

CREATING A SCHOOL GARDEN

Rocio's mom has a garden to help feed her family. This activity can help children reflect on the benefits of having a garden and learn to grow a plant.

Option 1: If the school has the space, you can create a school garden with the class or with volunteers.

Option 2: You can bring a vegetable or fruit that has seeds and ask the children to extract one or two seeds. Repurpose a plastic bottle to make a small pot. The children can fill the pot with soil, plant the seed, and be responsible for watering it every day and watching it grow.

"I DREAM OF MY COMMUNITY" ACTIVITY

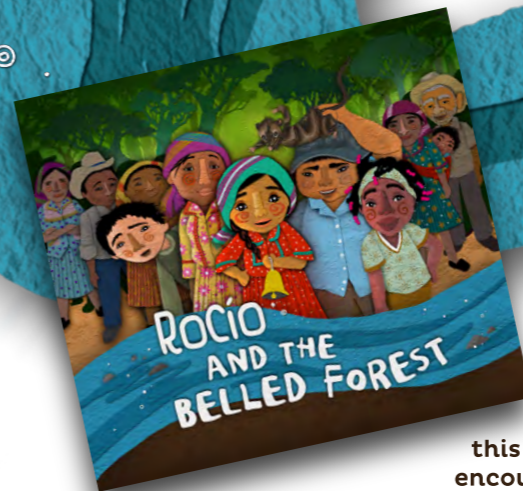
Step 1: Read the text "I dream of my community"*

I dream of a community that we can feel is our own, where we can all share, be creative, be unique, and live together in harmony. I imagine a place where we can have special moments, where we can learn and talk. In my dream community, learning happens not only at school or at home, but also when we play and enjoy our free time. Parks, squares, and other sites can be fun places to learn and explore. I would like that in my dream community, we not overlook the little things in life. The things we do every day are important because they make life exciting! In my dream community, we can be free, but we also understand that we need rules and laws that are fair to live together happily. I imagine special places in the community where we can spend time with friends and family. We could also take care of our planet, reducing the

amount of waste and taking care of the trees and animals! I would also like there to be empty spaces, like blank sheets of paper, where we can bring new ideas and projects to improve the community. We could decide how to use those spaces together. I imagine a community where we can all talk about what we want. We could help design the community and make it a better place for everyone. *This text is adapted from the original text entitled "I dream of my city. Me and my environment".

Step 2: Ask the children to answer the questions and draw a picture of a dream community.

1. The people who wrote the text are imagining a community. Why do you think they are describing what they are imagining rather than what it is actually like? Do you think the community they are describing could be like the one we have here? Why do you think that?
2. Apart from learning at school and at home, where else do you think we can learn important things?
3. Imagine you were a member of Congress representing our community. What would you do to make it a better place for everyone?
4. As told in Rocío's story, in addition to the decision-makers in the community, we can all make a difference with our actions. How can we carry out some of the ideas for improving the community from the classroom?



LEARNING guide

This story can be used to promote children's leadership, environmental protection, and community action. Using the exercises in this learning guide, facilitators can introduce and encourage discussion on key concepts and principles, highlighting actions and attitudes reflected in the story.

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1)) In the story, Rocío was concerned because the level of water in the river was lower than usual. Together with her friends, she discovered that the reasons for this included that the community was not conserving water and the trees in the Akoapa forest where the river flowed were being cut down.

1a) What did the wise tree say about how trees help the environment and keep rivers from drying up?

1b) Because the water level of the river was low and trees were being cut down, Rocío's friends found themselves being impacted for different reasons. Connect a line between the character and the reason why they were concerned about these environmental problems:

Martín	His home was cut down and he would have to move elsewhere
Rocío's mother	The family could not fish because the fish had left the river
Pepe, the river possum	The water in the well was very low and there might not be enough drinking water in the future
Margarita	If the river dried up, there wouldn't be enough water to irrigate the garden and they wouldn't be able to grow their own fruits and vegetables

1c) Seeing all the concerns that Rocío and her friends raised, you can appreciate the many ways in which nature helps us and how important it is to protect the planet. This can be defined as:

Ecoservices:
The benefits that nature brings people that improve their health, economic situation, and quality of life.



You can also make your mark. Draw below what you can do to protect the planet. Who could help you in your actions?

2a) When Rocío and her friends became aware of the problem, they decided to help. They all helped and proved to be leaders in different ways. In your opinion, and thinking about the characters in the story, what qualities should a leader have?

2b) In the story, the animals and the whole community helped solve the problem. Why do you think it is important to work as a community/team rather than alone? Can you give examples of when and how you work collaboratively at school or at home?

2c) In the story, everyone contributes with their knowledge and things they like to do. Rocío talks to members of the community because she likes to talk to people. Martín is very knowledgeable about the river because some of his family members are fishers. The tree knows how everything works in the forest because of the

many years it has lived there. Think of something you like to do; how could you use this to benefit your community?

2d) At first, Rocío was nervous about speaking in front of all her neighbours, but with practice and the help of her friends she was able to overcome that fear. What strategies can you use to overcome a fear or obstacle?

3) At the beginning of the story, it is mentioned that the inhabitants of Akoapa did not need a watch to tell the time or a calendar to know the season. Similarly, Martín knew the river and the forest very well because he travelled along them daily with his parents when they went fishing, as they had done with his grandparents. This can be defined as:

Traditional knowledge: wisdom, experience, skills, and practices that are developed, maintained, and passed on from generation to generation in a community.

3a) What has your family and/or friends taught you that has come from the wisdom of many past generations?

3b) What new knowledge would you like to pass on to the next generation as you grow up?

4a) In the story, the member of Congress visits Akoapa. Do you know what a parliamentarian is? Underline the responsibilities of parliamentarians in the following definition.

Member of Congress: representative of the Honduran people who is elected by popular vote every four years. Their responsibility is to make laws to improve the lives of the people of Honduras, set budgets, and oversee the work of the government. As representatives of the people, they engage in different ways of listening to citizens and promoting participation.

In the story, the parliamentarian representing Akoapa visits the community and talks to people to learn more about the actions they have taken to protect the environment and listen to their needs, including how to protect the Akoapa forest in a sustainable way.

4b) The parliamentarian works in the National Congress. In the following definition you can read about the Congress. Underline how many parliamentarians make up Congress:

National Congress of Honduras: A democratic institution that brings together representatives elected by the public. Congress passes laws and promotes the public's interests, among other functions. It is made up of 128 individuals called members of Congress.

4c) At the end of the story, in Congress, the parliamentarian who had visited Akoapa proposed declaring the forest a protected area. What does it mean to make decisions? What should we do to make decisions in the classroom?

4d) If you were asked to write a letter to a member of Congress about what makes you proud of your community or school, what would you say?



ACTIVITIES

SILENT LINE: SHOWING THE VALUE OF COMMUNICATION

In the story, all the residents of Akoapa met in the village square to discuss and find solutions to help the forest and the river. This activity helps demonstrate the importance of effective communication.

Step 1: Direct the children to line up in a particular order without speaking (e.g., they can line up by the order of their birthdays, the first letter of their name, etc.).

Step 2: Once the children have lined up, start a discussion. You can ask them:

• What did you find most difficult to agree on or to understand each other? How did you communicate with each other? Why is communication important? How can language be useful? Is there one or many? Which ones?

Step 3: Give them the opportunity to come up with a communication strategy to organize themselves more effectively (e.g., there are 1-2 people in charge of telling each person where to go).

Step 4: Give them a second guideline on how to line up and start over!