

The Ecodiddle Eco-riddle

(Abridged version)

A light-hearted play about climate change

By C C Seely

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Includes 14 speaking roles with opportunities
for non-speaking extras to be included.

Min cast required – 7 if actors double up roles.

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December 2019

CAST

Narrator/Prompter

Hope Ecodiddle (Ecodiddle Earth Scientist)



Main Characters

Ernest Ecodiddle (Ecodiddle Engineer)



Bernie Boozle (Fat-cat Entrepreneur)



Other speaking characters:

11 (min of 4 actors – covering solar system, gophers & molecules)

Solar system characters	Gophers	Water molecules
Earth	Head Gopher	Splat
Sun	Gopher 1	Drippy
Moon	Gopher 2	Droppy
	Gopher 3	Soggy

Extras: Gophers carrying signs between scenes, additional water molecules (groups of 4)

Non Acting parts: Stagehands, sound effects, making costumes & props.

ACT 1: Not so cool now!

SCENE 1: Out in Space

Gopher walks across with sign saying, "Out in Space"

Optional Sound track - Richard Strauss – Sunrise from Thus Sprach Zarathustra.

Curtain raises/lights up to reveal the Sun back centre stage (if using screen system use starry background centrally with sun crouching to left of centre. The sun gradually rises & opens cape as Earth & Moon enter from right spinning & orbiting to centre. Narrator Hope is in place on a chair at front left but fast asleep

Earth: *(Fanning with hands)* Phew moon, is just me or is it getting hotter?

Moon: Weeell, My front's hot and dry where it's in the sunshine but my bum's freezin' *(pats bum)*, pretty much business as usual I'd say. *(Meteorite sponge thrown from off stage hits the moon.)* Ow! Never mind you being hot, I've got problems of my own, these space rocks are ruining my complexion – look at these craters!

Earth: I know, I'm lucky to have an atmosphere to protect me. *(Burps & farts)* Oooh excuse me I'm very gassy and I'm definitely running a temperature. What do you think Sun?

Sun: *(Grumpily)* Ach you've no idea what hot and gassy is, try being a giant ball of burning hot gas! I might heat you up, but I haven't changed, so if you're feeling hotter than usual Earth, it must be you.....

Moon: Yes Earth, it's definitely you. *(Moves in for a closer look)* I think it's something to do with that fancy atmosphere of yours. It might save you from craters and allow you to have those flowing blue oceans and cheeky wee ice caps but it's definitely greyer than it used to be. Why don't you wake your ecodiddles up and see if they can help.....?

Earth: Great idea, this'll do the trick *(enormous burp or fart noise)* ...I never knew you were jealous of my lovely atmosphere....*(they start to spin and move off stage)*

Moon: *(Holding nose & waving the other hand)* Not any more Earth, not any more.....

Curtains close/lights dim/gophers turn screen to plain backdrop

SCENE 2: The Ecodiddles Awake

Gopher enters from other side with sign "At Earth's surface" as the sleeping narrator Hope Ecodiddle wakes up at the burp/fart noise and speaks to the audience Curtains stay closed/screen stays central.

Hope: *(Jumps up off chair looking around)* Wow, what was that noise? *(Turns & looks at audience, jumps again)* Oh hello folks I'm Hope, I'm an ecodiddle, no one knows if I'm a bat-like dragon or dragon-like bat, but one thing I do know is us ecodiddles need to keep cool. We snooze a lot, hang around in caves, and get jumpy if we get too hot. When I'm awake I like to study science and my thermometer shows things are getting hotter *(looks at Earth's thermostat)*, I wonder if my friend Ernest is hot too? I'll give him a ring. *Hope sits back & prods her phone*



Lights dim/Gophers move screen across to show cave set up

ACT 2 – The Ecodiddle Eco-riddle

Scenery: Ernest's melting ice cave

Gopher crosses with sign saying, "Ernest's ice cave"

Optional Sound effects: Dripping water.

The 4 speaking water molecules hide behind the ice cave plus any extras in groups of 4 lie down like puddles under material.

As lights/curtain/screen go up Ernest is wringing out his wet shorts & growling. His middle is glowing bright green (torch or stage light on his hi-vis scales) His laptop is open.



Hope: Meet Ernest, he's an ecodiddle, he has a scaly eco-middle and feels this warming eco-griddle, He's puzzled by this eco-riddle!

Ernest: Yuk, where has all this water come from? Phew I'm hot...(Looks around)

I know I'll cool down with some ice cream. (Picks up bucket and looks inside)

Aww, it's all runny. (Shrugs)

Oh well, I'll just have to finish it. (Glugs a bucket of ice cream, burps & wipes mouth on arm)

That's better, (to the audience) you can't have too much ice cream! (Phone buzzes & Ernest answers it)

Hope: (From side of stage on chair speaking on her phone) Hi Ernest how are you?

Ernest: Hi Hope, I'm awake! My ice cave has disappeared, I've got soggy pants and I'm all hot & bothered!

Hope: Oh dear, well Ernest you know your ice cave hasn't really disappeared, but it HAS changed. Some friends of mine can tell you what's going on - give the water molecules a shout!

Ernest: (Shrugs at audience) Okaaaay (Calls out) Hello, are there any water molecules around here?

(Water molecules Drippy, Droppy, Soggy and Splat, (+ any extras) appear from behind the cave in a line holding hands and giggling as they run circles around Ernest - one lifts the edge of Ernest's shorts with finger and thumb.

