

# Saving The World - The Musical

Script by Kate Butcher

All Original Music by Gilly Guy

Ingleton Middle School, Ingleton, North Yorkshire

Written as part of the Comenius Project – ‘Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Healthy World’ as a way of teaching about caring for the environment.

Spring 2005

*Two stages, with space in middle. Choir in place on right hand stage.*

*Lights go down and beautiful slides for the area are shown with piano accompaniment. As they come to an end, the Guardian of the Earth - female, dressed in floaty costume - green / blue, with signs of pollution (brown patches?) etc takes her place on chair in the centre space, surrounded by 4 dancers. Spotlight on her. She then sings ‘It’s a Beautiful World’ describing how our beautiful world is slowly being destroyed by human activity. As she sings, the dancers circle her making movements that fit the words. As she comes to the end, the three children take their places on the left hand stage - in a café sitting in different postures looking fed up. Lights up on them. As the action moves to the children, Guardian leaves.*

Jen            So, here we are in Ingleton on a Saturday afternoon and what is there to do? Nothing

Fran           Nothing!

Bill            At all.

Jen            Why do we have to live here. If we lived in a city, there’d be loads to do.

Fran           Yep. Loads

Bill            Tons.

Jen            They’ve got cinemas, bowling alleys, skate parks

Fran           Shops.

Bill            Megazone!

Jen            And what have we got? Countryside! And the trouble with countryside is that it gets everywhere.

Fran           Everywhere.

Bill            Yeah. Everywhere.

Jen            Mountains, caves, rivers, trees, valleys.

Fran           Waterfalls!

Bill            Mustn’t forget the waterfalls!

Jen            And you can’t do a right lot with those.

Fran Not much good to hard teenagers like us.

Bill Not much good at all to *well* hard folk like us.

Jen My mum says we should count ourselves lucky to live in a beautiful place like this.

Fran Mine too. But I don't think she was ever young. I think she was forty when she was born! She doesn't understand what teenagers need. We need aggravation, battles to fight, excitement.

Bill A raison d'être.

Jen, Fran OooOOHoo! (*they get up and start playfighting with each other as the intro to their song plays*)

### **Song by principal actors - 'We're Bored'**

*As they finish the song the lights go down. There is a flash of lights and a drum roll as the three star lords appear - the judge in front and the other two on either side and slightly behind. the children cower and try to hide behind each other.*

Prosec (*being dramatic with his light sabre - which he lights each time they start to speak*)  
So, here we are. Earth's last chance. And it's all down to these quivering excuses for humanity. Are you sure that these are the chosen ones? They don't look as though they could save a goal in a game of football against a team of sloths never mind the world!

Judge These are the chosen ones. the selection was random It has been decreed. The future of the world is in their hands.

Jen Who's he's talking about. Can't be us!

Fran Well I can't see anyone else around can you? Ask them what they're up to Bill.

Bill What's going on. Who are you? And what do you mean - the chosen ones?

Judge We are from the Senate of the Universe. Unbeknown to you earthlings, you have been inspected by the Intergalactic Inspectorate and have been found sadly lacking. It has been decided to put your planet into special measures. You have only 50 years to turn this planet around before we put the care of earth into someone else's hands or destroy what is left of it before it affects the rest of the galaxy.

Jen How can we be lacking? The world looks fine to me.

Fran In fact it's pretty good really.

Bill The only problem is that there isn't much to do round here.

Pros And that young man is part of the problem. You humans just don't appreciate what you've got - to the extent that you're ruining it. You had one of the most wonderful planets in the universe and you're abusing and destroying it.

Judge Star Lords - Please read the inspection report.

SLDef Good use and care of resources SLProsUnsatisfactory  
SLDef Care for the environment SLProsUnsatisfactory  
SLDef Maintenance of the beauty of the planet SLProsUnsatisfactory  
SLDef Planning for the future SLProsUnsatisfactory  
SLDef Responsibility for other living species SLProsUnsatisfactory

Judge We are here to show you some of the problems that you are causing. The rest is in your hands. With me I have the Star Lord for the prosecution and the Star Lord for the defence. (*points them out*) Together, we will present the situation and then you must work out your action plan.

Jen But, why us?

Fran What about the adults?

Bill What about the politicians? They spend a lot of time talking about the environment. They are the ones that make the decisions.

Judge Yes. But you are the future of the planet. They have had their chance and failed. They cannot agree. They will not take responsibility. Now it is up to you. You have been chosen at random as representatives.

SLPros A little too random if you ask me.

SL Def Time is limited. We must start our journey.

SLPros First Charge - Good use and care of resources.

**(slides showing landfill sites as he speaks)**

You have been given everything that you need to live a comfortable life and what have you done? You've used things up with no thought for the future and how people are going to survive then - fossil fuels, trees, different food sources. You use things once and then throw them away. Every household produces nearly a tonne of waste every year. On average every person in the UK throws away their own body weight in rubbish every two months. You collect it up and put it in landfill sites. You fill the earth with rubbish and pump it out to sea too.

