The Environmental Classroom is really two books in one. The first section, of approximately 140 pages, contains Hawkins' and Vinton's views on today's educational problems. The second part, about 200 pages, is a potpourri of articles, photographs, government pronouncements, cartoons, and book excerpts that reinforce the authors' position.

Hawkins and Vinton maintain that contemporary North American society is in the midst of several serious crises. The environmental crisis, however, is the most serious simply because unsatisfactory solutions will result in mankind's demise. The authors see education (but definitely not the "education" of the educational system which exists today) as the only possible hope for civilization.

Education must incorporate environmental issues not as separate disciplines or subjects, but as an integral part of a total commitment to human survival. Environmental education, then, must deal with mankind in a truly multidisciplinary, realistic way.

If we conceive of the environment as the total world in which man lives, and if we therefore conceive of all education as being environmental education..., then the environmental classroom becomes not just another panacea applied to an unworkable and anachronistic curricular structure, but a new conception of the purposes and methods of education. (p. 21)

The authors support their holistic view by citing numerous examples of environmental programs presently in existence and the latter section of the book adds reinforcement. There, over forty writers demand that we examine our present, inadequate programs and think realistically of alternatives. This second section goes a long way toward making The Environmental Classroom an interesting, relevant, and practical book. Hawkins and Vinton have brought a serious problem down to the only level where meaningful action will happen — the classroom.

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