

World Oceans Day Webinar
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Shared with students on May 23, 2019

This webinar was hosted by Sam Mackiewicz, who is the World Oceans Day Director of The Ocean Project, and Rachael Coccia, who is the Director of Youth Initiatives. World Oceans Day is Saturday, June 8, 2019 this year. This webinar gave a brief history of World Oceans Day and started with 2002 when there were only a few events that took place in a few countries, though no events were in the U.S. From 2004-2008 World Oceans Day was held in many countries and in many locations; the United Nations even proclaimed June 8 as the official World Oceans Day. The largest World Oceans Day was last year in 2018 with over 1,500 events in 140 countries. During these events, approximately 36% involved youth activities, and 57% were focused on plastic pollution.

World Oceans Day provides a global connection among people of all cultures and backgrounds, as well as offering activities that educate the public, encouraging conservation efforts, and providing a commitment to protect oceans and empower those who are involved. While the focus has been on individuals efforts to make a difference, the focus has shifted to providing and demonstrating leadership in preventing plastic pollution and providing solutions to the plastic problem globally. There is also an aspect of World Oceans Day that allows for those who are not near any ocean to participate and provide leadership and solutions.

The WorldOceansDay.org website has a vast amount of information and allows for many different ways to participate. The social media campaign theme this year is #TogetherWeCan. Based on viewing this webinar this evening (May 20), I decided that this is an excellent one to share with my 4th graders. I know that many of them will be interested in this, as plastic pollution in our oceans has been a hot topic this school year in my classroom.

Student Reaction

My students were shocked at the amount of plastic that finds its way to the oceans. They were glad that groups were organized to do clean up and think that clean up efforts should be happening more often during the year. My students said if we were near the ocean that they would participate in World Oceans Day.

This led to a nice introduction about picking up trash on our school campus the week of June 3. We talked about how all trash matters and how once it gets to water it has a chance of making it to an ocean.