Jen But, we are recycling. My mum does anyway - and we do at school. We collect things and take them to the recycling bins at the Community Centre.

Fran We have banks for paper, clothes, bottles and shoes.

Bill And we've learned at school about reducing, reusing and recycling.

SLDef In their defence. the reduce, reuse, recycle movement is growing. Some households have already reduced the rubbish in their bins by over 50%

*(with each section, big signs are brought in and then visual aids to each concept)*

They can reduce by buying loose food rather than pre-packaged, using their own shopping bags when visiting the supermarket and growing their own vegetables.

They can reuse various items such as envelopes, scrap paper and carrier bags. Each person in the UK uses about 134 plastic carrier bags each year at the moment. They can also use rechargeable items instead of disposable ones and buy things in refillable containers.

And of course they recycle - which the children have already told you about and compost too. They could try to buy more recycled goods. For instance - Patagonia fleeces are made entirely from plastic waste... these pencils too.

### **Song choir - 'Reduce, Recycle, Reuse'**

- Jen I guess we could all do a bit more than we are doing.
- Fran We could buy more recycled goods.
- Bill There's lots of things we could do if we really think about it.
- Judge And now we move on to the second main charge. Care for the environment.

### **Slides showing different types of pollution**

- SLPros There's one key word here. And that's Pollution. Now they're really good at that. They pollute the air with their smoke and chemicals. In some places people have to wear masks just to walk through the streets. They pollute the land, covering and filling it with all sorts and they pollute the water. Without water life on earth would be non-existent and yet they still pollute it - through laziness and greed. Much of the water is CONTAMINATED. They dump 14 billions pounds of rubbish and untreated sewage into the oceans each year and up to 10 billion tons of oil. They also contaminate rivers and streams. Often governments do not care or look the other way. Animals and plants living in water die and harmful things get into the food chain. They affect life all through the food chain and then eventually humans are affected.

### **Dance - river going happily along it's way and gradually being filled up with pollutants.**

- Jen I feel sick. It looks so clean, I was swimming in the sea at Blackpool last summer!  
Yuck
- Fran What are we doing to ourselves?
- Bill There must be something to stop all this pollution. We can't just be letting it happen surely.
- SL Def But that's not the whole story. They have a long way to go before they get it right, but they are doing some things to help. They treat a lot of their sewage, before it goes into the water systems. They have created UNEP -the United Nations Environmental Programme and more than 100 countries have environmental agencies. In the 1800s

contaminated water caused huge problems in the developed world but now waterborne diseases have been eliminated completely. If only that were the case in the third world where 5 million deaths a year are related to the pollution of the water.

**Song - 'Adults and their Global Schemes' - Soloists.**

Jen So, there are probably things that we should do ourselves to reduce the pollution in our country.

Fran But, the biggest problem is in the developing world.

Bill Right, but we can't ignore it, because their pollution will affect everyone in the end.

Jen Well, I don't know about anyone else, but I'm really depressed already.

Fran Yeah, me too. Why didn't we know all this?

Bill We did know some of it, but I guess that just like the governments, we chose to ignore it. We had other priorities in our lives.

*Slight pause for thought*

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**Judge The third main charge please.**

SL Pros Envirocrime

Children Envirocrime! What's that?

SL Def It refers to anything that degrades and spoils your surroundings - graffiti, leaving litter, dumping cars or plastering walls with posters

Jen There are other things too. Chewing gum on the pavement for instance - have you seen the pavements in Lancaster - it won't be long before all the chewing gum joins up and we'll be walking on a mass of sticky stuff. (*mimes walking through sticky goo*)

Fran What I hate is dog poo! It really stinks when you get it on your shoes and then you tread it into the carpet and your mum goes barmy!

Bill I've heard that you can catch nasty diseases too - something called Toxicara - it gives children stomach upsets and can even make them go blind.

Jen There's not much of that going on around here though is there?

*Enter the family from Envirocrime hell - mum and dad smoking, two kids chewing very obviously and dog. All look a bit rough and unkempt.*

Dad Eeh, it's grand living round here isn't it our Maureen. Now then kids, how about some chips?

Wayne, Kylie - can of coke to go with it?

Wayne Oh yeah dad. I'll just get rid of my chewing gum. (*spits it out*) Get rid of yours Kylie. (*she does the same*) (*bits of paper that look like chewing gum!!!*) Don't forget lots of salt and vinegar dad.

*Dad goes off stage to get the chips.*

Maureen Where's our Darren?

Kylie Haven't seen him for about ten minutes. He disappeared with a can of spray paint and said he was going to paint the town red or summat.

Maureen Oh, nice. He is sooooo artistic. Ah, here's our dad with the chips.

