

*Common Ground: The Water, Earth, and Air We Share*

**Discussion Guide**  
Grades 2-5

**Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.**

- Discuss the importance of taking care of our planet’s natural resources.
- Before reading, have a class discussion to activate prior knowledge about natural resources? What are they? Can they be replaced? Where are they? Do you need them in your life? Make a list of student generated responses on an anchor chart or whiteboard.
- Frontload vocabulary: environment, fossil fuels, natural resources, pollute, farms, livestock

**During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.**

- Why do you think the author starts the story with the story of sheep grazing?
- What does the story tell us each person can do to help share water, air, and other natural resources? What about businesses and farms doing the same?
- How is our planet described throughout the story? What are some examples from the illustrations or text?

**After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.**

Make a chart showing individual choices and group choices that affect the “common ground” of the earth. List the natural resources that are used by individuals, businesses, farms, and more. List ways those natural resources can be preserved or recycled.

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.