Soggy: Oooo Ernest, have we made your pants all soggy? Hee hee!
(Ernest growls at them as they line up next to him)

Drippy: (To Ernest & audience, patting the atoms on hat) We're water molecules, we're made out of atoms, 2 hydrogen & one oxygen that's why we're sometimes called H₂O!

Hope: (From side to audience) Water is one of the most important substances found at the surface of the Earth. All living things need it, but it is affected by Earth's temperature. Take it away molecules.....

ACTION RHYME: WATER MOLECULES

(4 molecules link arms to make a square or ice cube. They stamp feet but can't move).

Splat: When it's cold, we bond strongly together,
We become blocks of hard, solid ice.
Our bonds weaken, when we get warm weather,

(Molecules jiggle so linked arms loosen into holding hands. Start moving around)

Droppy: We turn liquid and flow down in a trice.

Drippy: More heat means our bonds will get broken,
(Molecules shake arms, drop hands & move around on their own)
As water vapour we fly off to the sky,

Soggy: Don't worry Ernest, now that you've woken,
Its so warm here your pants will soon dry!

(Splat points at Ernest's shorts again as the molecules fly around on their own)

All Molecules: Weeee, goodbyeee! (As they fly off stage)

Hope: So, Ernest, your ice-cave didn't disappear, it changed. The solid ice melted into liquid water and ran downhill into puddles making it all muddy and leaving the rocks behind. That means it has got warmer.

Ernest: *(Looks around peering over audience into distance speaks on phone)* But it's not just warmer Hope, the forests have disappeared, the sky is full of smoke, the river is muddy and brown and there are mines, power stations, factories and cars EVERYWHERE. I can see a big sign that says BBE. What's BBE?

Hope: Hang on I'll look it up *(Opens laptop)*

Ernest: *(To audience)* It looks bad. *(Pause & drops shoulders & head)* It makes me sad. *(Raise head & pause)* NO...it makes me ECODIDDLE MAD. *(Does a war dance on the spot & gets audience to boo)*

Hope: Ernest....ERNEST! *(Ernest stops dance to listen to laptop)* It means Bernie's Business Empire!

Ernest: Oh, that's Bernie Boozle, my fat cat neighbour. He's a friendly fellow but always looking to get rich quick. Is it something to do with him?

Hope: I don't know, we need to solve this eco-riddle and FAST! Can you look for clues?

Ernest: *(Looking at audience)* Let's not delay, let's get started right away, YAY! *(gets audience to cheer)*

Hope: But you need to find a new home first, where are you going to stay?

Ernest: Mmm, that's a teaser...*(Scratches head)*

Hope: I know! Bernie's freezer! That'll do nicely and you can get a closer look at the same time.

Ernest: Ecodiddley excellent idea! I'm off, there's no time to waste!

Ernest exits lights dim / curtains close /screen changes sides

ACT 3 – Ecodiddle Detectives

ACT 3 - SCENE 1: Collecting Clues

Scenery: Bernie's mansion set up

Optional soundtrack – Cool Cat Strut as a gopher takes a sign across stage saying “Bernie's Mansion”

Hope: Meet Bernie Boozle, he's a fat cat, a kind of “Where it's at” cat, a very upbeat flash cat, a big stuffed wallet cash cat!

Bernie enters in his business suit & sits at the table, wearing his suit & starts reading TIME magazine with him on the front cover munching sweets & crisps & throwing the packets on the floor.



(The Head Gopher enters with the A La Carte menu.)

Bernie: *(Puts magazine down, stretches back in his seat & speaks to Head Gopher)*

Ahh it's a hard life being an entrepreneur. Factories to manage, power stations to keep stocked with coal, trees to cut down, buildings to put up, land to clear for even more purrrfect enterprises!

(Head Gopher passes him the menu)

I'll have the caviar and Jersey gold top milk please. By the way, have my new suits arrived? When this one goes into the skip tonight, I'll need a new one.

Head Gopher: Yes, they came this morning. *(Note the order & walks off stage saying to the audience)*
Hope will fill you in! *(Bernie stands and shows off as Hope recites/reads from script)*

Hope: Bernie wears the best from top to toe, tailored suits from Savile Row, cool Italian leather loafers, a gold Swiss Watch and personal gophers he calls on his brand new phone to buy his favourite French cologne, handmade shirts of Chinese silk and crates of Jersey gold top milk.

(While Hope speaks Gopher 1 enters with milk in a cocktail glass on a tray, followed by Gopher 2 with caviar on a tray, they put them on the table. Bernie sits down to eat. The gophers start to tidy up his litter).

Hope: He flies in Russian caviar & drives a big gas guzzling car to the place that he calls home, this mansion where he lives alone. He's “A La Mode” and “A La Carte” and “Ooo la la” he thinks he's smart

(Gopher 3 enters from left & walks past the washing machine across the front to the skip with a full basket with “LAUNDRY” crossed out & re-labelled “SKIP” & starts to unload it into the skip helped by the others).

Hope: He throws his dirty clothes away, no work for him “No way José”, broken things go in the bin, there's no repairing things for him. Out of vogue goes in the skip, it all ends up down at the TIP!

Loud bang from behind fridge freezer – Head Gopher opens freezer door and out pops Ernest.

Bernie: Ernest! I thought you were having one of your loooong naps. What ARE you doing in my freezer?

