brown 52).

A third, very recent approach to language teaching is critical pedagogy. Brown claims that "the call for subversive teaching is not unlike the challenge to English language teachers today to engage in critical pedagogy. Those of us who teach languages may indeed have a special responsibility to 'subvert' attitudes and beliefs and assumptions that ultimately impede the attainment of such goals as equality, justice, freedom, and opportunity" (513). Education in its traditional sense meant that teachers were the ones who knew everything and thought about things they wanted to teach, whereas students were the ones who passively received the knowledge presented in lessons, which they were never encouraged to question, but learned and repeated. This traditional model of education is not valid any longer for the teachers of today are required to encourage their students to become autonomous and independent learners, who critically reflect and think about their position within the society they live in. In this respect, critical pedagogy should help students to leave their passive role and become actively involved in their own learning process by asking critical questions, developing their own opinion, and finding arguments to support their point of view (Aliakbari, Faraji 78). There has not been a commonly agreed definition of critical pedagogy. Even so, Suresh Canagarajah explains in her 2005 article "Critical Pedagogy in L2 Learning and Teaching" that "[c]ritical students and teachers are prepared to situate learning in the relevant social contexts, unravel the implications of power in pedagogical activity, and commit themselves to transforming the means and ends of learning, in order to construct more egalitarian, equitable, and ethical educational and social environments" (qtd. in Brown 513).

Furthermore, this new approach to language teaching and learning "encourages versions of learner autonomy that are more social and political in character. Autonomy grows as learners become more critically aware of the social context of their learning" (Benson 24). Relevant components of critical pedagogy which should be featured in language teaching are reflected in teaching techniques such as problem-posing, dialogues and discussions about personal socially relevant issues, and taking on positions and creating pro and contra arguments for certain topics (Derince 383). Talking about environmental concerns in the EFL-classroom requires the consideration of these essential components of critical pedagogy. Aliakbari and Faraji also argue that lesson plans which try to encourage critical awareness should include authentic materials which reflect current cultural issues in a real context, and which are not specifically designed for language learners (80). Such material could be newspaper or magazine articles, video clips, objects representative of a certain culture, and picture books. In the language classroom, such appealing and creative materials not only increase motivation or interest for a topic, they also serve as very a good basis for discussion and critical analysis of the represented culture and related issues and problems. They accomplish this because "language is not simply a means of expression or communication; rather it is a practice that constructs, and is constructed by, the ways language learners understand themselves, their social surroundings, their histories, and their possibilities for the future" (Norton, Toohey 1).

5.3.1.2. Learning Theories

On our way to reach the stated teaching objectives, it is important to keep learning theories in mind which promote the development of language proficiency on the one hand, and practical and social skills, on the other hand. In the following section, I will briefly touch upon two theories which offer valuable insights into ways to promote the development of social skills, such as critical and creative thinking or cultural understanding, and also help to increase learning outcomes. Aspects of constructivism and experiential learning offer students opportunities to critically engage with the subject or to argue on the basis of their own experience, not just build upon arguments a teacher has previously introduced. In doing so they actively construct and shape their learning outcomes, and, thereby, become accustomed to being more active, autonomous and independent participants in their own learning process.

The essential aim of the constructivist learning theory is to promote a sustainable, independent learning process, which clearly shows that students do not learn for teachers or for school in general, but to become independent thinkers and critical world citizens. This is based on a couple of features. First and foremost, it is important that learners are *active participants* in their learning process. This is based on the realisation that every human being perceives information differently and, thus, shapes and constructs their very own personal version of knowledge. Furthermore, new information has to be presented in a way that students can *connect new insights they have gained to their own background knowledge*. Based on this connection to something students have already learned, they can *construct their own knowledge.* This creation of new knowledge is a dynamic and active, self regulated process. In this respect, teachers have to keep in mind that there is neither one exclusive, or linear order to learn something. Neither are there basic skills which have to be acquired in the first place. Finally the learning process needs to have clear *learning aims*. This means that students need to know why they are learning something; they need to have the ability to deal with the challenges; and they need to see a personal benefit in learning it (Juen 2; Müller 46).

In students' learning processes, the role of the teacher is more the one of a coach who provides the learning environment, which means that he/she provides authentic materials and offers students various opportunities to choose. Furthermore, it is essential that the learning environment supports the development of learner autonomy and shows reasons and relevance for the construction of certain knowledge. In this respect, one has to keep in mind that information presented is should be beneficial in the outside world as well as in the classroom. Teachers are not there to provide predetermined knowledge, but to provide the scaffolding to support students when needed (Müller 46). This clearly shows that the learning process has to be seen as "reorganization and restructuring of experience rather than the gradual internalization or discovery of predetermined knowledge (…) [and] [c]reativity, interaction and engagement with the target language and negotiation of meaning are all emphasized in such approaches" (Benson 21).

In terms of environmental education in language lessons, critical awareness, learner autonomy, and active involvement in the learning process are principles which have to be considered and kept in mind when planning such lessons. Another aspect, which has only been briefly touched upon is personal experience. Experiential learning is the last learning

theory I will discuss which offers further insights and provides some ideas on how to encourage the development of learner autonomy, interest and motivation for learning in general.

As already mentioned above, Greg Garrard has emphasized that environmental education encourage students to become environmentally aware world citizens best when based on personal experiences (*Education for Sustainability* 373). When speaking of personal experiences and active involvement in the learning process, the key element of successful experiential learning is, of course, experience. It involves a wide range of interactive practices which provide students with many opportunities to learn through active engagement in the learning process. Examples for such interactive activities would be role plays in which students simulate situations, take over certain roles or positions, games or drama activities, visualisations and imaginative activities, discussions, and reflection in cooperative groups, personal journals or portfolios, reflections on current events or current debates, empathy taking activities, and (digital) story telling (Kohonen 23), just to name a few. For Kohonen experiential learning is not only about experience, but also about reflection based on conscious engagement with what has been experienced. He sees it as a circular process: From experience to reflection, from reflection to constructing knowledge, from knowledge to action which leads back to practical experiences (27).

In this respect experiential learning emphasises the significance of experience in combination with reflection in order to promote a successful learning process, and further stresses the need for creative interactive ideas to successfully implement environmental education in language lessons. Picture books, as one possible authentic material, can be used in various ways as starting points for many of the creative and interactive activities mentioned above. Nevertheless, one has to remember that "[s]chool is not just preparation for the life to come; it is also a community in its own right, with a specific culture. Learners practice living in community through the ways in which the teachers structure their learning experiences" (Kohonen 20). Whatever activities, materials or tasks we as teachers bring into the classroom, we have to keep in mind that our choice and our attitude towards this selection, as well as the way in which we introduce topics, tasks or materials, will have a strong influence on the experience students will make.

5.3.2. Reading Activities with Picture Books

Picture books are a versatile and fun educational material, not only with small children, but also with older students in language lessons. Nevertheless, one has to remember that even though picture books seem to speak for themselves, they are reading texts which need to be prepared and presented with adequate reading activities. Challenges with picture books arise when students consider them as childish material, or too easy to be worth paying attention to. But it always depends on the way picture books are presented and what is done with them. If the reading tasks are challenging and interesting, the reading experience can be fun and rewarding. Another problem is that it is difficult to share one picture book with an entire class of 25 or more students. The problem of having only one copy of the book can be solved by using overhead copies of the book pages, or a scanned version in PowerPoint, to make sure all students can see the pictures and the text. Another option is to print out the text and show the pictures of each page after reading the text. As Tricia Hedge points out, teachers can motivate students "by selecting or creating appropriate texts, to design useful reading tasks, to set up effective classroom procedures, to encourage critical reading, and to create a supportive environment for practising reading" (205). By providing these things a teacher can ensure that his students can profit as much as possible from reading. Well chosen texts combined with appropriate activities can help students to achieve the following objectives: Students can…

- ❖ … read texts of a general nature with comprehension
- ❖ … read flexibly according to purpose
- ❖ … learn language and content from reading, and
- ❖ … read with some degree of critical awareness (Williams 19).

When students are presented with a text they bring various forms of background knowledge to it. Tricia Hedge mentions six types of specific knowledge which readers might have which can help them to understand unfamiliar words of a certain text:

- ❖ *syntactic knowledge* about grammatical features of certain words,
- ❖ *morphological knowledge* about word formations or affixation,
- ❖ *general world knowledge*,
- ❖ *sociocultural knowledge*,
- ❖ *topic knowledge,* and
- ❖ *genre knowledge* (189).

In order to successfully make sense of texts and tasks students need to be reminded they have this knowledge and can make use of these various types of background knowledge. Furthermore, there are various forms of reading strategies which successful readers use depending on the purpose of the reading task. The following selection of major reading strategies can help students to successfully manage the reading task. Reading strategies are …

- ❖ … to identify the purpose for reading,
- ❖ … to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words,
- ❖ … to skim the text for main ideas,
- ❖ … to scan the text for specific information,
- ❖ … to analyze vocabulary, and
- ❖ … to distinguish between literal and implied meaning (Brown 366-371).

The reading process itself has to be divided into three phases: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading (Williams 39). At first, it is necessary to spend some time to introduce the text and the topic, and give students some time to get to know the topic a little bit before they start reading. While reading, it is essential that students have a purpose for reading besides that the teacher said so. Once the students have read the story, it is important that they can make something out of the text they have just read. In order to do so, there are many opportunities ranging from vocabulary work to discussing the author's original purpose, from looking at grammatical structures to coming up with creative writing tasks (Brown 375). In the following part, I will provide some concrete examples of pre-, while- and post-reading with picture books.

1. Pre-Reading Activities

These activities are meant to prepare students for the actual reading. Their overall purpose is to activate background knowledge by determining what they already know about the topic. They provide orientation, give reasons for reading, and help students to familiarize themselves with the language used in the text (Hedge 210). For picture books, pre-reading activities can include prediction and guessing based on visuals such as the cover page, or a picture of the main character in a representative situation. Such a picture can be used to invite students to think about their own lives in the context of the society they live in, and help them find examples taken from this personal context. A second possibility lies in

vocabulary work. Essential words needed for comprehension can be presented and, based on them, students can be invited to tell their version of the story.

2. While-Reading Activities

When thinking of reading as an interactive process between the reader and the text, or the reader and the author, while-reading activities are very useful to guide this interaction and keep students actively involved in their reading process (Hedge 210). The overall aims of while-reading activities is to understand the writer's purpose, the text structure, and to clarify the content of the given text (Williams 38). When students have a focus while they read it makes it easier for them to follow the content and stay focused. There are various while-reading activities such as note taking, asking questions, predicting the end of the story, or confirming what has been previously guessed (Hedge 210).

One special, but also controversial form of a while-reading activity is to ask students to read out loud. In order to make this a rewarding experience, it is essential to explain the concept of active listening and then provide students who listen with challenging but appropriate while listening activities. This helps to ensure that the reading process is not a waste of time, but a rewarding experience for both readers and listeners. If, for instance, students read to each other in smaller groups and take turns, the reading experience can be fun and entertaining. Especially if rhymes are involved, as it is the case in Dr. Seuss's picture books, the correct pronunciation of certain words becomes a lot easier. Working in smaller groups also increases the reading and speaking time of individual students.

Further options when reading together in a smaller group are to ask individual students to give a brief summary of what was read in their own words, or to ask questions about the content, characters, or other aspects which appeared in the story.

3. Post-Reading

The final reading phase takes place after the actual reading process and should help students reflect upon the text which has been read, and to relate the content to their own experiences, knowledge or interests (Williams 39). This theoretical aim can be put into practice by several creative post-reading activities which encourage students to come up with their own creative ideas to relate the major message of the story to their own lives, and explore how problems addressed in the story are dealt with in real life.

The most basic, but still effective post-reading activity would be to have the students retell the story to a partner. One fun way to do this in class could be to ask students to write a summary of the first sentence on a piece of paper. Everybody hands the paper to a neighbour who continues the summary by adding a second sentence, and so on. After a couple of switches, everybody gets his/her paper back and has a couple of minutes to edit the summary.

