Clean Shore Corps Script

For the in-classroom script for this program, pre and post beach survey, we remind teachers to use elements from the NOAA or Hawai’I Wildlife teacher guides.

At the beach:

Hello everyone! We’re here today at Plumb beach to do some important work. Like we’ve been talking about in class, humans have an impact on the earth. What’s one of those impacts? Yes, littering is one! Here in New York, when someone litters or plastic trash finds its way into the street, it gets washed into the ocean and rivers. Our goal here today is to gather data, as scientists, on what kind of trash and plastic is here on the beach. With data, we can find connections and understand how we can prevent the trash from ending up in the ocean.

Have the kids help measure out the 100 feet along the beach; that area is also from the waterline up to either the beach grass or another predetermined line. Divide the students up into groups. A group generally consists of one person marking down data, the other one or two people picking up the trash in those ten feet of beach. Have them contact a teacher/supervisor/volunteer when they’ve finished their section.

Various things to ask the kids as they work:

“There’s a lot of trash on this beach. What part of the city do you think it came from?”

“Why do you think we’re out here doing this survey? How is it going to help the environment?”

“Do you use any of the objects you’ve picked up so far? Have you seen other people use them?”

After the kids are finished, or you’ve called ‘time’ on the exercise, gather the kids up and have them look at the bulk of debris they’ve picked up. Collect the clipboards and data sheets and grabbers.

“Great job everyone; we have lots of data now that we’ll take back to the classroom and process. Before we do that, can I ask how everyone felt, picking up this trash? What were some of the things you were thinking while picking up?” *This could double as a writing assignment in-classroom.*

“So, the most important thing I want you guys to think about, after we’ve done all this work to clean up, is responsibility. Maybe we didn’t cause this trash to be here, maybe we did, but either way we as humans are the caretakers of our environment. We need to take care of it so the people who come after us have a nice place to live as well.

“Later we’re going to come up with ways to make sure this trash doesn’t end up on this beach in the first place! That’s another way to take responsibility for human impact on the environment, besides actually picking the trash up.”