Ernest: *(Walks to table)* Hi Bernie, my ice cave has melted, can I chillax in your freezer until I find a new home?

Bernie: Of course, make yourself at home! *(Phone rings).* Excuse me I must get this. *(Walking off stage)*
Hello, yes I've got plenty of coal and timber, I can deliver straight away...

Ernest: Hi Gophers, I see Bernie's keeping you busy, how are you all getting on?

Head Gopher: Well Ernest, as you can see things have changed while you've been snoozing! Come on gophers let's fill him! *(Gophers 1-3 join Head Gopher centre stage and speak in verse to Ernest)*

Gopher1: We're all Bernie's gophers, we live in high rise flats, he phones us when he wants things, He's our big friendly boss cat *(Rolls eyes & pretends to answer a phone)* “Ring Ring!” *(Spoken to the audience)*

Gopher 2: But he only asks for new stuff, his clothes, his food, his car, we take it to his mansion and treat him like a star (*Exaggerated shrug*) "Ooo la la!" (*Spoken to the audience*)

Gopher 3: We cook, and we clean up, put used stuff in the skip, it's never, ever re-used, he just sends it to the tip (*points at skip*) "It's madness!" (*Spoken to the audience*)

Head Gopher: Bernie's kind-hearted and generous but he's also a very greedy wasteful cat, we buy what he wants, then throw it away, we know that it's wrong, but we need to earn pay! (*Spoken to the audience*) (*Phone rings*). Uh-o that's the boss, come on folks we've gotta go!

Ernest: Time to jot down some notes! (*Pulls out notebook & pen and leaves stage with gophers.*)

ACT 3 - SCENE 2: Taking Action!

Gopher takes a sign across stage saying "One week later"
Optional soundtrack – Cool Cat Strut.

Hope: That Bernie Boozle – he's a fat cat, he's a very lazy trash cat, he's a very braggy brash cat, he's a rotten great big stash cat!

Ernest enters with large notebook.

Ernest: (*to audience*) It's all happening out there! I've been an ecodiddle detective and I must report my clues back to Hope. Time to zooooom in! (*Sits at table and opens his laptop*).

Hope: (*Opening her laptop*) Hi Ernest! Wow you've been busy, I see you've noted how Bernie is felling lots of trees, mining coal and burning it to power his factories, sending clouds of gas and smoke out of tall chimneys and waste flows through a massive pipe into the open sea!

Ernest: That's right - Boooo (*Ernest stands up and gets the audience to join him booing*).

Hope: Now all the forest animals don't have a place to stay, and all the soil & land waste is getting washed away! The river's gone all muddy so the fish just can't come back, plastic waste is everywhere, and smoke has turned things black. (*Ernest coughs & get audience to boo again*)
You also note he flies in food and drives a big gas guzzling car???

Ernest: (*Rolling eyes & shrugging*) Yeah, he drives it to his office even though it's not too far! He likes to buy brand new things, then throws them in his skip, nearly new, it all gets dumped into the rubbish tip.
(*More boos*)

Hope: I see his gophers say he's a greedy wasteful cat, that he causes all this havoc just to keep his wallet fat?

Ernest: Yup! This is an eco-riddle; I get more puzzled every day, it's bad, but I just can't see how it's made my ice cave melt away? (*Shrugs at audience & sits down at computer shaking & scratching head*)

Hope: I think I've worked that out, that greedy thoughtless cat really IS tampering with Earth's thermostat! I just need to check with other scientists. Can you stay for a bit longer? A week should do.

Ernest: Ooo, I REALLY hope you've solved the eco-riddle Hope. Uh-oh here he comes, gotta go!
(*Shuts the laptop quickly and jumps up to greet Bernie*)

Bernie: (*walking on & talking into phone*)OK that's a deal, cheerio (*puts phone off*)
Hello Ernest! Are you still here? I'll have to start charging rent if you don't find a new place soon
(*Phone rings*) Meeeow, I'll have to take this - speak later. (*Waves and heads off stage again*)

Ernest: *(To audience)* Grrrr what a cheek! He's melted my ice cave and now he wants to charge me rent! *(Opens laptop)* Are you still there Hope? We've got to stop that cat doing any more damage and find me a new home FAST – but how?

Hope: If Bernie can't afford to pay, a lot of this will go away. Hide his wallet where it won't be seen, inside that unused washing machine.

Ernest: *(Lifts the wallet from the table & pops it into the washing machine).* Aha! That cat never washes any clothes this is a "purrrfect" hiding place. That'll do the trick.

(Quickly goes across to meet Bernie as he wanders back in looking for his wallet Sssh to audience)

Bernie: That's very weird, my big fat wallet's disappeared. *(Shouts)* Gophers! *(Head gopher & gophers 1,2 & 3 appear)* Search the house I've mislaid my wallet.

