

Wesley
2nd Place
5th Grade, St. Nicholas School

As a 5th grade boy, I have always loved the great outdoors. Whether it's hiking through the woods, swimming in a crystal-clear lake, or just sitting by the campfire with my family, there is something special about being out in nature that makes me feel alive. It's no surprise then, that my passion for protecting the environment grew from our family camping trips.

I remember one summer when we went to a Yosemite National Park, and I saw firsthand how beautiful the natural world could be. The towering trees, the rushing streams, the majestic wildlife – it was all so awe-inspiring. But as we hiked deeper into the park, I also saw signs of human impact. There was litter scattered along the trails and even some visitors disregarding the rules meant to protect the park. It made me sad to see such disrespect for this amazing place that I loved so much.

From that moment on, I made a vow to do everything in my power to protect the environment. I started by picking up trash whenever I saw it on the ground, even if it wasn't mine. I learned about recycling and composting, and made sure my family did it at home.

Now, as I look to the future, I have big plans for how I want to help save the environment. I want to become a leader in protecting the earth and all its creatures. And I want to keep educating myself and others about the importance of taking care of our planet.

I know it won't be easy but I'm ready for the challenge. Because if we don't take care of the environment, who will? It's up to us to make a difference, and I'm determined to do my part.