

## Weekend Workshop with Thom Henley Teaching as if the Earth Matters

by Kenny Peavy, Science Teacher

What really matters in education? We often find ourselves asking this very difficult question, most often coming up with a wide range of answers. However, with recent headlines about global warming and other environmental issues it is becoming quite clear that one answer being repeated more frequently is, "The earth matters!"

Nowadays, many teachers are finding themselves wanting to incorporate environmental education into their lessons but often lack the knowledge or experience to do so. At a recent EARCOS sponsored workshop at the International School of Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, 18 participants representing 8 different international schools learned how to infuse environmental education into their daily lessons.

The workshop, which was facilitated by Kenny Peavy and Thom Henley and focused on their new book *As if the Earth Matters- Recommitting to Environmental Education*, was held at the Forest Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM). The outdoor setting immersed participants in a true outdoor experience while learning skills for identifying local birds, plants and aquatic organisms. Teachers also participated in hands-on activities designed to take their students from simple environmental awareness to environmental stewardship and action.

The rejuvenating power of nature was a recurring theme as many teachers took time out to find a place of solitude and reflect on their current teaching practices and the increasing importance of including environmental education into their daily lessons.

Reflecting back on the value of what they had learned and experienced, here's what a few of the participants had to say:

*These two teachers did an amazing job of packing every minute with information, practical ideas and solutions and motivating the entire group. It was one of the best workshops I've been to...including ones in the United States.*

Tonja Mosser  
Ruamrudee International School Thailand

*I am delighted that EARCOS sponsored this kind of educational opportunity for teachers. While there are pockets of individuals and programs, it's great to find out that so many of us share common interests.*

Kate Thome  
Singapore American School

*A workshop without desks and walls is fantastic. "As if the Earth Matters" is the best workshop I have attended in while.*

Steve Northcott  
International School of Kuala Lumpur

We also found ourselves reassessing our own lives and busy schedules with many participants deciding that they will take time to find a quiet place outside, relax and enjoy life!

If you or your school wants to host a workshop focused on Earth Matters please contact:

Kenny Peavy – [kenny\\_peavy@iskl.edu.my](mailto:kenny_peavy@iskl.edu.my)  
Thom Henley – [thomhenley@hotmail.com](mailto:thomhenley@hotmail.com)

## Synopsis of As if the Earth Matters

*As if the Earth Matters* calls for action beyond simple awareness of environmental issues. The authors wish to motivate educators to engage students in rich experiential exercises and deep sensory experiences in outdoor settings that will lead to a sense of belonging to the Earth. Once a deep connection to Nature has been nurtured through direct experience students will become stewards of the earth and be motivated to action to preserve and protect nature's beauty and resources.

For more information please contact Kenny Peavy at: [earthmattersinfo@gmail.com](mailto:earthmattersinfo@gmail.com)

New Society Publishers – (available in North America July 2007)  
P.O. Box 189  
Gabriola Island, BC  
Canada, V0R 1X0  
Tel: 250-247-9737  
Fax: 250-247-7471  
E-mail: [info@newsociety.com](mailto:info@newsociety.com)



*Bear Bug Frog: Cecile Woolman, Steve Northcott, Lois Powell, Lisa Nazun, and Kirsty Dzulknain*



*Bamboo Cycle Game: Tonja Mosser (RIST), Cecile Woolman, Kate Thome(SAS), Steve Northcott, Steve Earny (SAS), Lois Powell, Kirsty, Tom Hopkins (SAS)*



*Bird Watching: Kate Thome (SAS) and Lisa Nazum (ISKL)*