A second post-reading activity would be relating the underlying problem of the story to everyday problems faced by the students and people of our country, and those in other countries. In terms of environmental education, students can be encouraged to gather information about projects such as guerrilla gardening, permaculture, food sovereignty, recycling and dumpster diving, clean clothes, fair trade, and other projects and initiatives which have been created based on critical perception of environmental concerns. Presenting these projects and the underlying thoughts and ideas might be a great follow up activity to reading *The Lorax*. Furthermore, students who have read about the Lorax or Horton could be asked to come up with an idea of what these characters could have done differently to become more efficient spokespersons for nature, and what students themselves would and could do to make this world a better place.

Based on the fourth educational field stated in the Austrian curriculum, language teaching should also make use of creative activities. One such creative post-reading activity for a picture book introduction would be a role play, in which students act out an abbreviated version of the story. To challenge students a little bit, one can ask them to recycle garbage in order to create costumes, scenery, or other necessary equipment. A simpler version, taken from drama, would be 'freeze frame pictures,' in which groups of students pick a scene of the story, and every member of the group plays a character or an object by forming a completely frozen statue. By asking yes/no questions, the other students have to guess what each student represents. Another creative idea is to ask students to create a postcard or a flyer with the most important message of the story. Thereby encouraging students to come up with creative interpretations, and practice summarizing the message of the story in a few powerful words.

Overall, it might also be a good idea for post-reading activities to encourage students to come up with activities that interest them, or were triggered by the reading experience.

This not only gives them the power to participate in their learning process, but also helps to make sure they talk about aspects which relate to their own lives and, thus, are interesting for them.

Concluding, I would like to restate that working with picture books in the EFL-classroom has to be well planned and carefully thought through in order to be a rewarding experience for students and teachers. Even though there are pictures involved, it is still necessary that students are familiar with various reading strategies to guess unknown words and understand both the literal and the implied meaning of the picture book text. In this section I have provided some ideas for pre-, while-, and post-reading activities which showed that reading a picture book means active interaction with the topic and the ideas presented. The following chapter will provide some more detailed insights into how the previously presented theory can be put into practice.

6. A Sample Teaching Sequence with Dr. Seuss's Picture Books

As previous chapters have shown, Dr. Seuss's picture books have many qualities to enrich language lessons. The verbal story, the accompanying pictures, and the underlying message make many of his picture books a pleasure to read, re-read, analyse and discuss. In order to implement environmental education in language lessons, one needs such a positive but critical, and creative but sincere approach. These picture books provide a perfect starting point for critical discussions and creative engagement with environmental issues. However, it is essential to keep in mind that only a wide variety of activities and tasks can help to motivate as many students as possible.

This section provides a selection of activities which should encourage students to critically think about the environment and the way society uses natural resources. Through picture books' fictional description of environmental issues, students will be encouraged to see the real problems behind the story. In addition, these stories might enable students to come up with possible solutions and practical ideas on how to live their own lives in a more sustainable manner. The overall focus of this unit will be on possible solutions and already established sustainable practices, rather than on solely talking about the bad situation of our environment.

In the following sections I will briefly describe the teaching context and outline where this sample lesson should take students and teachers. I will first explain the target group it is meant for and what objectives students should be able to achieve. Then I will explain the lesson plan and exemplify how each activity can be used to achieve the stated learning objectives. Finally, I will include an overview of activities which provide information about the aims and objectives (in "can do"-statements), the skills (reading, listening, writing, speaking), the interaction format (individual, partner, group or class work) and the materials which are required. This helps to see the variety of activities, aims and skills at one glance, and shows how individual segments relate to each other. The final section will address additional ideas and final comments about this teaching sequence.

6.1. Prerequisites and Considerations

A few general thoughts have to be considered before starting a detailed discussion of environmental education in the EFL-classroom.

First, the objective of this sample teaching sequence is twofold: On the one hand, students should definitely practice and further develop practical language skills such as reading, speaking, writing and listening. On the other hand, they should acquire new knowledge about environmental concerns, ecocritically examine the representation of these issues in environmental children's literature, see local and global repercussions, and draw responsible conclusions which are relevant for their own lives outside the classroom. In terms of language teaching, one can concentrate on the acquisition of new vocabulary, the development of presentation and argumentation skills, or the pronunciation of new and/or difficult words. However, since the overall focus is more on the practice of communicative competencies than on grammatical or formal correctness, I would not recommend turning this lesson into a rigid analysis of grammatical or literary features of the primary text. Instead, the lesson should concentrate much more on active engagement with the story and its underlying issues.

Second, one has to keep in mind that every lesson is held in a specific context that is defined by the prior knowledge and current language skills of the learners. In order to be able to successfully combine content and language teaching, students have to be independent language users at a competence level of B1. In the Austrian teaching context, this means that the following teaching sequence could be used with students in the 5th or 6th grade in an upper secondary school (AHS). Adapted versions of this lesson plan could easily work with less advanced students, since Dr. Seuss's picture books are written for inexperienced, young native speakers, and contain simple language and pictures which foster comprehension. To list all possible activities and tasks which could be used with and are inspired by this material would go beyond the scope of the discussion. Thus, this chapter can only provide a small glimpse on what can be done with Dr. Seuss's picture books or environmental education in language lessons.

Third, it is important to consider a couple of core features of the approaches introduced earlier: A teacher can neither force values or attitudes upon students, nor tell them what is

right and wrong. Nonetheless, it definitely is a teacher's job to motivate students to become independent learners who can critically evaluate whatever information they come across, and to enable students to develop essential skills and competencies to accomplish these tasks. In order to reach this goal, teachers have to provide an interesting and appealing learning environment which includes a good mixture of materials, activities, tasks, advice, and support. In this environment students should be able to have positive learning experiences, and decide what to take and what to leave. Certainly they will learn the most through active interaction with a topic which is relevant for their lives outside the classroom and connects to their background knowledge. These features are the backbone of the following lesson plan, which is mainly based on communicative tasks, corresponding with the Austrian curriculum and the CEFR.

6.2. Lesson Plan: Environmental Education with Horton and the Lorax

This sample lesson plan should provide a selection of activities which promote ecocritical, creative and communicative engagement with Dr. Seuss's picture books and, at the same time, with environmental concerns. In order to structure my selection of activities, I have divided the lesson plan into four major sections. Each section focuses on one of the four essential aspects of environmental education which have been discussed in detail in previous chapters: The activation of background knowledge, the raising of environmental awareness, the development of specific ecocritical skills and competencies, and the actual change of behaviour. In addition, each section includes from two to four activities which should encourage students to become actively involved with the subject in a creative, interactive and fun way. If students experience that learning about environmental protection can be fun and does not have to be full of plain theory, sacrifice and factual details, they might develop an understanding for these concerns, see the relevance of environmental problems in their own local community on a global scale, and be encouraged to become environmentally aware world citizens. Despite the fact that this is just a small selection of activities, it should provide one possible creative, fun and interactive approach to introduce these issues in the EFL-classroom.

6.2.1. How to Put Theory Into Practice

Educational theory always requires practical suggestions for successful implementation in classrooms, and at the same time, practical teaching should always be based on well

defined theory. One needs the other. Keeping this in mind, I will briefly describe the four sections of the sample lesson plan and explain how it can be used in EFL-lessons. At the beginning of each section, one can find a very brief overview of activities involved, skills addressed, aims intended, and materials used. The overall aim of the description of each section is to point out connections to theory, provide basic suggestions and general considerations when using these tasks with students in the classroom, and give some ideas of how to modify them when necessary. Nevertheless, when using the lesson plan, one has to adapt it according to the specific individual teaching context. The present lesson plan only includes suggestions which are open to further development and alteration, since every teacher knows best what his/her students are able to do or not do, what they like or dislike, and how he/she can motivate them.

1. Introduction: The activation of background knowledge

Activities	• **Ecological Footprint Discussion** • **Ecological Footprint Calculation**
Skills	• Speaking • Reading
Aims	• To activate background knowledge, • To connect it with new information, and • To arouse students' interest
Material	• Handout "Our Ecological Footprint" • PP Presentation "Our Ecological Footprint"

Fig. 3: Overview - Activation of Background Knowledge

According to constructivists learning theories, successful construction of knowledge can only take place when it connects to students' background knowledge. Therefore, this first section aims to determine what students know about their own basic human needs, the natural resources available, and society's impact on the environment.

We all leave footprints wherever we go. Some people leave smaller footprints, others bigger ones, but we all leave them. The same holds true for our entire lives: we live on this planet, we build things, we buy things, we create things and, in the end, by doing so, we leave many footprints on the planet. In this respect, the ecological footprint is a very useful tool, because it can help students to visualize how much earth space their lifestyle requires, compared to the lifestyles of people in other parts of the world. In order to introduce this complex and abstract concept of the ecological footprint one needs the assistance of visual images. The PowerPoint (Appendix 3) helps to guide students through the initial

discussion about environmental concerns and addresses the most relevant questions. At first one should encourage students to think about their basic human needs. What do they need in order to survive, and what are important things in their own lives. The second question should address the fact that, in order to have those things and to live the way we do, we need to use natural resources. They might agree that in a fair and just society everybody should be allowed to use the same amount of the resources available. In real life, we know, this is not the case. The metaphor of the apple tree, explained earlier in this thesis, helps students to see that, currently, we are not only consuming the apples but the entire tree, which, inevitably, has to lead to environmental problems. In order to make this abstract discussion more concrete, students are encouraged to calculate their own ecological footprint to see how much earth space their lifestyles require. Everybody receives two worksheets (Appendix 1) and, together with a partner, they discuss the four tasks, answer the questions, and calculate their own ecological footprint. To calculate their footprint students should not show each other their different parts, but ask each other questions and fill in their own correct answers in their calculation box. Before students start to work, it is important to clarify unknown vocabulary and explain difficult terms. In the end, students should compare their results with other students and talk about the individual outcomes. The last task asks students to guess people's average ecological footprints in various countries. This task nicely illustrates which nations use most of the natural resources, and which countries do not use their fair share. By comparing these results with the outcomes of their own calculations, students might realise that they also use more earth space than they would be allowed to in a fair and just world.

2. Raising environmental awareness: Reading Dr. Seuss's picture books

Activities	**Story-Time** **Group Discussion** **Open Stage**
Skills	- Reading - Listening - Speaking
Aims	- to practice reading out loud - to listen actively and - to be able to talk about the story - to express feelings about the story
Material	Picture Books and Story Text Handouts: *Horton Hears A Who!* and *The Lorax*

Fig. 4: Overview - Raising Environmental Awareness

After the introduction of environmental concerns and its global impact by calculating one's ecological footprint, students' awareness for environmental problems has to be raised. Even though there are many ways to do so, Dr. Seuss's picture books offer a great opportunity to see how these issues are represented in a fictional, illustrated story. Since environmental education suggests a thoughtful use of resources, it is not necessary that every student has his/her own copy of the picture book. Nevertheless, picture books depend on the relationship between pictures and text, so it is essential that students can see the pictures. In order to do so, I would suggest either presenting the books as a scanned version in a PowerPoint presentation, or make the reading experience an interactive experience in a smaller group of students. This so-called story-time activity requires that the class is divided into two groups. Each group receives one copy of a Dr. Seuss picture book and forms a reading circle. One student after the other gets the chance to read a small part of the book, and to show the pictures to the other students. This activity offers students not only the opportunity to practice reading out loud, but also to listen to their fellow students. The listeners are asked to follow the story and, at the same time, are encouraged to think about how the natural environment is represented in the fictional story. In smaller groups of three or four people who all read and listened to the same story, students discuss the message of the picture book and summarize the most important events of the story. The task is to create a short creative presentation of the picture book. The presentation should not be longer than ten minutes and has to include information about the representation of nature in the book, the story's main characters and some of their characteristics, and also a favourite scene which they act out or read out loud. The aim of these presentations is to give the students who have not heard the story an idea what it is about.

