Ways to Encourage Students to Take Action!

Have you ever driven your car a block or two in town, when you know you could walk? Susan and I have, even though we know it’s not as environmentally friendly as walking! But we are trying some research-based tools in our own lives to help us take appropriate actions, and they work!

As you work with students in your mini-unit and other times, we want to help you get them to not just know more about “stuff,” but to do something as a result of this knowledge! Research tells us that simply “knowing” what to do often does not lead us to action.

This would be a good time to have students look at the Live Gently resource on The Way We Live Educator Resources to get ideas and inspiration.

Here are some things you can do to encourage students to choose an action and then follow-through. Feel free to use any or all of these actions… whatever you have time to do.

1) **Ask your students to say in public what they will do.** That **public commitment could be telling classmates, telling their family**, writing the action down and posting it in the classroom, and/or posting it on Facebook. Research tells us that when people make a public commitment, they are more likely to follow-through with the action.

2) **Give your students a high five, thumbs up, or whatever kind of public approval you can provide for the decisions they make.** Students can provide approval to each other as well with your modeling and encouragement.

3) **Set the stage so students see that making the commitment and taking the action are what you hope all students in the class will do.** This will indicate to your students that this is what others are doing, so they should do it, too.

4) **Help students make a plan to overcome the barriers to** taking the action they choose. A plan can help students decide when they will take the action, who will help them if needed… The Living Gently resource includes a plan that could be a starting point. Again, well-established social psychology principles show that people with a plan are much more likely to follow through. **As teachers, you make daily plans so you can talk to your students about how you use plans.**