

Celebrate Earth Day with MOHAI

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day in the United States. Starting in 1970, Earth Day celebrations promote environmental protection and stewardship through public education, political advocacy, and community organizing. Explore some of the history of current environmental issues and activism with MOHAI by exploring our online collection, creative activities, and partner resources with the young learners in your home.

Exploring the online collection

MOHAI's collection of artifacts, images, archival materials, and oral histories is a vital resource for both the community and researchers, and an expansive selection is available for [viewing online](#). Practice historian skills at home by looking closely at primary sources in the online collection using our [Introduction to Primary Source Analysis](#) worksheets. Below are a few items we've selected that touch on different topics related to the history of environmentalism.

- Salmon trap, ca. 1911 – learn about sustainability of traditional Native fishing practices <https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/imlsmohai/id/6308>
- Seattle City Light power plant, Seattle, 1837 – explore the history of electric technology <https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/imlsmohai/id/914>
- Students overturning car in Earth Day demonstration outside Seattle Community College, Seattle, 1970 – look back at the first Earth Day in Seattle <https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/imlsmohai/id/1931/rec/5>
- Hazel Wolf protesting in front of Federal Building, Seattle, May 5, 1986 – learn about nuclear waste and environmental activism <https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/imlsmohai/id/9415>
- Handblown glass sculpture by Dale Chihuly, 1987 – look at art inspired by nature <https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/imlsmohai/id/14637/rec/22>
- Philip Ripley with aluminum foil statue at Renton Park Elementary School, Renton, April 14, 1992 – think about ways students and schools can promote recycling <https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/imlsmohai/id/9378>

Resource spotlight

The Muckleshoot Food Sovereignty project advocates for the right of Native communities to choose their own diets and shape their own food systems. Learn about the project and Native food sovereignty by watching a Tedx Talk by Valerie Segrest at <https://youtu.be/RGkWI7c74oo> Afterwards, discuss:

- What natural resources have been important to Coast Salish food sovereignty?
- How does the health of the environment affect Native food sovereignty?
- What does food sovereignty look like or mean to you/your community?

Get Outside

Explore Seattle as an urban environment with our special neighborhood walk bingo at the end of this activity kit. Which ones can you find where you live?

Get Crafty

Look up the local “Bullitt Center,” which claims to be “the greenest commercial building in the world.” <https://bullittcenter.org/building/building-features/> Some of its features include:

- Radiant floor heating
- Solar panels
- Composting toilets
- Rainwater harvesting
- Bike garage instead of onsite car parking
- Timber framing sourced no further than 1000km
- Triple-paned windows with external shades

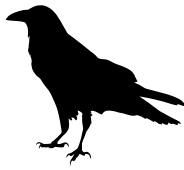
If you were to design a “green” building, what features would it have? How will it reduce waste and reliance on electricity? How can it encourage healthy low-emissions lifestyles? What are ways to reduce waste and environmental impact during the construction process? Grab paper and whatever drawing supplies you have and bring it to life! Now that you have a design, take it one step further by building a prototype/model of clean recyclables and trash.

Additional Activity Ideas

- *Environmentalism at home* – Think about an everyday task in your home, such as flushing the toilet, cooking, or cleaning. How did people do this activity in the past? Was that better, or worse for the environment? What are the remaining environmental challenges with this activity? Can you design a creative way to change that activity so that it has less environmental impact?
- *Make a mini greenhouse!* Take a plastic zip lock baggie, a couple of dried beans, and two cotton balls. Get the cotton balls a little bit wet – not too much! Seal up the bag almost all the way, then blow into it like a balloon. That’s it! Place your beans near a window and wait for them to sprout.
- *Look up the “heritage trees” in your neighborhood* – This map catalogues the street trees of Seattle: <https://www.seattle.gov/transportation/projects-and-programs/programs/trees-and-landscaping-program/seattle-tree-inventory-map> Once you’re in the map, click on “Explore Street Trees” tab up top then the “Heritage Trees” drop down on the left. Where are the Heritage Trees located? Why might there be more Heritage Trees in some areas of the city than others? If it’s close enough and you have someone to go with, take a walk to the nearest heritage tree. What species is it? Why do you think someone would label this tree a “heritage” tree? What activities might people from the past have done in the shade of this tree?

Seattle's Urban Environment Bingo

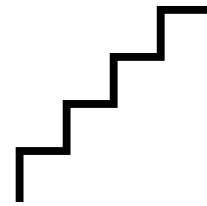
Celebrate Earth Day by exploring the built and natural environment around you! Take a walk around your neighborhood and see which of these Seattle features you can find. Cross each square off as you find it - when you get three straight across, up and down, or diagonally, you've got Bingo! Clear the board and you're a MOHAI star!



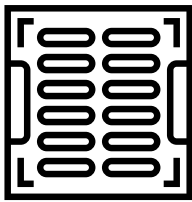
CROW



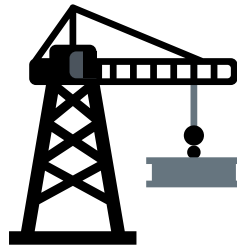
P-PATCH /COMMUNITY
GARDEN



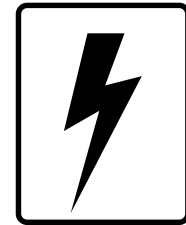
PUBLIC STAIRS



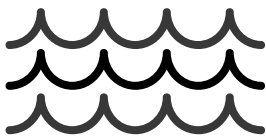
STORM DRAIN



CONSTRUCTION



ELECTRIC BOX



PUBLIC WATER ACCESS



FRUIT TREE



VIEW OF THE MOUNTAINS

Flip over to learn more about each item as you find it!

Seattle's Urban Environment Bingo

Learn more about each of the items on the bingo card as you find them!

1. Crows

The crow population has increased with the human one. Reduced forest cover creates open foraging areas preferred by crows and an increase in food sources like garbage.

2. Fruit Tree

Common fruit trees in Seattle include apples, plums, and pears. City Fruit is an organization that harvest fruit from Seattle trees for donation.

3. Storm Drain

Most are near or on a curb and have a metal grate to prevent debris. Take a closer look -does it say "Puget Sound Starts Here"? That's because they drain directly into natural waters.

4. Public Stairs

Seattle has a lot of hills! Some used to be even bigger but land was dug away to make them less steep. There are over 650 public stairs in Seattle.

5. Electric Box

Bonus points if it has art on it! Seattle City Light was the first electric utility system to achieve zero net greenhouse gas emissions in 2005.

6. Public Water Access

Did you know that in addition to public parks with water access, a 1996 city council resolution established public access through "shoreline street ends"? Wherever a public road dead ends at water in the city of Seattle is a public green space you can use.

7. Mountain Views

Which ones can you see? The Cascade range to the east and Olympic mountains to the west were both formed by tectonic plate collisions over millions of years.

8. Construction

In a rapidly growing city buildings are being torn down and built every day. Construction projects impact the environment through noise, reduced greenery, runoff pollution, emissions, and more. What are some ways we can reduce this harm?

9. P Patch / Community Garden

These shared spaces for gardening became common in Seattle during the 1970s. Gardens are a great way to promote a healthier urban environment and most also have shared plots to grow food for donating to others.