Gopher 3: Yes Bernie, I'll check upstairs *(Gopher 3 leaves)*

Bernie: Meeeow, what am I going to do? *(Looks downcast)*

Ernest: Don't worry Bernie; *(rhythmically in a rap style with the gophers)*

THE NO WALLET RAP

Ernest: You don't need great wads of cash, just mend what breaks & sort your trash.
Head Gopher: Re-use your things, give away your skip, stop sending stuff to the rubbish tip.
Bernie: But no more planes and no more cars and no more fancy caviar,
Gopher 1: Try local fish instead for dinner, ride your bike and get much thinner.
Gopher 2: Buy your milk from the local farm, make less fumes and cause less harm,
Ernest: Give it a week and you will see, it's GREAT to live sustainably!
YAY! *(Waves for applause)*

Bernie: Thanks for cheering me up Ernest. Gophers! Get my bike and fishing rod out of the garage please *(Phone rings)* I'll have to take this - speak later. *(Waves and heads off stage again)*

Ernest: *(Fanning himself speaks to audience)* Phew I need to cool down I think I'll lie low for a while and watch what happens next.... *(Heads into the freezer as the concerned Gophers speak to audience)*

Head Gopher: We're only paid to the end of the week, if that wallet doesn't turn up there'll be no wages.

Gopher 1: No pay, no stay!

Gopher 2: My family needs my pay, we must find that wallet, keep looking. *(Gophers exit)*

ACT 3 - SCENE 3: The Lost Wallet

Gopher takes sign across stage "One week later" Another gopher swaps skip with recycling bins.

Hope: Poor Bernie cannot find his cash, so he mends what breaks and sorts his trash, as less and less goes to the tip he even gives away his skip! Time to phone Ernest *(picks up phone & dials)*

Ernest: *(Comes out of freezer and speaks to audience)* Well folks, it's good news and bad news. The good news is that Bernie's made ECODIDDLEY ENORMOUS changes to his lifestyle. The bad news is that his business empire is still causing havoc and all the gophers have gone home. *(Phone rings)* Hi Hope.

Hope: Hi Ernest, I've spoken with the other scientists, and we've solved the eco-riddle! We know what to do but we need you to get Bernie up to your cave tomorrow! Bye....

Ernest: Yippee! Now how will I get Bernie to my cave!

Bernie's voice: (*Off stage distressed MEOW!*) Gophers, gophers, where are you all? (*Bernie appears in vest & shorts*) Oh Ernest, I can't pay the gophers, so they've gone home AND I've run out of new clothes, what am I going to do?

Ernest: (*Gives audience a big wink*) Don't worry Bernie, why not wash your clothes and re-use them like the rest of us. It's no problem, just bung them in the washing machine, they'll turn out as good as new! (*Puts arm round Bernie as they walk off stage*) Come on we'll go and find the laundry basket....

ACT 3 - SCENE 4: The Big Wash

Gopher with sign "One wash cycle later" Bernie in vest and shorts takes a basket full of clean laundry from washing machine to centre & talks to audience

Bernie: What a week! I love my new lifestyle; I'm fitter and full of energy but I miss my cheery gopher friends and it's HARD to run a business empire AND learn to cook and clean at the same time. (*Wistful*) I wonder where that wallet of mine is.

Bernie starts to shake the clothes out and the wallet falls out

Bernie: Hey what's this? It's my wallet - Yippee! It must have got mixed up with my laundry, thank goodness I didn't throw these clothes into the skip. Ernest, Ernest, look what I've found.

Ernest enters from freezer

Ernest: Wow, Bernie that's fantastic news! I've got the PURRRFECT plan to celebrate – lets go for a picnic. I'll pack some fish and milk for you and some iced tea and ice cream for me.

Bernie: Great idea, while you do that, I'll let the gophers know I can pay them again!

Both leave the stage – Bernie takes the wallet and gets his phone out followed by Ernest, who gives the audience a big wink & thumbs up behind Bernie's back as he picks up the laundry basket.

Curtain down/Dim lights/ move screen across

Interval if required

ACT 4 – Solving the Eco-riddle

ACT 4 - SCENE 1: The Picnic

Change scenery: To Ernest's dried up cave

Bernie changes into jeans, fleece & hiking boots, Ernest is wearing his iced tea engineer's hard hat.

Hidden in cave: Globe, torch, 4 blankets: blue, dark grey, light grey & brown, Eco-code scroll.

Gopher crosses with sign "Ernest's Cave"

Hope: Ernest's a happy ecodiddle, because we've solved this eco-riddle, now all we have to do is convince Bernie to change his ways and bring an end to this eco-griddle!!!!

Ernest & Bernie enter with picnic bag

Ernest: Phew it's hot! This was once my ice cave Bernie. Let's stop for our picnic and look at the view!

Bernie: What view? *(Puts paw over eyes looks over audience)* It's horrible, just smoke and factories and tree stumps. What ice cave? It's just a dried up hole in the rock. It's a mess, what's going on around here?

Ernest: *(Looking at sky)* Uh-oh, it looks like rain *(Phone rings)* Hi Hope,

Hope: Hi Ernest, I've arranged some picnic entertainment! Get Bernie to sit on that big stump and don't worry it's only going to be a few drops!

Ernest: Please take a seat Bernie and prepare to be entertained!

Water molecules run in, fall onto ground & jump up again

Water molecules: Weeeee, Hi again Ernest,

Drippy: Brrr it got a bit cold up there, so we condensed into water and came back down

Droppy: Oooo, have we rained on your picnic Ernest? hee hee!

(Drippy & Droppy sit either side of Bernie as Splat & Soggy head over to the cave)

Ernest: I've got a surprise for you Bernie, this is my friend Hope, *(Hope enters from cave with clipboard)*

Bernie: Nice to meet you Hope I love to be entertained! *(Rubs paws together)*

Soggy & Splat bring a torch for Bernie & globe for Ernest from the cave then sit on either side Bernie)

Hope: Right Bernie, grab that torch and pretend you're the sun... *(Hope, using clipboard if necessary)*
It all starts with energy from the sun that reaches Earth & heats it up – shine your torch on the globe.

