Reclaim Your Holidays

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Our Mission

Reclaim Your Holidays helps Iowans create fun, meaningful holidays that are easier on the environment through practical, inspiring information, and opportunities to share ideas.

Our Sponsors

Reclaim Your Holidays is funded by the REAP Conservation Education Program and UNI EPSCoR.

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January 2016

Earth Month planning ideas ready-to-use

What better way to celebrate and reclaim the earth than to reduce the natural resources we use! Our partner project, Helping Students Protect the Environment & Live Well, offers many activities and lesson plans to use with all ages for Earth Month. Teachers, naturalists, librarians, solid waste educators, and others are welcome to use the materials.

Check out the Earth Month Planning Ideas - ALL in the Educator Resources database. Some of our teachers’ favorites can be used with adult audiences, too! Commonly used with grades 3-8 is the book, Agatha’s Feather Bed, by Carmen Agra Deedy. An associated lesson plan and fun skit - enlightening for all ages - are found here. Another teacher favorite is Everything Comes from Something. Explore the possibilities on the database!

How did your holidays go? Want to change anything?

January is a great time to think about how you spent your time during the winter holidays. The RYH 5-Minute Assessment will give you a quick look at what you did and let you see if you want to make any changes for 2016. (RYH Trainers - Use this blurb in your own newsletters or put a few 5-Minute Assessment handouts at your welcome desk. Add a table tent, “Happy about your Holidays?” Try it first so you can give a personal appeal to your audiences.)

How I use RYH resources
Jen Jordan, recycling coordinator, City of Iowa City, says:

I use RYH resources frequently, including at the City's November holiday market. I borrowed the [RYH table display](link to RYH table display) to help engage shoppers looking for local, hand-made goods. I thank them for shopping locally and encourage them to choose reusable packaging and homemade or experiential gifts that have a lower impact on the natural world. I also joined RYH coordinators in reading *The Gift of Nothing* (link to YouTube reading) at library story hours and encouraged the adults to get the book from the library to read to their families and friends.

*RYH Trainers:* Add a note to your August/September calendar to take RYH resources to your own community holiday/winter market!

**Live what you love all year round**

If you're ready to make 2016 plans to live what you love, check out the 2-minute Public Broadcasting Service [Happiness Store video](link to Happiness Store video) (2 min.; all ages) and then head in the right direction by taking the [Pick 5 survey](link to Pick 5 survey) (grades 9-adults; adaptable to other grade levels). These two resources can help you see what's most important in your life. A next step is to complete the [Living Gently guide](link to Living Gently guide) for taking some personal actions!

*RYH Trainers:* Use this item in your newsletter to motivate RYH audiences to "live what they love." OR show the Happiness Store video during a children's program this winter/spring and then ask the adults in the crowd to take the Pick 5 survey with/without their young person.

Cheers for longer days as we head toward Earth Month!

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