After every group has prepared their presentation, it is time to share their outcomes with their fellow students. An open stage is a space where people can show their special skills - be it acting, singing or reading out loud - and to practice performing or speaking in front of a nice and friendly audience. This is a very useful communicative skill which needs a safe space and friendly atmosphere to be practiced. After the running order is chosen, every group gets a chance to present their picture book "on stage". Students who have worked with Horton receive the story-text handout about the Lorax, and those who have read the story about the Lorax receive the text about Horton (Appendix 4 and 5). After every group has had a chance to present their outcomes, it is important to leave room for questions and discussion about each picture book. An additional idea would be to watch a short Youtube

video clip about the Lorax or Horton to see how these books have been adapted. In the end, the main environmental concerns of both stories should be summarized and written on the black board for all to see. This serves as a basis for deeper ecocritical engagement with the two picture books.

3. Interaction with Dr. Seuss's stories: Development of ecocritical skills and competencies

Activities	• **Worksheet** • **Role-Play** • **Creative Task**
Skills	• Reading • Writing • Speaking (conversation)
Aims	• To answer content related questions about the story • To relate content of story to real problems • To argue for and against certain positions presented in the story • To come up with your personal, environmental message
Material	• Worksheets "Lorax and Horton protect the environment" • Pictures of main characters • Plain Postcards

Fig. 5: Overview - Development of Ecocritical Skills and Competencies

The third section contains activities and tasks which aim at a deeper interaction with the two previously read and discussed picture books, in order to develop ecocritical skills such as critical and creative thinking or cultural understanding. The first task should help students to focus on specific aspects of the story, understand their underlying messages better, connect the fictional story and real problems of their own and other cultures, and establish a knowledge about local and global environmental problems. The other tasks are mainly based on the idea of experiential learning, which suggests that students should have the opportunity to apply their knowledge actively and have educational experiences which, become the foundation for further learning experiences.

The worksheet "Lorax and Horton protect the environment" (Appendix 6) can be filled out individually, but it might be a good idea to ask students who read the story about Horton to work together with students who have read the story of the Lorax. Each student is the expert for one story and can contribute his/her expert knowledge to their discussion. The worksheet asks students to think about the stories, answer content related questions, relate certain fictional aspects of the story to real problems, and think about how these problems are dealt with in their own local community. The knowledge they have actively constructed

through reading, presenting, discussing, and analysing the story serves as basis for interactive and creative follow up tasks. There are many options, from which I have selected two interactive tasks which enhance practicing creative, critical and communicative skills. The first task includes a role play in which some students pretend to be the Lorax discussing environmental concerns with other students who pretend to be the Once-ler. Every student has to find arguments for and against each position as part of being able to discuss environmental concerns from different viewpoints. The Once-ler has different needs and desires than the Lorax, and the Lorax wants other things to be done and not done than the Once-ler. In addition, a second discussion role-play can be created between Horton, who speaks for the Whos, and the Kangaroos, who are supported by the Wickersham brothers. Different students argue from different viewpoints and try to find some common ground. This prepares the students for real discussions in the outside world, where some people strongly argue for environment protection and others argue for economic gains or personal benefit.

If students are self conscious about discussing in front of others, it might be a good idea to practice discussions as an so-called "Zwiebel" or "Kugellager" method (Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung). Like the skins of onions there are two circles, one in the middle and one outside. Onc-lers sit in the middle, Loraxes sit outside. Every Lorax faces one Once-ler. Like in speed dating, every pair has 3 minutes to discuss environmental problems, and their personal needs and desires. After three minutes, the Once-lers in the middle move one chair to the left and the new pairs continue their discussion. This can be repeated a couple of times until they are ready to perform a public discussion while seated at a round table in front of the others. When discussing it is important to remind students that they should listen to their discussion partners and be as polite as possible. They are not forced to produce completely correct English, but they need to make sure that their partners understand what they want to say.

The second task can be done individually or with a partner, and it can be either used as an in-class task or assigned as homework. Students have to think back to what they have heard about environmental concerns so far and decide on one powerful image or picture from the book or a completely new one. In addition, they can think about a catchy phrase, a short message, or a piece of advice which could go along with the picture and which they would like to remember.

Once they have collected some ideas, everybody gets a plain postcard (Appendix 7) and can design the front page. When all students have finished their postcards, the teacher collects them and tapes them on the wall. To conclude this section, all students have the chance to walk around and look at the postcards. As an additional activity, students could select the most appealing postcard. To do so, every student gets three points, which he/she can stick next to the postcards he/she likes most. After this activity the postcards are collected by the teacher for use at the end of the following section.

4. Connecting fictional stories with real problems: A change of behaviour

Activities	• **Brainstorming** • **Research Project** • **Presentation** • **Exchange of Experts**
Skills	• Writing • Speaking (presentation skills) • Listening
Aim	• To link fictional stories with real problems • To find information about local and global initiatives and actions • To present own ideas for a change of behaviours
Material	• Empty Posters • Postcards students have designed • Cards: interesting, current initiatives

Fig. 6: Overview - Change of Behaviour

This final section is meant to encourage students to think about possible solutions to real problems. As a prerequisite, students are supposed to have already analysed and discussed in great detail the problems and solutions found in Dr. Seuss's fictional picture book stories. The next step is to relate these outcomes to their personal context. What are the local and global communities doing in order to reduce humanity's ecological footprint? What is the cause for environmental problems, and what can be done by each and every individual on this planet to stop what is causing these problems?! The stories read and discussed include fictional problems but, as previous tasks and activities have shown, these stories represent real problems and include practical suggestions for possible solutions.

One major problem of teaching and learning is that it creates passive knowledge which has no need for activation in the world outside the classroom. This section tries to bring the outside world and a real context into the classroom, to show students that the knowledge they construct about these issues is not only relevant in class, but also for their future lives

as environmentally aware world citizens. To begin this section, it is important to determine whether or not students are already familiar with possible solutions. So, the first, introductory activity is brainstorming about the actions and measures people are already taking to fight against environmental problems. Every student has a couple of minutes to individually think about environmental problems and possible solutions related to five categories: food, mobility, consumer goods, energy and natural resources. After this individual brainstorming, the teacher tapes five posters to the walls on which only the names of the categories are written. In a quiet phase, without talking to others, students can walk around and write their ideas on the posters. As soon as everybody has returned to their seats, the teacher reads aloud what has been written on the posters, and asks if anybody knows any initiatives which are already actively working on concrete issues related to one or several of these main categories. Now the teacher shows a pile of cards on which he/she has written the names of interesting initiatives which promote environmental change such as guerrilla gardening, critical mass, taste your waste dumpster diving, second hand stores, permaculture, fair trade, organic products, or clean energy (Ökostrom) (Appendix 8). The teacher asks if anybody can briefly explain these concepts or projects. Then students can tape them to the correct category.

After this introduction, students form small groups and pick one aspect, initiative, or project which seems most interesting or relevant to them. In an allocated amount of time, students have to collect as much information as possible to become experts on their topic. In the end, they have to create a creative, interesting, and inspiring presentation in which they present their concern and try to convince the others to become involved as well. Furthermore, it is their task to think about three to four quiz questions which are based on their presentation for their fellow students.

After each group had the chance to present their research outcomes, one expert from each group gets together with experts from other groups. They discuss the ideas for more sustainable lives which they have come across during the preparation of their presentation and during all the activities on this topic. In the end, they have to agree on a couple of practical principles which they think would be most useful to implement in ones life to reduce our ecological footprint. The task is to write down short sentences which clearly state what they can do as environmentally aware world citizens. The students receive their postcards and write their ideas for action on the back side of the postcards. The teacher

then collects the post cards, copies, and returns them to the students, who can spread the word by giving these cards to friends and family.

6.2.2. Overview of Individual Activities

The overview below does not include a detailed description of the context or the content of each activity, but shows at one glance the variety of activities, objectives and interaction formats provided, as well as the required material. As mentioned before, this is just one small collection of activities which can only serve as basis for further engagement with the topic.

	Activity	Objectives (Intended Learning Outcomes)	Skills	Interaction Format	Material
LESSON PLAN - ACTIVITIES and TASKS OVERVIEW **«Environmental Education in the EFL-Classroom with Horton and the Lorax»**					
1	**Ecological Footprint Discussion**	⇨ introduce the topic ⇨ activate students' background knowledge ⇨ provide a context / frame for following activities	Speaking	Class Work	Pictures or PP "Our Ecological Footprint"
2	**Ecological Footprint Calculation**	⇨ students can relate the content to their personal lives ⇨ students can understand the concept of the ecological footprint	Reading Speaking	Partner Work	Handout "Our Ecological Footprint"
3	**Story-Time**	⇨ practice reading out loud (pronunciation practice) ⇨ active listening ⇨ students can infer meaning from pictures and text	Reading Listening	Group Work (2 groups)	Books and Story Text Handouts: *Horton Hears A Who!* and *The Lorax*
4	**Group Discussion**	⇨ students can speak about the story, summarize its most important events and explain what they liked and disliked	Speaking	Group Work (each group splits into two)	-----------------

5	**Open-Stage**	⇨ students can collect enough information to develop expert knowledge about the book they have read ⇨ students can present what they have discussed to others, who have not read it, in a comprehensible way	Speaking	Groups of four (with each one member of the previous groups)	-----------------
6	**Worksheet**	⇨ students can answer content related questions ⇨ students can link the events of the story to real life problems	Reading Writing	Individual Work / Partner Work	Worksheets "Lorax and Horton protect the environment"
7	**Role-Play** "Confrontation of Dr. Seuss's main characters"	⇨ students can come up with arguments for and against a certain issue ⇨ students can express their thoughts and feelings ⇨ students can actively participate in a discussion	Speaking	Individual Work / Class Work	Pictures of main characters
8	**Creative Task** Designing Postcards	⇨ students can summarize the main / underlying meaning of the stories read ⇨ students can transform the content into a new visual / verbal message	Writing	Individual Work / Partner Work Homework	Plain Postcards
9	**Brainstorming** "Real problems - real solutions"	⇨ students can link fictional problems with real environmental issues	Writing	Individual Work / Class Work	Empty Posters
10	**Research Project** "Words in Action - Examples for Environmental Activism"	⇨ students can research and collect information about a certain local or global topic they are interested in ⇨ students experience the global dimension of environmental issues ⇨ students can prepare an interesting and creative presentation	Speaking Writing	Group Work (Groups of three or four)	Cards: interesting, current initiatives

		⇨ students can summarize the most essential arguments and come up with questions for their fellow students ⇨ students can relate information they find to their everyday lives and derive tips and ideas to make their own lives more sustainable			
11	**Presentation** "Words in Action"	⇨ students can present their project in a creative, fun and comprehensible way ⇨ students can follow a presentation and answer follow up questions about the presentation	Speaking Presentation Skills Listening	Group Work	-----------------
12	**Exchange of Experts**	⇨ students can agree on four most important ideas/tips which they think are most important to implement in ones life in order to reduce our ecological footprint ⇨ students can write short sentences which clearly state purpose and action of their advice. ⇨ students can relate classroom work to their outside lives	Speaking Writing	Group Work (Groups of experts - three to four students)	Postcards students have designed (they write their advice on the back side of the card)

Fig. 7: Lesson Plan - Activities and Tasks Overview

6.3. Final Remarks Upon the Lesson

This sample teaching sequence has shown one possible way to implement environmental education in EFL-lessons. The selected activities have been based on the learning theories mentioned. Hence, the activities have been chosen with a special focus on interactive and creative learning opportunities which should help students to construct their own learning process instead of only consuming predefined knowledge. Furthermore, these tasks

encourage students to make learning itself an experiences which allows them to relate the content to their personal lives.