(Bernie shines torch on globe held by Ernest)

As the sunlight spreads over Earth's curved surface, it is hot & strong near the middle and spread out and weak near the poles. Earth also tilts, spins, and moves around the sun so at the surface we get days, nights, seasons & different temperatures.

(Ernest moves to one side of Bernie so the N pole tilts towards the torch & spins the globe)

Soggy: *(Pointing)* In the north the days are long with lots of warming sunlight but in the south the days are short and the sunlight is weak so it's winter and it's cold Brrrr!

(Ernest moves to the other side of Bernie so the S pole tilts towards the torch & spins the globe)

Splat: Then it changes to winter in the north & summer in the south!

Ernest: *(To the audience)* The middle always stays warm & tropical – yuk!

Hope: All the land, water, and ice at the surface heat up & cool down differently and this affects the air above the surface. This blanket of air is called the atmosphere, it filters the sunlight during the day but also traps surface heat in which keeps Earth cosy through the night. *(Molecules bob up & down randomly)*

Ernest: The atmosphere is a bit like the Earth being inside a greenhouse, so the gases that trap heat are called greenhouse gases! Maybe this'll help, shine the torch on my globe Bernie...

*Bernie shines torch on globe as Ernest spins it & slowly orbits around him.
The molecules stand to do actions as Hope recites from clipboard....*

Hope:

ACTION RHYME - WHAT'S WEATHER?

The Earth spins and tilts and orbits up in outer space,
Giving days, nights, years and seasons here at Earth's surface,
Throughout the day the atmosphere filters bright sunlight,
Then like a giant greenhouse keeps it cosy through the night.
Land, air, ice and water heat unevenly through the day,
White snow and shiny ice reflect a lot of heat away,
Land absorbs the heat quite fast, but cools down quickly too,
While water absorbs heat slowly but takes longer to cool.

*The water molecules spread arms,
tilt to one side & spin on the spot.
Face front & put on their shades (Day)
Cross arms & hug themselves (Night)
2 wipe sweat off brow & 2 shiver
Splat points to ice caps on globe
Drippy points to land on globe
Dropy points to ocean on globe*

The air above them warms up, rises, cools and falls back down,
As it moves it creates WIND which keeps on moving round,
Water vapour rises too, condenses and falls back down,
So we get RAIN, HAIL, SLEET or SNOW down here on the ground,
The water flows back through the land and ends up in the sea,
Huge air and ocean currents move around heat energy.
It gives us our WEATHER, wind, rain, snow and sunshine,
Weather patterns form into CLIMATE over longer chunks of time.

*The molecules touch toes and
with wriggling fingers raise
their hands centrally upwards
until overhead then make
giant outward circles back
down to toes again & repeat*

Soggy: So that's why we water molecules AND the air around us are always going round in circles!

Bernie: *(Scratching head)*Interesting but so what?

Hope: Well Bernie, we know weather changes in the short term, but it also forms into long term patterns called CLIMATE. But if there's too much greenhouse gas in the atmosphere it acts like a blanket and traps more heat in so Earth gets hotter and climates change.

Ernest: *(To audience)* Would you wear a blanket in a greenhouse?

Soggy: The more heat energy there is the faster we move! Some places melt, some dry up while other places might get faster winds & heavier rain!

*(Molecules make faster big circles with arms then
quietly go to get the blankets from the cave & return to sit near Ernest)*

Hope: It's not just temperature and weather, living things have adapted to Earth's climates too. They need food, water, air, and places to live so if climates change, they must adapt fast enough to survive!

Ernest: Like me in my ice cave – I'm adapted to a cold climate and my ancestral home has never melted before. But because the climate around here has warmed up it's completely melted, I'm WAAAAY too hot and that's why I'm living in your freezer!

Bernie: Mmm, if living things breathe air & drink water, do they also affect the atmosphere?

Hope: Yes, green plants use energy from the sun to take in greenhouse gas and water and make their own food. They take greenhouse gas OUT of the atmosphere. Animals eat plants for energy which puts greenhouse gas into the atmosphere.

Ernest: But some animals *(looking hard at Bernie)* can have more effect than others.....

Bernie: *(Innocently)* Really, how?

Hope: Bernie, it's easier to show you. Would you pretend to be the Earth this time, Ernest will start you off with your natural atmospheric blanket of mixed gas.

*Splat gives the sky blue blanket with white swirls/clouds to Ernest who wraps it around Bernie
Hope dials thermostat to "Just Right" setting*

Hope:

ACTION RHYME PART 1: WHAT'S CLIMATE CHANGE?

These greenhouse gases act, just like a giant blanket,
They wrap themselves around, our lovely blue planet,
Sunshine hits the surface, and warms it through the day,
At night Earth stays cosy, as less heat gets away.

Molecules encourage audience to cheer YAY except Droppy who hands the grey blanket with stumps on it to Ernest who wraps it around Bernie

Hope:

If you remove the plants by felling all those trees,
They don't remove that gas 'cos they're not there to breathe
So the greenhouse gases stay in the atmosphere
Their levels get much higher as our forests disappear

*Molecules encourage audience to BOO except Drippy who hands the thick dark grey/black to Ernest who wraps it around Bernie
Hope dials up thermostat to "Getting too warm"*

Droppy: (*Nudging Splat*) Hey, if there's no plants on the ground, we can whizz downhill super-fast

Splat: (*Takes Droppy's hand*) The soil gets washed away with us into the river and we all end up in the ocean with the pollution from your landfill tip & waste pipe!

