

Written Presentation Sample (A)

The following article by Justin Friesen was printed in newspapers across Canada including the Halifax Herald, the Toronto Star and the Montreal Gazette in August, 2002.

WE CAN DO IT!

by Justin Friesen

I was born in 1991. Now in 1991, we looked at things differently. We did this because, we didn't recycle or compost where I lived. And if I had continued like this over my lifetime we would have lot more problems than we do now.

To give you a picture of what would be different, here's what I would have done in my lifetime if we didn't recycle or compost:

I would live to the age of 74 years old.

I would have four homes in my life until I retire in an old age home.

I would own twelve cars. Two of them would be lemons.

I would have 1.1 kids and 1.2 wives. (I'm not quite sure what that means, but I haven't finished Grade 6 math yet).

During my 74 years, I would consume a lot.

I would use 16,700 pop and juice containers.

I would drink 18,500 litres of milk.

I would burn 510,000 litres of oil and gas. 20% of that will be motor fuel.

I would eat 5,400 chickens. That's 10,800 chicken wings.

I would normally eat 5,000 fish. But I don't like fish. Probably I'd have more chicken.

I would eat 30 entire pigs and 35 whole cows.

I would eat 15,000 eggs.

I would use 13 million litres of treated water and produce that much again as sewage.

I would produce 15,000 kgs of packaging

As a result of this consumption, I would produce 1,200,000 kgs of Carbon Dioxide. Carbon Dioxide is most of our greenhouse gas emissions.

In '91 terms, I would have gone on to produce 65,000 kg of solid waste. Picture that. 65,000 kgs of solid waste thrown out, all rotting away in a landfill. That's 750 times my body weight.

Here is another scary fact. In the United States, every week they throw away one billion aluminum cans! In one year, all those cans could build 33,764 Boeing 737 jets!!!

But, things are different where I live now. All those things I would have thrown out, we now recycle and compost. I can recycle and compost in my school, my home, and at the store. We can do this because **we** made it happen. And why did we do it? Well certainly I can tell you why I do it - I need the environment a lot longer than the adults do (No offence!). While we have done a lot of things to help, we need to remember: we can't stop.

So what can you do? That is probably what most of you are still pondering. Well let me tell you there are thousands of things you can do. Like simply picking up a piece of litter on the ground

to organizing a local clean up! Start recycling at work or at school. Compost in your back yard. Plant a tree or a garden. Start a new web site. Get active in your community!!!

I started my own new web site to help kids and schools learn about the environment. It is www.Justinvision.com .

And you wouldn't believe what a bit of effort can lead to. Now the adults are listening to the kids! I was fortunate to be one of twelve kids from around the world to be on the Jr. Board for the International Children's Conference on the Environment sponsored by the United Nations Environmental Programme. It's brought kids from around the world to talk about environmental issues! At the conference there was an election by the kids to select two of us to go to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. Analiz Vergara, from Ecuador, and I were chosen to go. We will be presenting challenges we made at our conference to the world leaders at the Summit.

But here is our challenge: Too often the world leaders are just a bunch of adults talking, listening to big businesses who don't care about the environment. They tell lies like the environment is getting better, that they're not polluting, or that there is no such thing as climate change when we know this isn't true. There is pollution happening. The environment is changing. And there is climate change. Scientists have proven this for a fact! Look around you. Look at the smog across our countries this summer. There is pollution happening all around us! Did you know that very 8 seconds another person dies because they don't have clean water in the world. 1.1 billion people don't have access to clean water!

We need our leaders to listen to us this time!! We need them to do what the people of the world want and need. We need them to stop listening to big businesses who only care about money. All my life I have had to do what adults have told me to do. Now its time for the adults to listen to us kids. And that's because we want an earth that will be around when we grow up. You can help, too. Tell your friends, your politicians, everyone. Tell them to listen to the people. Tell them your kids need a future.

And don't just say something. Do something for the environment today. Its easy and fun to do. It makes me feel great to see everybody doing things to help. I love it when I see people at clean-ups, not even knowing who other people are, and just saying "Hi, I'm John" or "Hi, I'm Martha!" And then we just work together to keep our air fresh, our water pure and our ground clean. I just hope there is enough earth left (What am I talking about?! Of course there will be!) so my kids have a future, too. So don't just stand there, WE CAN DO IT!

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