In addition, since the major focus of the activities presented is on the development of communicative competencies rather than on linguistic correctness, some aspects have not been mentioned explicitly. Nevertheless, there are some language learning related issues which have to be introduced and implemented as well. First and foremost, students need to have the opportunity to establish specific vocabulary knowledge, which enables them to talk about environmental issues correctly. In terms of autonomous learning, as introduced earlier, it is very important that the teacher does not prepare a predefined vocabulary list, but encourages the students to look up unfamiliar words in dictionaries or to research words which could be useful when talking about environmental issues. On the one hand, these seemingly small tasks help students to construct their own knowledge. On the other hand, they also help students to develop the skills and competencies required to become independent, life-long learners.

A second issue which has not been considered is grammar teaching. Even though none of the activities or sections presented specifically introduces any grammar practice, there are some issues which can be introduced in order to enhance students' understanding for language use in a specific context. One of these grammatical structures which can be practised in this context is if-clauses. Since the success of many actions and measures taken is highly hypothetical, it might be necessary for students to be able to express various degrees of certainties or, more likely, uncertainties. If I do this, that will happen. Or, if I had said this, that would have changed. Another grammatical structure which can be useful to express a call for action is the imperative. Students need this structure when they want to create statements which should encourage themselves or others to change their behaviour in order to live a more sustainable lifestyle.

A third aspect worth mentioning is the introduction of argumentation skills. Students may need guidance and assistance when it comes to finding arguments for a certain point of view. How to express agreement or disagreement, and how to introduce new ideas might be skills they need to practice before they can actually participate in a discussion about such a controversial topic.

In general, the aim of this sample teaching sequence was to present possible solutions and to show everybody's power to change their lifestyles in order to lead more sustainable lives. As already mentioned, one common theme all Dr. Seuss's picture books share is hope (Morgan, Morgan 279-280). This teaching sequence should not discourage students from learning a language or caring about the planet we live on. Rather, it is supposed to show them that language competencies and environmental awareness are all very good ways to become responsible and environmentally aware world citizens. Living sustainable does not mean that one has to sacrifice a decent lifestyle; it means to respect nature, natural resources, and the needs and desires of other people living on this planet. This teaching sequence should provide activities which allow students to experience that environmental education can be fun and rewarding.

Conclusion

Given the fact that environmental education has been a cross-curricular topic in the Austrian school system for nearly thirty years, it is surprising, but true, that it is still widely neglected in many subjects, including EFL. The knowledge deficit of today's youth in terms of environmental concerns was the starting point of this thesis, and it led to questioning in what way environmental education could be successfully implemented in foreign language teaching and learning. Starting from the acclaimed first environmental picture book *The Lorax*, written in 1971, and Dr. Seuss's second environmentally themed picture book *Horton Hears a Who*, I have tried to create an interactive and relevant sample lesson plan on the basis of ecocritical analysis and the threefold objective of environmental education: to raise awareness for environmental concerns, to develop knowledge, skills and an attitude for change, and finally to change one's behaviour by actively applying the knowledge gained.

To successfully introduce environmental education in the language classroom, specific approaches are necessary. In this respect, I have argued that the teacher cannot confront students with a predefined knowledge. First, a predefined solution for environmental concerns does not exist. Second, as constructivist and experiential learning theories have shown, students will learn the most by being actively involved in their own learning process, by constructing knowledge based on personal motivation and experiences with a certain topic. Therefore, the two main tasks of the teacher are to coach or guide students through their learning process, and to provide a learning environment which encourages and motivates students to become autonomous and independent learners. This means that the teacher supplies a wide range of interactive and well prepared activities, beneficial tasks and authentic materials. Since we are living in a visual age, teachers have to keep in mind that many students are visual learners. Consequently, I have claimed that picture books, which offer information on a visual and on a verbal level, can be an excellent source for language learners to develop language skills, expand their vocabulary knowledge, and at the same time get information on specific topics. Especially complicated issues such as environmental problems are presented in an understandable and appealing way to encourage the reader/viewer to further engage with the underlying problems. Dr. Seuss's picture books are a great source in the EFL-classroom, and can be used as well to introduce other related topics, such as discrimination, authority, or tolerance. In terms of

environmental education, I have only introduced a very small selection of tasks and activities, but providing an extensive selection would have gone beyond the scope of this discussion.

This thesis should serve as a basic contribution to the not very active, but nevertheless, highly relevant discussion of environmental education in EFL-classrooms in Austria, and provide a selection of ideas on how to put the theory into practice. Aspects from related concepts such as global and intercultural learning, ecocriticism, ecopedagogy or ESD were considered, and suggestions offered to help understand the global dimension, environmental concerns have already been reached. On that score, the aim of this thesis is to provide food for thought and future discussions on creative, innovative and interactive ways to implement environmental concerns in all subjects across the curriculum and also in the EFL-classroom.

Concluding, one has to admit that fifty years of environmental education have not prevented the bad environmental situation from becoming worse. But the hope is high that the next fifty years will bring about a change. In order to do so, we have to educate today's youth to become aware of these issues and equip them with essential skills and competencies to resist following the convenient, unsustainable path, and, instead, become ecocritical and environmentally aware world citizens. In this respect, English language teaching plays a vital role, since language competencies help to foster global understanding and intercultural communication. These skills can open new doors to share and get to know various innovative ways, which individual people from all over the world practice in order to live more sustainable. To conclude I would like to quote a song by Daisy O'Hara claiming that

> our consciousness is growing in time
> as the problems become more demanding
> we've got to continue to educate our young
> as they are gonna be the last ones standing
> there is hope for us all if we can recognize our fate
> and alter our course before it is too late
> time is of the essence as some people say
> cause these are problems from which we can't run away.
> ("People Get Up")

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Our Ecological Footprint [4]

❶ Read the text and fill in the missing words

productive   necessary   wood   developed

measure   emissions   transport   expressed

An ecological footprint shows how much productive land you need to lead your lifestyle. This includes your consumption of food, _____ ( ), and fibres. The ecological footprint also reflects where you live, how much energy and fuel you need, what means of _____ (2) you use. Pollution, such as carbon dioxide _____ (3), is also counted as part of the footprint. The larger your footprint is, the more resources are _____ (4) to support your lifestyle.

The ecological footprint is _____ (5) in global hectares (gha) or acres. 1 gha = 2.47 acres. Globally, there are about .8 hectares of _____ (6) area per person, but the average ecological footprint is already 2.3 hectares.

The Ecological Footprint Quiz was _____ (7) in 2002 with Earth Day Network to provide a simple way for people to _____ (8) their impact on the earth.

❷ Answer the following questions in pairs

. Do you have an ecological footprint?
2. Does what you wear impact on your global footprint?
3. What does it mean if you have a large ecological footprint?
4. What is the average ecological footprint today?
5. How large do you think your footprint is? Is it above or below the average?

❸ Calculate your own ecological footprint

	Points						Total
Food Footprint	.			2			
Goods and Services Footprint	3			4			
Housing Footprint	5		6	7			
Mobility Footprint	8	9	0	11	2	13	
Ecological Footprint							

Adapted from: http://www.earthday.net

❹ Try to work out each country's average ecological footprint per person

4.8 gha   9.57 gha   0.5 gha   7.7 gha

1.5 gha   3. gha   0.8 gha   4.7 gha

United States	
Nigeria	
China	
Czech Republic	
Chile	
Austria	
Bangladesh	
Australia	

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[4] **Source:** Ecological Footprint. 13 April 2013.
<http://www.goethe.de/ins/uy/prj/jug/pro/7_int_footprint.pdf>

Our Ecological Footprint - Student A

Ecological Footprint Quiz – Ⓐ

**You and your partner have half the footprint data
each. Use them for discussion so you can complete
the table Ex. 3 after you have filled in all 13
boxes, add up your total ecological footprint.**

1. Food Footprint

Eating animal based products (beef, pork, chicken, fish,
eggs, dairy products):

•	Never (vegan)	0. points
•	Infrequently (no meat, eggs/dairy a few times a week, vegetarian)	0.2 points
•	Occasionally (no meat or occasional meat, but eggs/dairy almost daily)	0.3 points
•	Often (meat once or twice a week)	0.4 points
•	Very often (meat daily)	0.5 points
•	Almost always (meat and eggs/dairy in almost every meal)	0.6 points

3. Goods and Services Footprint

Electricity in your home:

•	No electricity	0 points
•	Electricity	0.8 points
•	Electricity with energy conservation and efficiency	0.4 points

5. Housing Footprint

The size of your home in square metres:

•	Larger than 200	4 points
•	30–200	3 points
•	90– 30	2 points
•	60–90	0.4 points
•	30–60	0.2 points
•	Smaller than 30	0. points

7. Housing Footprint

Housing type:

•	Free standing house with running water	3 points
•	Row house or building with 2–4 housing units	0.5 points
•	Multi-storey apartment building	0.4 points
•	Green-design residence	0 points
•	Free standing house without running water	points

9. Mobility Footprint

Number of km travelled by car/motorbike/bus each week –
as a driver or passenger:

•	more than 130	3 points
•	50– 30	.5 points
•	25–50	0.6 points
•	1–25	0.3 points
•	0	0 points

11. Mobility Footprint

Getting around by bicycle, walking, or using animal power:

•	Most of the time	0 points
•	Sometimes	0.2 points
•	Seldom	0.4 points

13. Mobility Footprint

Number of hours flown each year:

•	100	6 points
•	25	3 points
•	10	points
•	3	0.5 points
•	0	0 points

Our Ecological Footprint - Student B

Ecological Footprint Quiz – Ⓑ

You and your partner have half the footprint data each. Use them for discussion so you can complete the table Ex. 3 after you have filled in all 13 boxes, add up your total ecological footprint.

2. Food Footprint

Eating processed, packaged and imported food:

* Most of the food I eat is processed, packaged, and from far away   0.5 points
* Three quarters   0.4 points
* Half   0.3 points
* One quarter   0.2 points
* Most of the food I eat is unprocessed, unpackaged and locally grown   0. points

4. Goods and Services Footprint

Waste you generate compared to people in your neighbourhood:

* Much less   0.3 points
* About the same   points
* Much more   3 points

6. Housing Footprint

Number of people in your household:

*   6 points
* 2   2.5 points
* 3   0.6 points
* 4   0.5 points
* 5   0.4 points
* 6   0.2 points
* /   0. points

8. Mobility Footprint

Travelling on public transport each week (bus, train, underground):

* More than 300 km   4 points
* 00–300 km   2 points
* 50– 00 km   0.6 points
* –50 km   0.3 points
* 0 km   0 points

10. Mobility Footprint

Number of km travelled by car/motorbike/bus each week – as a driver or passenger:

* more than 500   8 points
* 300–500   4 points
* 50–300   2 points
* 50– 50   points
* 2–50   0.3 points
* 0   0 points

12. Mobility Footprint

Your car consumption per 00 kilometres:

* Fewer than 4.5 litres   0 points
* 4.5–6.5 litres   0. points
* 6.5–9 litres   points
* 9– 5 litres   2 points
* More than 5 litres   4 points

Our Ecological Footprint - Teacher

Time	45–60 minutes
Level	intermediate
Skills	speaking, reading
Knowledge goal	raising awareness of people's impact on the environment
Materials	Ss' worksheet: p. S1 – a copy per student
	p. S2, p. S3 – infosheets A and B – one per pair

❶ Lead-in

Draw or project pictures of different footprints – e.g. human, tiger, bird. Ask Ss where they might have seen them. Ask Ss for other traces of creatures' existence that could be found in nature. Focus on human traces and brainstorm the term "ecological footprint".

