

Lesson 8: Earth Hour won over 85% of GTA adults

Media article

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Note: This article has been modified from www.thestar.com

Toronto residents, it seems, love their candlelight dinners! They were far more likely than other Canadians to celebrate last month's Earth Hour by eating in the light of a warm flickering flame, according to a poll conducted for event organizer World Wildlife Fund-Canada.

The online survey revealed that an overwhelming 85 per cent of adults in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) said they participated on March 29, 2008 when people around the world were asked to turn off their lights between 8 and 9 p.m. to support action on climate change. Almost everyone who participated said they turned out lights during the hour, and many shut down computers, televisions and other appliances. In Toronto, though, 13 per cent dined by candlelight, compared with just six per cent elsewhere in Canada.

Across Canada, 49 per cent said they took part in Earth Hour. Equally important, most of those surveyed recognized that Earth Hour was meant to lead to further steps to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

In the GTA, 71 per cent of respondents said that after Earth Hour they're more likely to reduce energy use at home by at least 30 per cent.

Earth Hour began in 2007 in Sydney, Australia, but Canada took a lead role this time, with 150 communities participating and 130,000 people (out of 300,000 globally) registering on the event's website (www.earthhour.org.)

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Student worksheet

Answer the following questions:

1. When was this article written? _____
 2. Which newspaper carried the article? _____
 3. Who wrote the article? _____
 4. What percent of Greater Toronto Area (GTA) residents participated in Earth Hour in 2008? _____
 5. Which group conducted the survey (or poll)? _____
 6. What was the purpose of Earth Hour? _____
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7. In which country did Earth Hour begin? _____
 8. Which country took over the “lead role” for participation in 2008?
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9. Have you ever participated in Earth Hour? If so, describe what you did.

10. Given the opportunity, would you participate in Earth Hour when the event takes place again March? Why or why not?

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Teacher instructions

Introducing the activity

- Poll students to find out if any of them have ever experienced a power outage and ask them what it was like.
- Then ask:
 - What would it be like to be without energy for an entire day?
 - How would things be different?
 - Would anyone voluntarily go without power for one hour?
(Explain to students that on March 29th, 2008, more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of all adults in the GTA turned off their lights for one hour in the evening. This hour of darkness has come to be known as Earth Hour.)
 - Why is this hour of darkness is called Earth Hour?

Ideas for teaching the article and worksheet

- Have students quickly scan the article and then ask them to select five words or phrases that capture their interest. Write these words on the front board and ask them to read the word list out loud with you. If there are any words that they don't know, discuss them and use members of the class as consultants.
- Read the article with the students and review the questions out loud. Record the answers on the front board to make it easy for students to complete their own worksheet.