Splat & Droppy: Here we go again! Weeee (*2 Water molecules whizz off stage*)
(*Splat changes back into Earth costume Droppy changes back into a Gopher for finale*)

Hope:

ACTION RHYME PART 2: WHAT'S CLIMATE CHANGE?

When you mine and burn coal to power your factories,
They belch extra greenhouse gas out into the breeze,
Fumes from your cars and trucks are making us all wheeze, (*Cough*)
Bad air all around Earth just piles on those degrees.

*Drippy encourages audience to BOO
Soggy hands the brown blanket to Ernest who wraps it around Bernie*

As waste rots down it sends gas from your rubbish tip,
That greenhouse gas blanket is getting very thick,
All this extra wrapping makes Earth's temperature rise,
So this ice cave melted to Ernest's great surprise!

Hope dials up thermostat to "WAY TOO HOT"

Ernest: Aha! All this extra wrapping has made the temperature rise, so that's the connection between Bernie's Business Empire and my melting ice cave surprise (*To audience*) More of a soggy shock actually!!

*Soggy & Splat encourage audience to BOO again then join
Ernest to hug the blanket clad Bernie when Hope says "round here"*

Hope:

ACTION RHYME PART 3: WHAT'S CLIMATE CHANGE?

Even if no more gas goes in Earth's atmosphere,
The thick greenhouse blanket will still be wrapped round here,
Please stop putting extra greenhouse gas into the air,
And find ways to remove, the gas already there.

Bernie: Phew I'm getting hot in here, so now I understand. I've been adding to Earth's blanket all this time and now poor Earth is so hot Ernest's ice cave has melted. I'm so sorry Ernest – How can I put this right?

Ernest: A bit longer rent free in your freezer would help!

Bernie: You've got it (*Ernest & audience cheer YAY*)

Hope: It's not just Ernest's ice cave Bernie, the whole world is getting warmer and weather patterns are changing.

Soggy: We can't go where it gets too hot, so some places have droughts & fires that destroy even more plants and that puts even more greenhouse gas into the air.

Drippy: We don't get so much chance to rest either as glaciers and ice caps melt. We end up in the sea, the sea level rises, coastal areas get flooded and some islands could be completely lost.

Soggy: The extra heat makes us evaporate into the air faster and stay for longer in the atmosphere causing stormier weather and flash floods!

Ernest: This damage is causing wildlife & people to move around looking for new homes. But warmer oceans are bad for marine life and polar creatures who have nowhere else to go. There just isn't enough room in your freezer!

Bernie Oooh dear, It's a CAT-AS-TROPHE! I've been a bad cat and tampered with Earth's thermostat! Please forgive me, I really didn't do it on purpose, I'd no idea I was making such a mess. Is there ANYTHING I can do?

Hope: Well Bernie, you aren't a bad cat, you've just been thoughtless, greedy and wasteful. Cheer up, there's lots you can do but you have to work FAST. Even if you can stop putting more greenhouse gas into Earth's atmosphere, the blanket will stay thick and keep on trapping the heat. The solution to this eco-riddle is to stop putting greenhouse gas up into the air AND find ways to thin that blanket down.

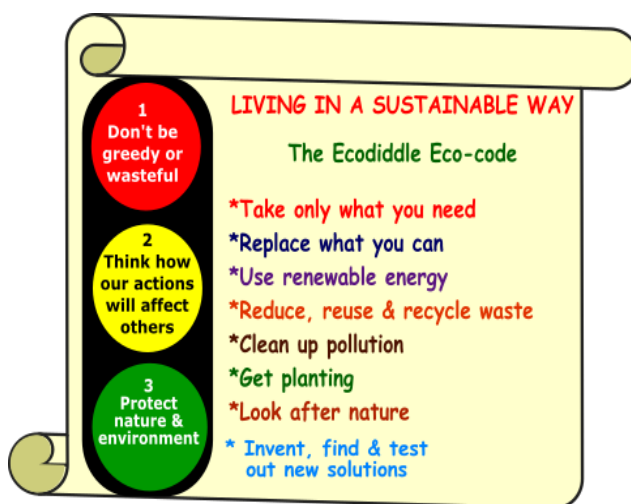
Drippy & Soggy quietly go to the cave & get the eco-code scroll

Ernest: You've already made a great start by changing your personal lifestyle. You buy less, you throw away less, you walk and cycle instead of driving the car, you eat local food instead of all those food miles.

Hope: But now Bernie, I hope you understand why, YOU'VE REALLY GOT TO SORT OUT THAT BUSINESS EMPIRE OF YOURS. Remember, while it's important to stop adding more to the blanket we can't cool Earth back down until we start making that blanket thinner! You need to start following the Ecodiddle Eco-Code.

(Soggy & Splat unroll scroll)

Ernest: Take only what you need,
Replace what you can,
Use renewable energy,
Reduce reuse & recycle waste,
Clean up pollution,
Get planting,
Look after nature,
Invent, find & test new solutions.



Bernie: Soooo.. I need to stop being greedy & wasteful, think how my actions affect others and always protect nature and the environment – Meeeow, no pressure!