❷ Main activity

- Distribute the worksheet p. S1 and ask Ss to read about the concept of ecological footprint (Ex. 1). Ss fill in the missing words. If necessary, preteach some vocabulary.
- Ask Ss to check the exercise in pairs.
- Ss in the same pairs answer the questions in Ex. 2. Check as a class.
- Make new pairs. Give one student Sheet 2 and the other Sheet 3 (p. S2–S3). They shouldn't show the handouts to each other. Tell them that these handouts will help them to calculate their own ecological footprints. They'll find there aspects from their life and corresponding points. Their task is to make a question for the partner and write down their point score in the Ecological Footprint Quiz (Ex. 3).
- After Ss have calculated their final score, tell them that the points represent global hectares and ask them to compare it to the area available that was mentioned in the reading (1.8 of productive area per person).

❸ Follow-up – discussion

- Draw or project a picture of a globe. Ask Ss how many planets we would need if everyone lived like them.

  Example: There is about 1.8 gha available per person, so if a student has a score of 3.6 points, it means that we would need 2 planets.

- Ask a few Ss to draw their score expressed in the number of planets on the board. If there are big differences between the Ss' scores, you can ask about the differences in their lifestyles.
- Calculate the class average and the class total.

- Ask Ss to discuss different lifestyles and compare their impact on the environment. Ask them to think about an average person in their country.

  How much resources do they need? Do you think their ecological footprint is large?

  Do you know anybody whose lifestyle leaves a very small ecological footprint?

  Do you think that people's ecological footprints in other countries are similar to yours?

- Ask Ss in small groups to do Ex. 4 and fill in the countries' average ecological footprints. Ask Ss to estimate which countries have the footprints provided. Check the answers as a class.
- Ask Ss which countries in the world (not only the ones from Ex. 4) they think have the biggest ecological footprint. Ensure that they realize that it is not only the average ecological footprint per person that counts, but that the total population plays a key role also. Refer to the class total and average.

  Answer: The three countries with the biggest ecological footprint are the USA, China and India. Although the ecological footprint per person in India is only 0.8 gha, the population is more than one billion.

❹ Follow-up

- Ask Ss to suggest ways of reducing their ecological footprint in three areas – home, city, school/workplace.
- Divide students into three groups and ask one to write down suggestions for a different place – home, city, school/workplace. They can also make instructive posters.

❺ Ideas for homework

A. Ss do research on the Internet. Ask them to find suggestions for reducing eco footprints.

B. Ss find out what carbon footprint is.

KEY:

Ex. 1
1. wood, 2. transport, 3. emissions, 4. necessary, 5. expressed, 6. productive, 7. developed, 8. measure.
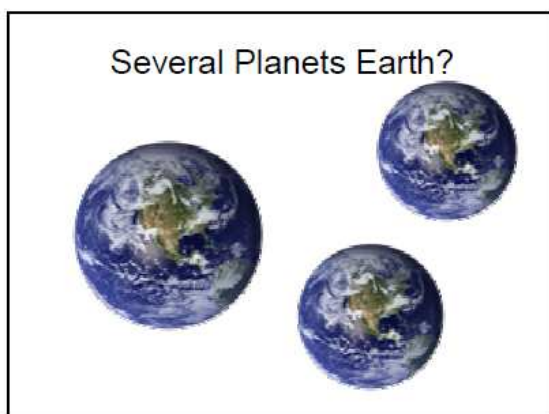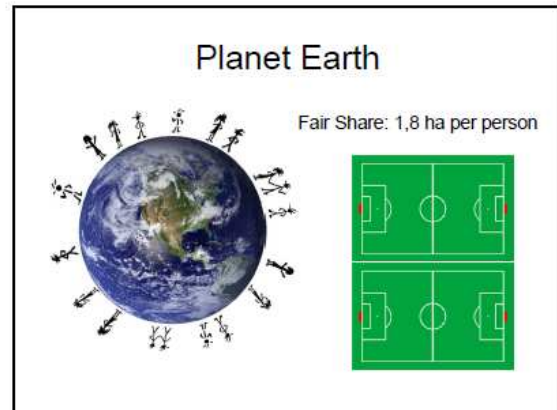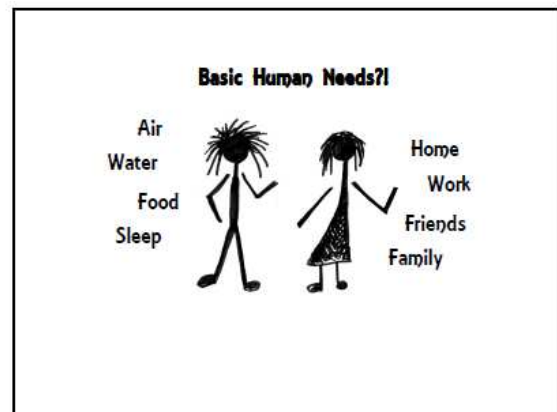
Ex. 2
1. Yes, everybody on this planet has one.
2. Yes. What matters is the material and its growth/production, the place of production, how many kilometres your clothes have travelled to get to you.
3. It means that for your lifestyle you need a lot of resources. For example you use a lot of water, food, clothes, electricity, or you travel a lot by car or plane. However, it also reflects things that people usually don't see – e.g. buying products which are produced/grown abroad and which then travel all around the globe to your country, supermarket, office etc. This results in higher consumption of oil and emissions.
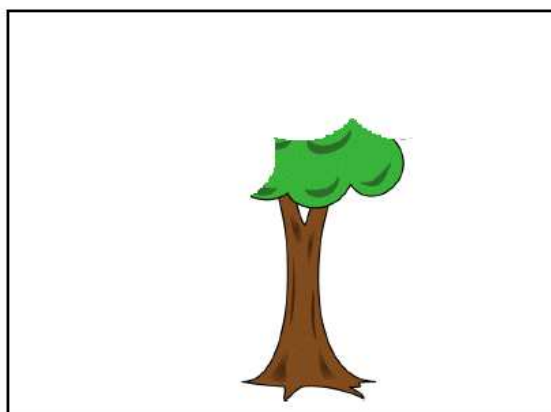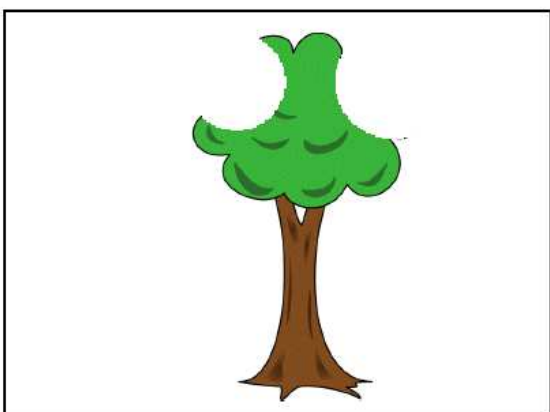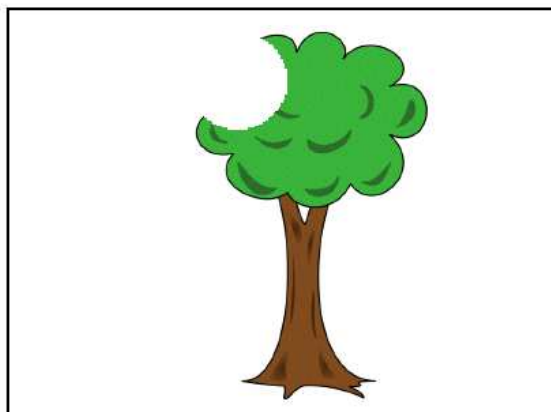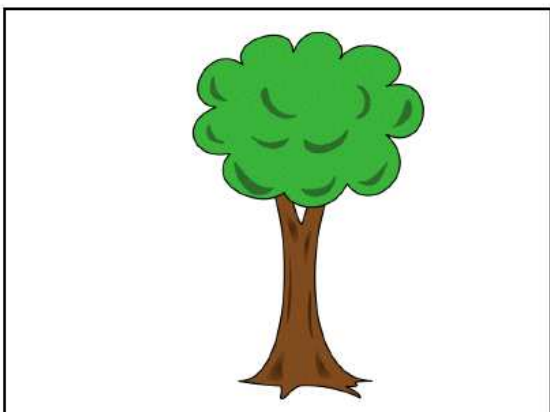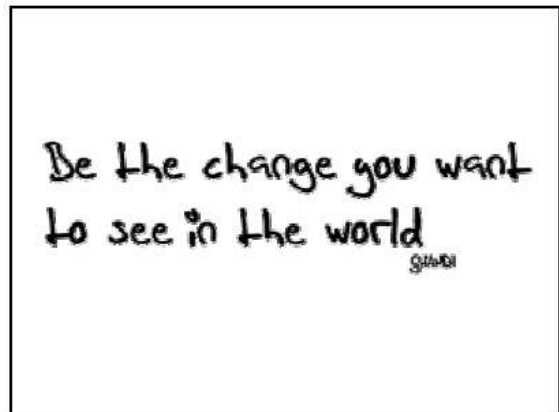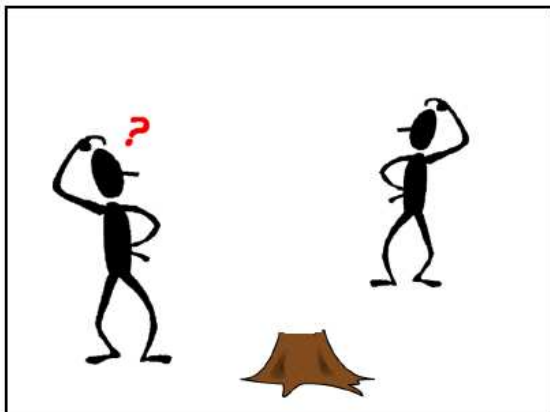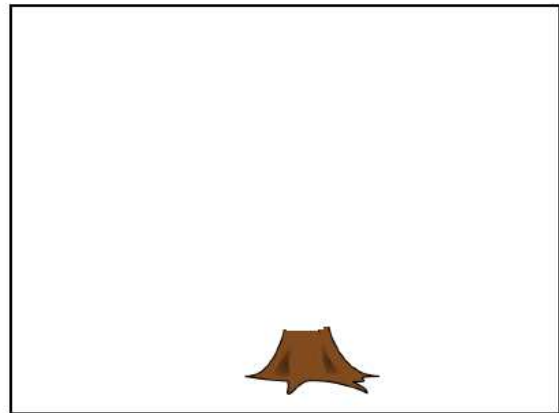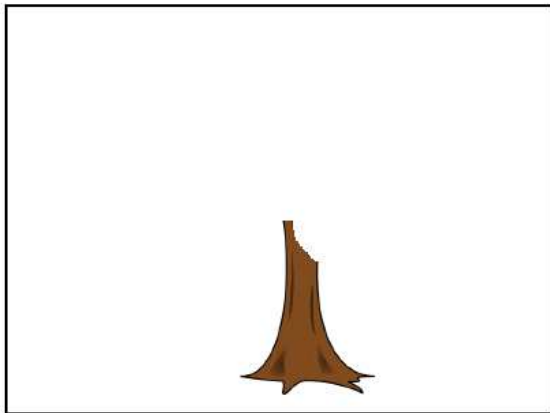4. 2.3 hectares.

Ex. 4
United States – 9.57 ha
Nigeria – 0.8 ha
China – 1.5 ha
Czech Republic – 4.8 ha
Chile – 3.1 ha
Austria – 4.7 ha
Bangladesh – 0.5 ha
Australia – 7.7 ha.

Our Ecological Footprint - PP Presentation[5]

[5] Source: Schaumberger, Hans-Jörg. "Der ökologische Fussabdruck" based on Wackernagel, Rees 1997.

