



How to

**ORGANIZE A
CLASSROOM VISIT**

Panda Ambassadors

Do you remember, as a kid, going on a field trip or listening to a speaker who ignited your love for the environment? Now it's your turn to inspire the next generation! There's no better audience—children are enthusiastic, receptive to new ideas, and still filled with wonder at the world around them.



Step 1. Pick a topic and an age group

There are so many environmental issues to choose from. Pick a topic that you find exciting, but that's also appropriate for your target age group. High schoolers can probably handle a presentation about poaching—but there's no way you'd want to talk to elementary school kids about it. Choose a topic with solutions that young people can implement themselves, with minimal help from their parents.

Potential Topics

Elementary and older

- Recycling and reusing
- Food waste
- Local wildlife
- Specific animal species, such as tigers or elephants
- Trash and plastic

Middle School and older

- Climate change
- Deforestation
- Wildlife extinction

High School and older

- Disposable economy
- Renewable energy

College

- Sustainable finance

If you need a little more direction, head over to WWF's [Wild Classroom](#) and check out some of the lesson plans we've already put together. This resource is meant for teachers, but you can definitely use parts of a lesson or individual activities for your classroom visit. It can also give you an idea of what kinds of lessons are appropriate for what grade levels.

Step 2. Contact your local school

If you know any teachers, start by asking if they or anyone they know would be interested in a visit. You may want to post on social media asking if anyone has a contact who teaches the grades you are interested in. You can also check with the Panda Ambassador Facebook group to see if anyone has local school connections.

Otherwise, find the website or phone number for the local school. You can call the general number and explain to the receptionist that you are affiliated with World Wildlife Fund and would like to come in and give a presentation to a class about your chosen topic. Ask if there's a particular person you should contact—either a teacher or someone in charge of planning external speakers. You may also be able to find email addresses for teachers on a school's website. If you know which grade you'd like to visit, you can email the teacher directly to ask if they would be interested.

Whoever you are working with will probably want more information about you, the Panda Ambassador program, and your presentation. Be ready to tell them a little bit about yourself and why you want to come speak to their class.

If your request to visit the classroom is declined, make sure you know why. You might learn that your topic isn't right for the age group, or that it doesn't fit with the curriculum. Or it could just be the wrong time—for example, April is the start of testing season for most schools and they won't have as much flexibility for guest speakers. Once you are sure your topic and timing are appropriate, contact another school and see if they would be interested. It might take some time, but eventually you should be able to find a teacher who is excited to have you visit.

Step 3. Tailor your presentation to your audience

Just like when you're giving a presentation to adults, you need to tailor the content to fit your audience. Young children won't want to listen to a long speech about the environment. Instead, plan an activity that helps them learn about the topic. For example, you can pull items out of a bag and ask whether they should be thrown in the trash, recycled, or composted. Or you can ask them to make thank-you cards for people working to protect nature in their community. Whatever your topic, make it visual, exciting, and fun. Again, check out [Wild Classroom](#) for activity ideas that are already kid-tested and approved.

Middle school kids can sit through a lecture, but they already do that all day. Try to make your visit fun by adding interactive elements like creating artwork, playing games, and performing skits. For high school and college audiences, you can open the floor to debate and a more serious, in-depth exploration of issues.

Know what main message you want your audience to be able to repeat when they leave the classroom. This goes for any age—but keep that message simpler for younger children and repeat it several times. Even the littlest kids should be able to go home and tell their parents what they learned about when you came to visit.

Step 4. Use visuals

A presentation full of visuals can really help kids connect to the subject. Talking about deforestation is not nearly as effective as showing photos of deforestation. The same goes for most environmental issues. Bring in props for your own show-and-tell session!

Step 5. Give action items

The most important thing you can give the kids at your presentation is a clear understanding of what they can do to help solve the problem. Leave them feeling empowered, optimistic, and ready to save the planet. They'll take that enthusiasm home to their families, where it might prove to be contagious.

For young kids, this should be a simple change they can make in their daily life, like taking multiple smaller helpings at dinner to avoid wasting food, starting a compost bin at home, or finding ways to reuse items that would otherwise go into the landfill.

Step 6. Leave resources for further study

It's a great idea to donate a few age-appropriate books on your topic to the classroom you visit. The kids who are really inspired will then have easy access to more information.

Step 7. Share your experience

Log on to the Panda Ambassador Facebook group and tell everyone how your classroom visit went. Were the kids engaged with the topic? What would you change if you decided to do it again?