Ernest: Don't worry Bernie, now you've found your wallet I've got plenty of ideas – what you need is an Ecodiddle Engineer! (*Puts on engineers hard hat on with a flourish*)

(Drippy & Soggy gradually unwrap blankets from Bernie as Ernest & Hope rhythmically recite)

ECODIDDLE ENGINEER RAP

Ernest: The way to get out of this jam is buy some windmills, build a dam,
Use less coal and plant more trees, put turbines in the estuary,

Hope: Add solar panels to the roof, your power supply will be fool proof,
Filter outflows, clean the sea, divert the gas from those chimneys,
For heat and growing food for town, soon the warming will slow down,

Ernest: The plants will breathe those gases in and the blanket will begin to thin,
As the heating gases disappear, we'll start to cool the atmosphere,

Hope: Start straight away, don't be too slow, invest your cash and watch it grow,

Ernest: Electric cars will make you purr, Bernie eco-entrepreneur!

Bernie: Now you're talking AND I'M HEARING YOU! I can see how I can live a healthier lifestyle, provide eco-friendly jobs for all the gophers AND look after the planet *(to audience)* WIN WIN WIN!

Ernest: Yup, it's a no brainer Bernie, but you need to act FAST.

Bernie: I can see it now, instead of BBE it'll be BEE – Bernie's Eco Empire – I'll have a Busy Bee logo!

Hope: Ecodiddley excellent, but you'll need to be a busy bee RIGHT AWAY! It's been a pleasure meeting you Bernie, I'll let you go and get started, I'm off home for a nap, byeeee *(Exits to chair sits down & naps)*

Bernie: *(Putting arm round Ernest and holding the eco-code scroll)* Lets head back too, my friend, there's loads to do and I'm buzzin' to get started!

Ernest looks at audience as he walks off with Bernie, punches the air and mouths "YES" as Soggy & Drippy carry off all the blankets

Close curtain / Dim lights/ Move screen to middle with starry background

SCENE 2: Bernie Changes His Ways

Opening soundtrack: Intro to On A Good Day (Guitar)

In front of closed curtain/screen Planet Earth enters spinning with a spring in its step and a new light blue cloak with white clouds on it

Earth: I feel great! That grey blanket's fading away, blue skies are coming my way and it looks like I'm going to have a wonderful day YAY!

As Earth exits Hope Ecodiddle stands and speaks to the audience

Hope: Well folks, it looks like we've got a result! Bernie's got the message at last and the gophers were right, he's not a bad cat at all! Now he understands that his actions are causing all this mess it looks like he's going to change his ways and take climate action FAST.

Maybe us ecodiddles can even get back to chillaxing again!

I wonder how he & Ernest are getting on.

Curtain down/Dim lights/ move screen across

ACT 5 – RESULT!

Gopher entering with a sign saying “Bernie’s Mansion”

Bernie and Ernest are sitting at the table looking at blueprints, big eco-trophy cup on table with wallet.

Hope: WOW! Bernie’s now an eco-flash cat, a chilled out cool eco-cash cat. Our plan has been a great success, looks like he’s cleaned up all that mess.

Bernie: Well Ernest this is all just purrrfect. You’ve really helped me clean up my act. Imagine ME being awarded eco-entrepreneur of the year!



Ernest: *(Yawning)* It’s ecodiddly excellent Bernie, but now my work here is done I’m starting to feel rather sleepy. Hope’s found a new ice cave for me with a bit more room than your freezer. She’s coming to help me move today.

Bernie: Aww, I’ll miss you, *(pauses)* It’s going to seem very quiet without you.

Ernest: I know, but now it’s cooling down again I need to take a looong nap. Look on the bright side Bernie, once I’ve moved out you’ll have loads more freezer space! *(Hope enters)*

Hope: Hi Guys. Don’t worry Bernie, now all the gophers are back you’ll not have a chance to get lonely. Keep it up and you’re all going to be happy, healthy and COOOL for a long time to come. Time to go and pack Ernest.... *(Ecodiddles exit into freezer)*

Bernie: *(Turns to the audience and says)* Well folks, looks like that’s it. What an adventure - but there’s still one thing left to say:

Don’t make the same mistake as me,
My best advice must surely be,
DON’T MESS WITH THOSE ECODIDDLES,
Don’t wake them up in the middle,
Of a world-wide eco-griddle,
They really hate an eco-sizzle.
Re-use, recycle and repair,
Learn to wash your underwear,
Look after nature, it’s so clear,
We must protect our atmosphere.
If you ignore it, here’s the teaser....
You might find Ernest in YOUR freezer!

Ernest: *(Bursts out of freezer followed by Hope)* **BOO!** Hey, cheer up folks, there’s time for one last song before I go. Come on Bernie, come on Gophers, *(looks at audience)* Everyone can join in – each line starts with “One World” so if you guys do that bit, we’ll fill in the rest it’ll be ecodiddly easy!

Use ecodiddle Karaoke resource if screen is available

FINALE:

SONG - ONE WORLD

Verse 1

One world, for us all to share,
One world, and it needs our care,
One world, which is nature’s home,
One world where we live and grow,
One world, with one atmosphere,
One world to keep clean and clear,
One world, let’s not play the fool,
Let’s do our best to keep it cool,

Verse 2

One world, with just finite space,
One world let’s make zerowaste,
One world, let’s re-plant those trees,
One world, and go clean those seas,
One world, use clean energy,
One world, grow food carefully
One world, we must all agree,
It’s time to live sustainably
Because we’ve only got one world!