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to see in the world
GHANDI

Literature and useful links

Rees, W. & Wackernagel, M. (1997). Unser ökologischer Fussabdruck.
Basel: Birkhäuser Verlag.
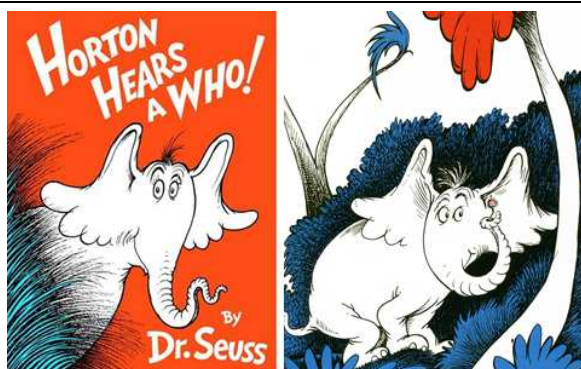
www.caretaker.cc

www.greenpeace.at

www.wwf.at

Quelle: Rees, Wackernagel (1997), S. 5

Horton Hears a Who! (1954)

by Dr. Seuss

On the fifteenth of May, in the Jungle of Nool,
In the heart of the day, in the cool of the pool,
He was splashing … enjoying the jungle's great joys…
When Horton the elephant heard a small noise.

So Horton stopped splashing. He looked toward the sound.
"That's funny," thought Horton. "There's no one around."
The he heard it again! Just a very faint yelp
As if some tiny person were calling for help.
"I'll help you," said Horton. "But *who* are? *Where*?
He looked and he looked. He could see nothing there
But a small speck of dust blowing past through the air.

"I say!" murmured Horton. "I've never heard tell
Of a small speck of dust that is able to yell.
So you know what I think? … Why, I think that there must
Be someone on top of that small speck of dust!
Some sort of a creature of *very* small size,
Too small to be seen by an elephant's eyes…"
"…some poor little person who's shaking with fear
That he'll blow in the pool! He has no way to steer!
I'll just have to save him. Because, after all,
A person's a person, no matter how small."

So, gently, and using the greatest of care,
The elephant stretched his great trunk through the air,
And he lifted the dust speck and carried it over
And placed it down, safe, on a very soft clover.

"Humpf!" humpfed a voice. 'Twas a sour kangaroo.
And the young kangaroo in her pouch said "Humpf!" too.
"Why, that speck is as small as the head of a pin.
A person on *that*? …Why, there never has been!"

"Believe me," said Horton. "I tell you sincerely,
My ears are quite keen and I heard him quite clearly.
I *know* there's a person down there. And, what's more,
Quite likely there's two. Even three. Even four.
Quite likely…
"…a family, for all that we know!
A family with children just starting to grow.
So, please," Horton said, "as a favor to me,
Try not to disturb them. Just please let them be."

"I think you're a fool!" laughed the sour kangaroo
And the young kangaroo in her pouch said, "Me, too!
You're the biggest blame fool in the Jungle of Nool!"
And the kangaroos plunged in the cool of the pool.

"What a terrible splashing!" the elephant frowned.
"I can't let my very small persons get drowned!
I've *got* to protect them. I'm bigger than they."
So he plucked up the clover and hustled away.

Through the high jungle tree tops, the news quickly spread:
"He talks to a dust speck! He's out of his head!
Just look at him walk with that speck on that flower!"
And Horton walked, worrying, almost an hour.
"Should I put this speck down?" Horton thought with alarm.
"If I do, these small persons may come to great harm.
I *can't* put it down. And I *won't!* After all
A person's a person. No matter how small."

Then Horton stopped walking.
The speck-voice was talking.
The voice was so faint he could just barely hear it.
"Speak *up*, please," said Horton. He put his ear near it.
"My friend," came the voice, "you're a *very* fine friend.
You've helped all us folks on this dust speck no end.
You've saved all our houses, our ceilings and floors.
You've saved all our churches and grocery stores."

"You mean" Horton gasped, "you have *buildings* there, *too*?"
"Oh, yes," piped the voice. "We most certainly do…
 "I know," called the voice, "I'm too small to be seen
But I'm Mayor of a town that is friendly and clean.
Our buildings, to you, would seem terribly small
But to us, who aren't big, they are wonderfully tall.
My town is called *Who*-ville, for I am a *Who*
And we *Whos* are all thankful and grateful to you."
And Horton called back to the Mayor of the town,
"You're safe now. Don't worry. I won't let you down."

But, just as he spoke to the Mayor of the speck,
Three big jungle monkeys climbed up Horton's neck!
The Wickersham Brothers came shouting, "What rot!
This elephant's talking to *Whos* who are *not*!
There *aren't* any *Whos*! And they *don't* have a Mayor!
And *we're* going to stop all this nonsense! So *there*!"

They snatched Horton's clover! They carried it off
To a black-bottomed eagle named Vlad Vlad-i-koff,
A mighty strong eagle, of very swift wing,
And they said, "Will you kindly get rid of this thing?"
And, before the poor elephant even could speak,
That eagle flew off with the flower in his beak.

All that late afternoon and far into the night
That black-bottomed bird flapped his wings in fast flight,
While Horton chased after, with groans, over stones
That tattered his toenails and battered his bones,
And begged, "Please don't harm all my little folks, who
Have as much right to live as us bigger folks do!"

But far, far beyond him, that eagle kept flapping
And over his shoulder called back, "Quit your yapping.
I'll fly the night through. I'm a bird. I don't mind it.
And I'll hide this, tomorrow, where *you'll* never find it!"

And at 6:56 the next morning he did it.
It sure was a terrible place that he hid it.
He let that small clover drop somewhere inside
Of a great patch of clovers a hundred miles wide!
"Find THAT!" sneered the bird. "But I think you will fail."
And he left, with a flip of his black-bottomed tail.

"I'll find it!" cried Horton. "I'll find it or bust!
I SHALL find my friends on my small speck of dust!"
And clover, by clover, by clover he found
That the one that he sought for was just not around.
And by noon poor old Horton, more dead than alive,
Had picked, searched, and piled up, nine thousand and five.

Then, on through the afternoon, hour after hour…
Till he found them at last! On the three millionth flower!
"My friends!" cried the elephant. "Tell me! Do tell!
Are you safe? Are you sound?
Are you whole? Are you well?"

From down on the speck came the voice of the Mayor:
"We've *really* had trouble! Much more than our share.
When that black-bottomed birdie let go and we dropped,
We landed so hard that our clocks have all stopped.
Our tea-pots are broken. Our rocking-chairs smashed.
And our bicycle tires all blew up when we crashed.
So, Horton, *please*!" pleaded that voice of the Mayor's,
"Will you stick by us *Whos* while we're making repairs?"

"Of course," Horton answered. "Of, course I will stick.
I'll stick by you small folks through thin and through thick!"

"Humpf!" Humpfed a voice!
"For almost two days you've run wild and insisted
On chatting with persons who've never existed.
Such carryings-on in our peaceable jungle!
We've had quite enough of your bellowing bungle!
And I'm here to state," snapped the big kangaroo,
"That your silly nonsensical game is all through!"
And the young kangaroo in her pouch said, "Me too!"

"With the help of the Wickersham Brothers and dozens
Of Wickersham Uncles and Wickersham Cousins
And Wickersham In-Laws, whose help I've engaged,
You're going to be roped! And you're going to be caged!
And, as for your dust speck… *hah! That* we shall boil
In a hot steaming kettle of Beezle-Nut oil!"

"*Boil* it?..." gasped Horton! "Oh, that you *can't* do!
It's all full of persons! They'll *prove* it to you!"

"Mr. Mayor! Mr. Mayor!" Horton called. "Mr. Mayor!
You've *got* to prove now that you really are there!
So call a big meeting. Get everyone out.
Make every *Who* holler! Make every *Who* shout!
Make every *Who* scream! If you don't, every *Who*
Is going to end up in a Beezle-Nut stew!"

And, down on the dust speck, the scared little Mayor
Quick called a big meeting in Who-ville Town Square.
And his people cried loudly. They cried out in fear:
"We are here! We are here! We are here! We are here!"

The elephant smiled: "That was clear as a bell.
You kangaroos surely heard *that* very well."
"All I heard," snapped the big kangaroo, "was the breeze,
And the faint sound of wind through the far-distant trees.
I heard no small voices. And you didn't either."
And the young kangaroo in her pouch said, "Me, neither."

"Grab him!" they shouted. "And cage the big dope!
Lasso his stomach with ten miles of rope!
Tie the knots tight so he'll *never* shake loose!
Then dunk that dumb speck in the Beezle-Nut juice!"

Horton fought back with great vigor and vim
But the Wickersham gang was too many for him.
They beat him. They mauled him! They started to haul
Him into his cage! But he managed to call
To the Mayor: "Don't give up! I believe in you all!
A person's a person, no matter how small!
And you very small persons will *not* have to die
If you make yourselves heard! *So come on, now, and TRY!*"

The Mayor grabbed a tom-tom. He started to smack it.
And, all over *Who*-ville, they whooped up a racket.
They rattled tin kettles! They beat on brass pans,
On garbage pail tops and old cranberry cans!
They blew on bazookas and blasted great toots
On clarinets, oom-pahs and boom-pahs and flutes!
Great gusts of loud racket rang high through the air.
They rattled and shook the whole sky! And the Mayor
Called up through the howling mad hullabaloo:
"Hey, Horton! *How's this?* Is our sound coming through?"

And Horton called back, "I can hear you just fine.
But the kangaroos' ears aren't as strong, quite, as mine.
They don't hear a thing! Are you *sure* all your boys
Are doing their best? Are they ALL making noise?
Are you sure every *Who* down in *Who*-ville is working?
Quick! Look through your town! Is there anyone shirking?

Through the town rushed the Mayor, from the east to the west.
But *every*one seemed to be doing his best.
*Every*one seemed to be yapping or yipping!
*Every*one seemed to be beeping or bipping!
But it *wasn't enough*, all this ruckus and roar!
He HAD to find someone to help him make more.
He raced through each building! He searched floor-to-floor!

And, just as he felt he was getting nowhere,
And almost about to give up in despair,
He suddenly burst through a door and that Mayor
Discovered one shirker! Quite hidden away
In the Fairfax Apartments (Apartment 12-J)
A very small, *very* small shirker named Jo-Jo
Was standing, just standing, and bouncing a Yo-Yo!
Not making a sound! Not a yipp! Not a chirp!
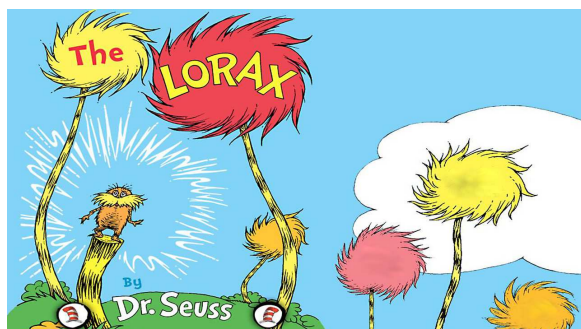And the Mayor rushed inside and he grabbed the young twerp!

And he climbed with the lad up the Eiffelberg Tower.
"This," cried the Mayor, "is your town's darkest hour!
The time for all *Whos* who have blood that is red
To come to the aid of their country!" he said.
"We've GOT to make noises in greater amounts!
So, open your mouth, lad! For every voice counts!"

Thus he spoke as he climbed. When they got to the top,
The lad cleared his throat and he shouted out, "YOPP!"
And that Yopp…
That one small, extra Yopp put it over!
Finally, at last! From that speck on that clover
Their voices were heard! They rang out clear and clean.
And the elephant smiled. "Do you see what I mean? …
They've proved they ARE persons, no matter how small.
And their whole world was saved by the Smallest of All!"

"How true! Yes, how true," said the big kangaroo.
"And, from now on, you know what I'm planning to do? …
From now on, I'm going to protect them with you!"
And the young kangaroo in her pouch said, …
"… ME TOO!
From sun in the summer. From rain when it's fall-ish,
I'm going to protect them. No matter how small-ish!"

The Lorax (1971)

by Dr. Seuss

At the far end of town where the Grickle-grass grows
and the wind smells slow-and-sour when it blows
and no birds ever sing excepting old crows...
is the Street of the Lifted Lorax.