*(they stub out their cigarettes on the floor, sit down and eat, looking around at the scenery)*

Dad Aye, it's proper grand around here. Look at those hills.

Maureen It's really beautiful innit? Shame we haven't got our car anymore. Where is it anyway?

Dad Oh, it was goin' to cost me too much to have it towed away so I got a mate of mine to take it up one of those valleys and dump it there. Saved a few bob there pet.

Maureen Nice. Here what's Killer doing? Aah, he's hungry. Give him a chip then.

*(Kylie feeds Killer, dropping chips all over the place)*

Wayne Eugh. He's having a (BEEP)

Dad Well, don't you stand in it and get it all over your shoes. Your mum cleaned those two months ago. Come on let's be off. Give us your chip papers then.

Maureen (*linking arms with him*) You can be a gentleman at times love. Nice.

*(They exit. Dad throws away all the chip papers into the audience and the kids do the same with the coke cans)*

### **Song choir - 'Envirocrime'**

SLPros Well, that says it all doesn't it. I hardly need to go on!

### **Judge The fourth main charge please.**

SLPros The fourth charge is about taking care of the planet for the future generations - maintaining the delicate balance of the elements.

Jen What does he mean by that?

SLDef He is talking about global warming and the destruction of the ozone layer children.

Fran Well, that's not our fault!

Bill And we can't do a lot about it anyway.

SLPros Global warming, also known as the greenhouse effect has been caused by humans. Whenever you burn coal, gas, oil or petrol, you produce carbon dioxide and other gases which go into the atmosphere and prevents heat from leaving it. This causes temperatures to rise.

Jen Yes, but that's OK surely. We could do with being a little bit warmer couldn't we?

Fran The weather's pretty awful here, you've got to admit. We do rain really well in Yorkshire - everyone says so.

Bill And if it got warmer, our heating bills would be lower!

SLDef It's not quite as simple as that. Scientists say that as the ice caps melt, the sea levels will rise. If that happens there will be a lot of flooding in the world. Huge areas of land where people live will be below the water level. A warmer earth may lead to changes in rainfall patterns and we would have more extreme weather. There could also be a wide range of impacts on plants, wildlife and humans generally.

### **Song - Global Warming**

Jen So, what do we do about it?

SLDef Well, basically, you have to reduce the amount of fossil fuels you burn and protect the world's forests. You need clean cars that run on alternative fuels and environmentally responsible renewable energy technologies.

SLPros And so far, you're not doing very well at that. For you to make a significant difference, everyone has to work together - governments, industry, communities and individuals and that's about as likely to happen as Wayne joining Greenpeace

Jen Well, you never know.

### **Judge The final charge please.**

SLPros It is unbelievable to us that species living side by side should seek to destroy each other for materialistic gain.

Jen Translate please.

Fran He's talking about humans killing other life on the planet to make money - destroying their habitats for instance by cutting down trees to sell.

Bill And killing animals for their skin or horns or tusks.

SLDef It has to be said that throughout time animals have been going extinct long before people evolved. It is a natural process. Palaeontologists estimate that well over 90% of all plant and animal species that ever existed have become extinct.

SLPros Yes, but humans are doing a very good job of speeding it all up. They are completely immoral - killing animals for fashion and for sport and destroying their habitats. All sorts of animals are in danger - the red and grey wolf, the snowy leopard, the condor, the whooping crane, different sorts of apes, the elephant, the gorilla to name but a few.

### **Song choir - 'Species Song'**

Judge     So, those are the main charges. There are many more, but these are the key ones for the moment. We hope that this little journey has been informative and that you are wiser than before. As you can see the situation is very serious. There is much to do. Can you do it? Can you make a difference where many before you have failed? Are you up to the job? You have fifty years in which to try. After that ...who knows.

### **Song - 'What're We Gonna Do?'**

*(They disappear)*

Jen       Well, so much for a boring Saturday afternoon.

Fran      Looks like we've found our cause Bill.

Bill      Our battles to fight.

Jen      But, can we do it?

Fran      Can we make a difference where many before us have failed?

Bill      Are we up to the job?

*(Look at each other)*

All       Yes we are!

Jen      We're going to make sure that everyone knows about all of this. We are going to educate

Fran      We're going to unite the youth of the world. We're going to get everyone's support

Bill      We are going to rally the troops and fight all the battles.

Jen      We will make a difference.

Fran      In fifty years, this world will be a much better place. We will be proud to hand it on to our children

*All is in darkness. There is a piano introduction and the a single spotlight appears on 'The Guardian of the Earth' (dressed in the earth colours of green and blue), who then sings a haunting melody about our beautiful world - mountains, trees, animals, birds, seas etc and how there is now hope. As she sings, a dancers circle her making movements that fit the words.*

*When she finishes, the lights go down. Slides of the beautiful Yorkshire Dales are shown.*