Care

Find

Squeak the mouse that tells the Harvest story.

A cup full of soil

Two waste paper baskets and some rubbish for the relay race.

Introduce

Introduce Squeak as the mouse who has been on the Harvest adventure. Begin the assembly by inviting a child to come and see what the mouse has hidden in his nest today, (which will be a cup full of soil). Why do you think we have a cup full of soil? (Give the children time to guess and then explain about the name of our planet means soil).

Do you realise that Earth, is the only planet in our Solar System that is not named after one of the Greek or Roman gods or goddesses. The word Earth simply means land or soil. It doesn't have quite the same feel about it as Mercury or Venus – does it? But perhaps the thing that makes 'Earth' so special is not found in the name but in the responsibility we, as humans, have for where we live. We ourselves have been given the responsibility for our planet and we must take on this responsibility.

Harvest is a good time not only to say thank you for all the food and the wonderful world we live in but also to think about how we can care for the world that surrounds us.

Play

Set up a relay race between two teams – explain that it is only walking no running. Have an equal amount of rubbish (This can be anything from screwed up paper to empty crisp packets). The teams have to collect the rubbish and then bring it back to the waste paper bin.

Once the race is finished and everyone has been congratulated explain that the amount of rubbish we produce and the way we treat our planet is a very serious issue.

Talk

According to one newspaper report every day Britain throws away 220,000 loaves of bread, 1.6m bananas, 5,500 chickens, 5.1m potatoes, 660,000 eggs, 1.2m sausages and 1.3m yoghurts. That is as well as all the other rubbish we produce. This waste of food means that one day the world will run out of resources – remember whilst we throw away food other parts of the world are starving.

Every 2 hours apparently we produce enough rubbish to fill the Albert Hall. Did you know that there is a rubbish dump twice the size of the US floating in the Pacific Ocean and most of this is plastic? As this plastic begins to break down it is now finding its way into the food chain as fish and sea birds are eating these tiny pieces of rubbish. Such a large amount of rubbish in our oceans is obviously not good for the sea life or for us. All of the rubbish we are producing has to go somewhere – we are simply running out of space.

And did you know another sad fact? Although scientist cannot be completely sure about this it is estimated that 0.1% of all species become extinct every year. That could mean that over 2,000 species become extinct every year – the figure may be much higher. Scientists believe that places like the Amazon Rain Forest contain amazing natural cures that we have not yet discovered but we are destroying 150 acres of rainforest every minute of every day that means we may never discover those cures. We are destroying the very thing that we need to survive – the Earth.

Another example of how things are being destroyed is in Britain where there is now a lack of bees to pollinate flowers and fruit and this is causing major problems for gardeners. The animated film 'Bee Movie' shows us just how grey the world would be if this small but amazing creature became extinct completely. Each thing in nature, no matter how big or small it is has its own place and purpose. If we are not playing our part and in taking care of our world then we are going to be in a terrible mess. We cannot wait for someone else to start to tidy up – the process has to start with us. It is time for us to act.

(Take some time to think about the part we can all play in looking after our world).

Pray

Dear God thank you for the amazing world you have given us. We are sorry that we have not always treated the world and all that is in it as well as we should please give us the wisdom and the desire to look after it better. Amen

Classroom follow up:

Junk craft – instead of throwing the junk away have a lesson of creating something fantastic with it

Research some of the environmental charities and see the work they are doing

Write a pledge not to waste food as much as we sometimes do

Have a local litter pick or recycle tin cans – the school could make money from this