And deep in the Grickle-grass, some people say,
if you look deep enough you can still see, today,
where the Lorax once stood
just as long as it could
before somebody lifted the Lorax away.

What *was* the Lorax?
Any why was it there?
And why was it lifted and taken somewhere
from the far end of town where the Grickle-grass grows?
The old Once-ler still lives here.
Ask him. *He* knows.

You won't see the Once-ler.
Don't knock at his door.
He stays in his Lerkim on top of his store.
He lurks in his Lerkim, cold under the roof,
where he makes his own clothes
out of miff-muffered moof.
And on special dank midnights in August,
he peeks out of the shutters
and sometimes he speaks
and tells how the Lorax was lifted away.
He'll tell you, perhaps... if you're willing to pay.

On the end of a rope he lets down a tin pail
and you have to toss in fifteen cents and a nail
and the shell of a great-great-great-grandfather snail.
Then he pulls up the pail, makes a most careful count
to see if you've paid him the proper amount.

Then he hides what you paid him away in his Snuvv,
his secret strange hole in his gruvvulous glove.
Then he grunts, "I will call you by Whisper-ma-Phone,
for the secrets I tell are for your ears alone."
SLUPP
Down slupps the Whisper-ma-Phone to your ear
and the old Once-ler's whispers are not very clear,
since they have to come down through a snergelly hose,
and he sounds as if he had smallish bees up his nose.
Now I'll tell you, he says, with his teeth sounding gray,
how the Lorax got lifted and taken away...
It all started way back... such a long, long time back...

Way back in the days when the grass was still green
and the pond was still wet and the clouds were still clean,
and the song of the Swomee-Swans rang out in space...
one morning, I came to this glorious place.
And I first saw the trees! The Truffula Trees!
The bright-colored tufts of the Truffula Trees!
Mile after mile in the fresh morning breeze.

And, under the trees, I saw Brown Bar-ba-loots
frisking about in their Bar-ba-loot suits
as the played in the shade and ate Truffula Fruits.
From the rippulous pond came the comfortable sound
of the Humming-Fish humming while splashing around.

But those *trees*! Those *trees*! *Those Truffula Trees!*
All my life I'd been searching for trees such as these.
The touch of their tufts was much softer than silk.
And they had the sweet smell of fresh butterfly milk.

I felt a great leaping of joy in my heart.
I knew just what I'd do! I unloaded my cart.
In no time at all, I had built a small shop.
Then I chopped down a Truffula Tree with one chop.
And with great skillful skill and with great speedy speed,
I took the soft tuft. And I knitted a Thneed!

The instant I'd finished, I heard a *ga-Zump*!
I looked. I saw something pop out of the stump
of the tree I'd chopped down. It was sort of a man.
Describe him?...That's hard. I don't know if I can.

He was shortish. And oldish. And brownish. And mossy.
And he spoke with a voice that was sharpish and bossy.
"Mister!" he said with a sawdusty sneeze,
"I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees.
I speak for the trees, for the trees have no tongues.
And I'm asking you, sir, at the top of my lungs"-
he was very upset as he shouted and puffed-
"What's that THING you've made out of my Truffula tuft?"

"Look, Lorax," I said. "There's no cause for alarm.
I chopped just one tree. I am doing no harm.
I'm being quite useful. This thing is a Thneed.
A Thneed's a Fine-Something-That-All-People-Need!
It's a shirt. It's a sock. It's a glove. It's a hat.
But it has *other* uses. Yes, far beyond that.
You can use it for carpets. For pillows! For sheets!
Or curtains! Or covers for bicycle seats!"
The Lorax said, "Sir! You are crazy with greed.
There is no one on earth who would buy that fool Thneed!"

But the very next minute I proved he was wrong.
For, just at that minute, a chap came along,
and he thought that the Thneed I had knitted was great.
He happily bought it for three ninety-eight.
I laughed at the Lorax, "You poor stupid guy!
You never can tell what some people will buy."

"I repeat," cried the Lorax, "I speak for the trees!"
"I'm busy," I told him. "Shut up, if you please."

I rushed 'cross the room, and in no time at all,
built a radio-phone. I put in a quick call.
I called all my brothers and uncles and aunts
and I said, "Listen here! Here's a wonderful chance
for the whole Once-ler Family to get mighty rich!
Get over here fast! Take the road to North Nitch.
Turn left at Weehawken. Sharp right at South Stich."

And, in no time at all, in the factory I built,
the whole Once-ler Family was working full tilt.
We were all knitting Thneeds just as busy as bees,
to the sound of the chopping of Truffula Trees.

Then... Oh! Baby! Oh! How my business did grow!
Now, chopping one tree at a time was too slow.
So I quickly invented my Super-Axe-Hacker
which whacked off four Truffula Trees at one smacker.
We were making Thneeds four times as fast as before!
And that Lorax?... *He* didn't show up any more.

But the next week he knocked on my new office door.
He snapped, "I'm the Lorax who speaks for the trees
which you seem to be chopping as fast as you please.
But I'm *also* in charge of the Brown Bar-ba-loots
who played in the shade in their Bar-ba-loot suits
and happily lived, eating Truffula Fruits."

"NOW...thanks to your hacking my trees to the ground,
there's not enough Truffula Fruit to go 'round.
And my poor Bar-ba-loots are all getting the crummies
because they have gas, and no food, in their tummies!
They loved living here. But I can't let them stay.
They'll have to find food. And I hope that they may.
Good luck, boys," he cried. And he sent them away.

I, the Once-ler, felt sad as I watched them all go.
BUT... business is business! And business must grow
regardless of crummies in tummies, you know.
I meant no harm. I most truly did not.
But I had to grow bigger. So bigger I got.
I biggered my factory. I biggered my roads.
I biggered my wagons. I biggered the loads
of the Thneeds I shipped out. I was shipping them forth
to the South! To the East! To the West! To the North!
I went right on biggering...selling more Thneeds.
And I biggered my money, which everyone needs.

Then *again* he came back! I was fixing some pipes
when that old-nuisance Lorax came back with *more* gripes.
"I am the Lorax," he coughed and he whiffed.
He sneezed and he snuffled. He snarggled. He sniffed.
"Once-ler!" he cried with a cruffulous croak.
"Once-ler! You're making such smogulous smoke!
My poor Swomee-Swans...why, they can't sing a note!
No one can sing who has smog in his throat."

"And so," said the Lorax, "-please pardon my cough-
they cannot live here. So I'm sending them off.
Where will they go?... I don't hopefully know.
They may have to fly for a month...or a year...
To escape from the smog you've smogged-up around here.

"What's *more*," snapped the Lorax. (His dander was up.)
"Let me say a few words about Gluppity-Glupp.
Your machinery chugs on, day and night without stop
making Gluppity-Glup. Also Schloppity-Schlopp.

And what do you do with this leftover goo?...
I'll show you. You dirty old Once-ler man, you!"

"You're glumping the pond where the Humming-Fish hummed!
No more can they hum, for their gills are all gummed.
So I'm sending them off. Oh, their future is dreary.
They'll walk on their fins and get woefully weary
in search of some water that isn't so smeary."

And then I got mad. I got terribly mad.
I yelled at the Lorax, "Now listen here, Dad!
All you do is yap-yap and say, 'Bad! Bad! Bad! Bad!'
Well, I have my rights, sir, and I'm telling *you*
I intend to go on doing just what I do!
And, for your information, you Lorax, I'm figgering
on biggering and Biggering and BIGGERING
and **BIGGERING!!**
turning MORE Truffula Trees into Thneeds
which everyone, EVERYONE, *EVERYONE* needs!"

And at that very moment, we heard a loud whack!
From outside in the fields came a sickening smack
af an axe on a tree. Then we heard the tree fall.
The very last Truffula Tree of them all!

No more trees. No more Thneeds. No more work to be done.
So, in no time, my uncles and aunts, every one,
all waved my good-bye. They jumped into my cars
and drove away under the smoke-smuggered stars.

Now all that was left 'neath the bad-smelling sky
was my big empty factory...the Lorax... and I.

The Lorax said nothing. Just gave me a glance...
just gave me a very sad, sad backward glance...
as he lifted himself by the seat of his pants.
And I'll never forget the grim look on his face
when he heisted himself and took leave of this place,
through a hole in the smog, without leaving a trace.

And all that the Lorax left here in this mess
was a small pile of rocks, with one word... "UNLESS."
Whatever *that* meant, well, I just couldn't guess.

That was long, long ago. But each day since that day
I've sat here and worried and worried away.
Through the years, while my buildings have fallen apart,
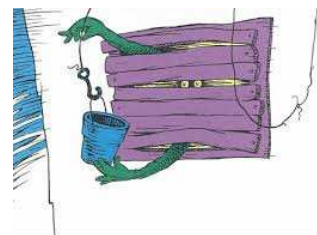I've worried about it with all of my heart.

"But *now*," says the Once-ler, "Now that *you're* here,
the word of the Lorax seems perfectly clear.
UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better. It's not."

"SO... Catch!" calls the Once-ler. He lets something fall.
"It's a Truffula Seed. It's the last one of all!
You're in charge of the last of the Truffula Seeds.
And Truffula Trees are what everyone needs.
Plant a new Truffula. Treat it with care.
Give it clean water. And feed it fresh air.
Grow a forest. Protect it from axes that hack.
Then the Lorax and all of his friends may come back.

Worksheet «Lorax and Horton protect the environment»[6]

The LORAX is a fictional story about a man who abused the environment and about what he learned. The story begins in the most run-down part of a dull, gray town. A small boy asks the Once-ler to share the secret of the Lorax and how he was "taken away." Thus, the story is told as a "flashback" as the Once-ler talks about the Lorax and past events.

The **characters** of the story include:
- _____, a businessman
- _____, a leader of the plants and animals in the natural world.

The Once-ler's Story: The Beginning

(1) The Once-ler moved across the land in his wagon. He came upon a new region with an important natural resource. What was this natural resource the Once-ler found?

The Natural Resource: _____

Name an important natural resource in your region: _____

(2) Humans often appreciate the beauty of the natural world. Experiences such as finding sea shells on a beach or seeing a rare bird often cause strong feelings. Did the Once-ler have feelings about the region and natural resource that he found?

What were the Once-ler's feelings: _____

Setting Up Shop and Doing Business

(3) The Once-ler used the land's natural resource to start a business which made and sold a product. What was the product? How was it used by buyers?

The Once-ler's product:_____
The Product's Uses:_____

(4) The Once-ler's name suggests that he uses things only once. What products / things are you using only once? _____

(5) The Once-ler, like other humans in business, organized a system to manufacture and distribute his product. Listed below are several parts of a manufacturing process. Describe if and how each of the following was used in the story.
- (a) Raw materials?_____
- (b) Product design? _____
- (c) Labor (workers)? _____
- (d) Assembly line? _____
- (e) Energy? _____
- (f) Shipping, transportation? _____
- (g) Communication?_____
- (h) Profits/ losses? _____

Using Technology

Businessmen, like the Once-ler, sometimes try to make more money by increasing the number of products they can sell. Often new machines and other systems are invented to do this. Other people use machines to work faster, more easily, and more accurately. For example, students, engineers, and others use calculators. Robots are sometimes used to weld sections of cars. Sometimes machines are used to do work humans cannot do. X-ray machines, for example, allow doctors to "see" inside the human body. All these machines are examples of "technology".

(6) Name examples of technology YOU use and explain what YOU use them for:

(7) What technology did the Once-ler invent to increase the production of thneeds?

Environmental Effects

(8) The use of technology requires the use of natural resources. The use of natural resources often has an effect on the environment. How did the production of thneeds affect the environment?

(9) Threatened and endangered species are those plant and animal populations facing extinction. Often, this is a result of human activity. Can you name several threatened or endangered species and describe why they face this condition?

