

Rhoda Takes Care of the Environment



This book is part of the Inuutsiarniq Reading Series, developed by the Department of Health in Nunavut. The Inuutsiarniq Reading Series is a unique, Nunavut-developed literacy initiative that infuses Northern values of healthy living and self-care into a culturally appropriate reading program.

The Inuutsiarniq Reading Series was developed to support the reading level guidelines outlined in the Department of Education's Inuktut reading program, Uqalimaariuqsaniq. Uqalimaariuqsaniq is a sequential and progressive Inuktut reading program that supports students in their development as readers.

Healthy students are better learners and become healthy adults. For more information, visit www.gov.nu.ca/health and your local Health Centre.

Book details

Level: 11

Text Type: Fiction

Subjects/themes: Simple definition of the environment; how litter is harmful to the environment; how to take care of the environment; spring cleanups

Key features: 32 pages, dialogue, past tense

Rhoda Takes Care of the Environment



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One day at school, Rhoda's teacher Jay made an announcement.

"Today is the day we are helping out with the spring cleanup," Jay said. Rhoda and her classmates cheered and ran to put on their jackets. They were happy to spend the day outside.





Once they were outside, Jay gathered the class in a circle.

“A spring cleanup is much more than a fun day outside,” Jay said. “It is one way that we take care of the environment.”

“What is the environment?” Rhoda asked.

“It’s the land, sea, and air. Plants, animals, and humans are part of the environment, too,” Jay said. He looked around at everyone. “Do you know why we take care of the environment?”

Rhoda scrunched her nose. No one in the class spoke up.





“We take care of the environment because we need it to be healthy,” Jay said. “We breathe air, drink water, and eat plants and animals. We need all of these things to be healthy so that we can be healthy too.”

Rhoda and her class spent all morning picking up litter by the creek. Rhoda filled up a big bag with pop cans and plastic wrappers.

Rhoda felt proud of her hard work, but she wanted to learn more about how to keep the environment healthy. She decided to ask Jay some more questions.





“Jay, why is litter bad for the environment?” she asked.

“Litter is full of harmful chemicals. When we litter, we are putting these harmful chemicals on the land,” Jay said. “Plants absorb the chemicals from the litter, which makes it difficult for them to grow.”

Jay bent down and pointed to the tundra.
“Animals eat all different kinds of plants,”
Jay continued. “Caribou eat lichen and moss
like this. If there is none to eat, the caribou
may have to find somewhere else to live
where there is more lichen and moss.”





“So litter makes the land unhealthy for the animals to live on,” Rhoda said.

“That’s right,” Jay said. “Animals can also eat the litter and become sick. If the animals can’t live here, then we won’t have animals to hunt and eat.”

Rhoda frowned as she thought of the caribou her dad brought home from hunting.

“Are there other ways that we can take care of the environment?” Rhoda asked.

“Of course!” Jay said, smiling. “One of the easiest ways to take care of the environment is to never litter. All we have to do is throw our garbage away properly instead of leaving it on the land.”





Soon, it was time for lunch. Rhoda wanted to know about more ways to take care of the environment. She decided that she would ask her brother, Mike.

When she got home, Mike was in the driveway working on his ATV.

Rhoda ran up to him. “Mike, how do you take care of the environment?” she asked.

“Great question!” Mike said. He pointed to his ATV. “I’m taking care of the environment by fixing my ATV.”





“How does that help the environment?” Rhoda asked.

“My ATV was leaking fuel. Fuel is a dangerous chemical,” Mike said. “If fuel gets on the land, it can make the plants and animals unhealthy.”

“And we need the plants and animals to be healthy so that we can be healthy, right?” Rhoda asked.

“That’s right!” Mike said.

Just then, Rhoda's mom came outside carrying a big pot.

"Anaana is taking care of the environment by sharing her caribou stew," Mike said as he opened the door of the truck for her so she could put the pot inside.

"What do you mean?" Rhoda asked.





“Your dad hunted a caribou, but there is more than we need,” Rhoda’s mom explained. “We take care of the environment by not wasting. I am bringing this stew to the community feast this evening.”

Rhoda asked, “Can I come?”

“Of course!” her mom said. “Another way to take care of the environment is to be proud of where you live. Sharing country food and using all parts of the animal are great ways to do that.”

“When you feel proud of the environment where you live, you will want to take care of it,” Mike added.



Rhoda smiled at her mom and brother. She had learned so many ways to take care of the environment.

She couldn't wait to get back to school so she could tell Jay and her classmates about what she had learned.



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