WHAT IS E.C.O. CHALLENGE?
Thanksgiving Point’s Explore, Create, Observe (E.C.O.) Challenge is a STEM program that invites junior high and high school students to address real-world environmental challenges on both a local and global scale. In the fall, students attend a career day to meet professionals working in science and engineering careers from state agencies, industry, and non-profit organizations. Teens learn the needs of these groups related to the challenge and spend the next several months designing and prototyping solutions in a way that makes sense to them. From producing short films to design challenges that aid in conservation, students select unique and authentic ways to contribute their ideas and solutions. Prizes are awarded to help schools provide real-world environmental science programs in the coming year. We invite you to participate and join the E.C.O. Challenge!

WHY PARTICIPATE?
• Inspire students’ critical-thinking skills and civic engagement.
• Connect to a network of educational resources and hands-on learning opportunities.
• Showcase your students’ abilities to local industry and agency.
• Win prizes and recognition for both student and school achievement.

HOW DO I PARTICIPATE?
• Submit a school registration form to Thanksgiving Point ThanksgivingPoint.org/eco-challenge-registration-page.
• Provide opportunities throughout the year for your students to complete their entries.

RECEIVE AWARDS
The average top scoring high school will receive the 2019-2020 E.C.O. Challenge Award. Participating students and teachers also receive E.C.O. Challenge T-shirts (featuring the winning design of the T-shirt Design Challenge). The three top average scoring schools are awarded $1,000 (1st), $500 (2nd), and $250 (3rd) to support environmental programs and initiatives at their school.

CONTACT
Our staff is available to answer questions and provide assistance if needed. Contact us at challenge@thanksgivingpoint.org or by calling 801.768.7480.
COOKING WITH LOCAL FOODS

The Challenge: Local Gardening

Entries due: April 3, 2020

There are many ways you can grow your own food. Research the positive impacts of urban and community gardening, then take steps to grow your own food in your community. Create a recipe using at least 5 ingredients grown in a community or urban garden. Provide a copy of the recipe and a typed essay. 500-500 word essay explaining the positive impacts of growing food locally. Students must provide evidence of impact of growing food locally for their community.

Challenge
• Use at least 5 ingredients grown in a community or urban garden to create an original recipe.

Showcase Day
• All entries must include the ingredients list.

Showcase Day
• Any tomato-based dish, potato based dish, or pasta will not be provided. You will have a choice to include a kitchen for meal prep but it will be available upon request.

SHORT FILM

The Challenge: Light Pollution

Entries due: April 3, 2020

20% of America’s light is from a place where they cannot see the Milky Way. The increasing amount of light pollution makes it difficult to see the stars and impacts our environment and our health. Make a video that addresses the following: what causes light pollution, what are the effects, how important is it to be able to see the night sky, what steps can be done to improve light pollution, how do we raise awareness and action in our own communities? Students will receive feedback and guidelines. (600-1200 words)

Challenge
• The video must include a location that addresses light pollution in Utah, from causes to action.

Entry Submissions
• 300-500 word typed essay
• Video link
• Must be done within 24 minutes
• What causes light pollution in Utah?
• What are the effects of light pollution?
• How important it is to be able to see the night sky
• What steps can be done to improve light pollution?
• How do we raise awareness and action in our communities?

Showcase Day
• Submit video digitally through private YouTube (Upload)
• Must be uploaded at least 1 week before the showcase
• Video is required
• Video Length
• 2-30 minutes
• Video Must be appropriate for family audiences

Showcase Day
• 500-1000 word typed essay including a picture of a character from the video submission
• What is the importance of upighting?
• Why did you choose this character?

GAMES TO PLAY

The Challenge: Air Quality

Entries due: April 3, 2020

Utah ranks in the top 10 of states for air pollution across the country, while we are breaking other states. Utah is the only state that is affected by air pollution. We have to do something to make a change! In order to make a change, we need to make more people aware of the cause of the air pollution. The games, etc. that top 10 states of air pollution use the same strategy. Students must create a game, essay, etc. that demonstrates the causes of air pollution, the effects it has, and how to stop air pollution. Students must use the game, essay, etc. to play and demonstrate the game during the ECO Challenge Showcase. All entries must include the game, essay, etc., the rules, the game, the facts, and how it helps the environment and the impact to the environment.

Challenge
• Create a game, essay, etc. that demonstrates the causes of air pollution, the effects it has, and solutions to prevent or stop air pollution.

Entry Submissions
• Physical/digital games and instructions
• Essay
• Game or video submission
• 300-500 word typed essay
• Poster

Showcase Day
• How does it teaches and informs on air pollution

Showcase Day
• Demonstrate the game

CREATIVE WRITING

The Challenge: Earth Stewardship

Entries due: April 3, 2020

Most people don’t know enough about the species we share our land with. If we do not attend to our land and the environment, we are taking a chance that the wildlife and plants we share our home with may not be able to withstand the dangers we may inflict on them. In our challenge, we aim to help students learn about species, their habitats, and the things we can do to protect them.

Challenge
• Create a poster or a brochure that describe the species you are interested in. Make sure to include the habitat of the species and why it’s important to protect this species.

Entry Submissions
• Create a poster or brochure that describe the species you are interested in. Make sure to include the habitat of the species and why it’s important to protect this species.

Showcase Day
• Option to read in front of the showcase (must specify that they want to read to the group) (writing available for judges to read) and talk with participants.