(10) Certain animals depended on truffula trees. Name the animals. Explain why these animals needed truffula trees.
Animals:
The Need for Trees:

(11) Interdependence is an important characteristic of the environment. Living things depend on certain abiotic (non-living) and biotic (living) factors. can you think of a real example in which man's activities have altered the interdependence in natural systems?

(12) Often, technological production creates "byproducts." For example, a byproduct of sawing wood is sawdust. Sometimes the byproducts of technology are unwanted or dangerous (for example, poisonous chemicals) and are pollutants in the environment. Sometimes byproducts are useful. (For example, wood chips can be used to make particle board.) Name two byproducts that resulted from making thneeds. Were the byproducts that resulted from the making of thneeds harmful or helpful to the environment?
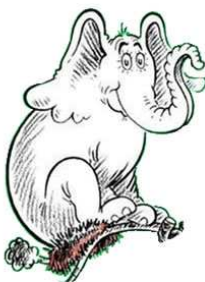
Byproduct – 1:
Byproduct – 2:

Byproduct 1: Helpful _____ Harmful _____ I can't decide. _____
Byproduct 2: Helpful _____ Harmful _____ I can't decide. _____

(13) The fish and swans were affected by the byproducts of making thneeds. Explain how the byproducts and making thneeds affected these animals.

Horton Hears a Who! tells the story of an elephant who hears a little creature on a small speck of dust. Without being able to see the creature, he seems to know it is there and that it is his duty to save it from harm. Despite the fact that all other jungle animals persist that Horton is being absurd and take measures to eliminate the speck of dust, he continues to protect the so-called *Whos*.

The **characters** of the story include:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Horton's Story: The Beginning
When Horton hears the voice on the dust speak, he reasons that there must exist a person, too small to be seen, but who is definitely there. But, the other animals don't believe him.

(1) Why doesn't the kangaroo believe Horton? What justifies her belief that a person could not be on the dust speck?_____

(2) If we cannot see things, does this mean they do not exist? Can you name some examples from your own life?_____

Society: The Kangaroos and the Wickersham brothers
The jungle animals do not believe Horton and make fun of him. Horton does not give up and continues to do what he thinks is right.

(3) How does Horton try to convince the kangaroo of the existence of a person on the dust speck?

(4) If you were Horton what would you say to convince the kangaroo?

Environmental problems of a small planet
The *Whos* living in *Who*-ville are in danger to be killed by the animals of the jungle. They represent an entire civilization and have many technologies to manage their own life. The Whos try to make themselves heard but the kangaroo denies hearing anything. Finally, the Who's try again and they are heard!

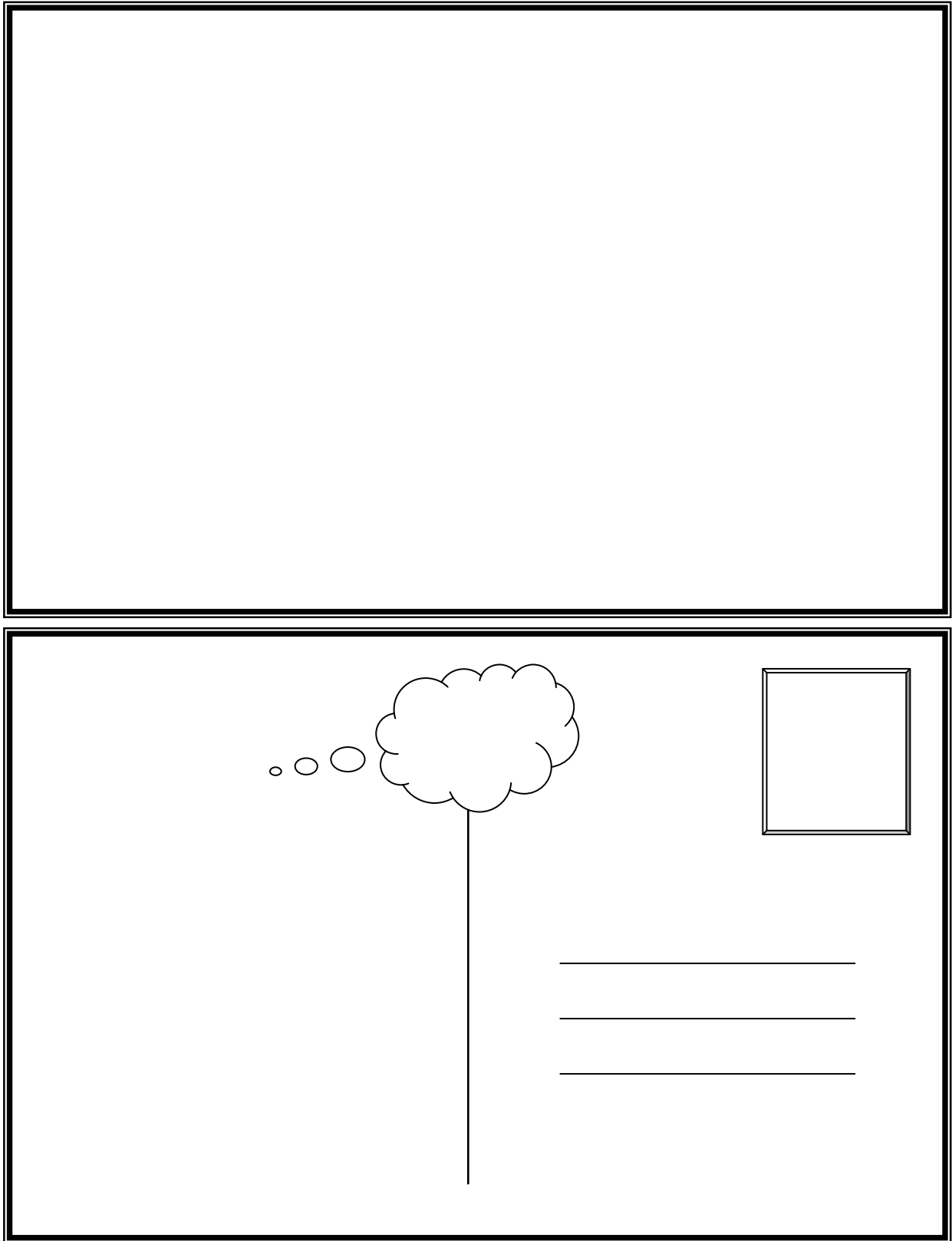(5) Who could be considered a *Who* in our society?
Whos in Austria:_____
Whos in other countries: _____

(6) The *Whos* managed to save their planet! What did they do to achieve that goal?

(7) What can YOU do to protect the *Whos* in our society?

(8) What are problems we have to face and how can we manage to save our planet?

Plain Postcard

Cards: interesting, current initiatives

guerilla gardening	critical mass
dumpster diving	second hand
permaculture	fair trade
organic farming	clean energy

Abstract

This thesis is concerned with the question in what way Dr. Seuss's picture books *The Lorax* and *Horton Hears a Who!* can be used to introduce environmental education in combination with foreign language teaching and learning in the Austrian EFL-classroom. The theoretical basis of this thesis is threefold and includes the pedagogical concept of environmental education, ecocriticism as fairly recent form of literary criticism, and selected picture books by Dr. Seuss as an example of environmental children's literature. Based on this threefold theory, teaching methods and learning theories, as well as pedagogical and didactical implications on how to teach environmental concerns with picture books in the EFL-classroom have been part of the discussion. Overall, it has become clear that environmentally themed picture books offer many advantages to enrich EFL-lessons. They can be used to achieve the three major goals of environmental education: to raise awareness for environmental problems, to equip students with skills and competencies, and to alter students' attitudes toward nature and, subsequently, encourage them to change their behaviour. The overall aim is to show students ways to enhance the development of language competencies which allow them to become environmentally aware world citizens.

Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Diplomarbeit beschäftigt sich mit der Fragestellung wie Dr. Seuss' Bilderbücher *Der Lorax* und *Horton Hört ein Hu!* zur Umwelterziehung im Englischunterricht eingesetzt werden können. Die theoretische Basis dieser Arbeit setzt sich aus drei Themenbereichen zusammen: das pädagogische Konzept der Umwelterziehung, Ökokritik im Zusammenhang mit Umweltliteratur, sowie Bilderbücher mit Umweltschwerpunkt. Des Weiteren wird auf spezifische Lehrmethoden und Lerntheorien eingegangen, und es werden pädagogische und didaktische Ansätze zur Umsetzung von Umwelterziehung mit Bilderbüchern im Englischunterricht näher erläutert. Gerade im Fremdsprachenunterricht bieten Bilderbücher auf Grund der Kombination von Bildern und Sprache viele Vorteile. Somit eignen sie sich sehr gut um die Ziele von Umwelterziehung erfolgreich umzusetzen. Ebenso können SchülerInnen dadurch ein Bewusstsein für die vielschichtigen Umweltprobleme und deren Hintergründe entwickeln, Fähigkeiten und Kompetenzen erwerben die ihnen helfen sich diesen Problemen zu stellen, sowie ihre Einstellung und ihr Verhalten langfristig ändern. Das vordergründige Ziel dabei ist die Sprachkompetenz der SchülerInnen zu fördern und ihnen gleichzeitig einen Weg zu zeigen, wie man ein umweltbewusster, kritischer und verantwortlicher Weltbürger werden kann.

Lebenslauf

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Schul- und Berufsbildung:

1990 – 1995	Volksschule 13 in Klagenfurt (mit Vorschule)
1995 – 2003	Ingeborg Bachmann Gymnasium – Klagenfurt (Latein ab der 3. Klasse)
2003 – 2004	Studium an der Universität Klagenfurt (Anglistik und Philosophie - Diplom)
2004 – 2006	Kolleg für Kindergartenpädagogik – Albertgasse 38, 1080 Wien
2006 – 2008	AuPair in America - New Jersey
Seit 2008	Studium an der Universität Wien (Anglistik – Philosophie/Psychologie – Lehramt)
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2006 – 2008	AuPair in Amerika – New Jersey
2009	Jugendaustausch in Tschechien (Youth in Action)
	68:Youth for Hope, hope for youth!
2010	Jugendaustausch in Ungarn (Youth in Action)
	Going the Gypsy Way
2012	Erasmus Semester in Valencia, Spanien

Arbeitserfahrung:

2005 – 2006	Frühbetreuung an der Volksschule Zeltgasse, Wien 8
2006 – 2008	AuPair für 2 Kinder (2 und 4 Jahre (2006))
2008 – 2009	Überbrückungshilfe / Springerin für die Wiener Kinderfreunde (geringfügig - 46h/Monat)
2009 – 2010	Pädagogin im Privat-Kindergarten Heidi (geringfügig - 10h/Woche)
2010 – 2011	Privat-Kindergarten Heidi – Leitende Pädagogin Vorschulgruppe
2010	Mitverfasserin der Broschüre „Klimazwerge sind Freunde der Erde und beschützen sie" Klimabündnis Österreich
2011	Erstellung eines Klimakasperl-Theaters mit Workshop für Kindergärten in Österreich – Klimabündnis Österreich
seit 2011	Puppenspielerin „Kasperl und die Klimafee" Klimabündnis Österreich
seit 2012	Pädagogische Leitung Privat-Kindergarten Heidi

Persönliche Fähigkeiten und Kenntnisse:

Sprachkenntnisse:	Muttersprache Deutsch
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Instrumente:	Gitarre, Gesang
Weitere Fähigkeiten:	Rhetorische Kompetenz
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Interessen:

Nachhaltige Lebensstile im Bezug auf Mobilität, Ernährung, Energie, Umwelt und Klimaschutz im Alltag, Kunst (Zeichnen, Malen, Origami, kreatives Gestalten), Singen und Musizieren (Gitarre, Flöte, Gesang, Tanz), Reisen, fremde Kulturen und Lebensweisen, Lesen (Weltliteratur, Reiseführer, Kinderbücher), Natur, Wandern, Rad fahren, Klettern, Theater und Konzertbesuche,…

Wien, am 18. April 2013