Whole cast take final bows

COSTUMES

Narrator



Hope Ecodiddle

(White lab coat, hat/hood with ears & horns, wings on elastic straps
brown trousers & gloves, optional face paint)

Main Characters



Ernest Ecodiddle

(High vis vest as scales, red bolero & cut-off jeans over brown trousers & top, gloves,
hat/hood with ears & horns, wings on elastic straps, & optional face paint)



Bernie Boozle

Cat's ears on hat/ hairband face paint whiskers
(3 costumes: suit, vest & pants, fleece & jeans)



Solar system characters
(vest + painted disc, hat & cloak)

Earth*

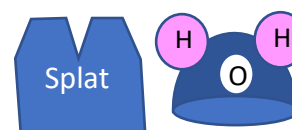


Gophers (Smart or work clothes)

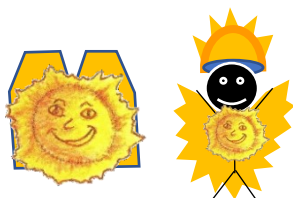
Head Gopher



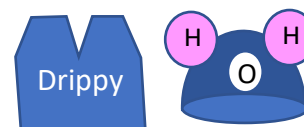
Water molecules (Vest & Caps)



Sun*



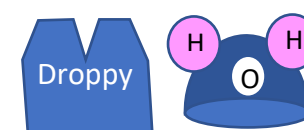
Gopher 1



Moon



Gopher 2



***Costume notes:**

Sun: Hat = painted card flames

Cloak = sheet dyed yellow

Earth: Hat = melting ice cap

Cloak = grey sheet with clouds

Cloak 2= L.Blue sheet with clouds

Gopher 3



SCENERY: SETS & BACKDROPS

If you are doing this in a room without a stage & curtains, either dim the lights between scenes or make a screen on a wheeled coat rack or wide, portable display board, set up the ice cave on the left & Bernie's mansion on the right then move the screen across to open & close the set you want the audience to look at. As an option you could decorate the screen so it has a plain side & a starry side to help with Act 1! All backdrops are optional!

ACT 1 - Scene 1: In Space – No scenery, a plain dark or starry background optional

ACT 1 - Scene 2: No scenery, either a plain backdrop or in front of curtain /screen

ACT 2: Ernest's melting ice cave

(Off centre to LH side facing stage)

Optional backdrop: thawing mountains & tree stumps

Quick fix: The melting ice cave is easily made using a pop up tent with some cardboard box rocks & a fitted sheet draped over the top to look like melting snow



ACT 3: Bernie's Mansion

Optional backdrop: Windows with industrial view

LH side: Large freezer door that opens so you can walk in out, a washing machine with opening door.

Centre: Table with white cloth & VERY large wallet on it, chair

Back RH side: A skip

Quick fix: Paint large cardboard boxes for freezer, washing m/c & skip.



ACT 4: Ernest's dried up cave

Quick fix: Leave out the snow sheet

Optional backdrop: Mountain scenery rain clouds

Centre: 2 tree stumps

Quick fix: Bean bag, stool or pouffe made to look like a stump.



ACT 5: Bernie's Mansion

Optional backdrop:

Windows with the new view

LH side: Freezer door, washing m/c & laundry basket

Centrally: Two chairs, table with white cloth, eco-cup & wallet, deck chair for gopher to relax on

RH side: Recycling bins & bike (no skip)



Props List

General	Narrator's chair & script book
Act 1 Scene 1	Sign: "In space..." Sponge meteorite
Act 1 Scene 2	Sign "Earth's surface..." Hope's thermometer (<i>see picture of Hope in Cast</i>) Hope's mobile phone (<i>real or painted card</i>)
Act 2	Sign "Ernest's ice cave..." Large carton labelled "Ice cream" Ernest's mobile phone (<i>real or painted card</i>) Hope's laptop (<i>real or painted folded card</i>) Ernest's laptop (<i>real or painted card</i>)
Act 3 Scene 1	Sign "Bernie's mansion..." TIME magazine (<i>with Bernie's photo on cover</i>) Large empty crisp packet & selection of empty sweet/crisp packets Large A la Carte Menu Head Gopher's notebook & pen Cocktail glass (<i>painted to look like it holds milk</i>) Large tin labelled "Caviar" 2 small round trays Large laundry basket (<i>with "LAUNDRY" crossed out & re-labelled "SKIP"</i>) Large wallet bursting with notes Bernie's mobile phone Ernest's notebook & pen
Act 3 Scene 2	Sign "One week later..." Ernest's notebook & pen & laptop Hope's laptop Bernie's mobile phone Large wallet
Act3 Scene 3	Sign "One week later..." All mobile phones
Act 3 Scene 4	Sign "One wash cycle later...." Laundry basket Wallet Bernie's phone
Act 4 Scene 1	Sign "Ernest's ice cave..." Ernest's iced tea engineer's hard hat (<i>see Scene picture</i>) Picnic bag Hope & Ernest's phones + Hope's clipboard Stool or bean bag make to look like a stump Earth's thermostat (Dial with moveable pointer) Large torch, Globe 4 sets sunglasses Blue sheet with white cotton wool clouds Grey blanket/fleece with pictures of tree stumps pinned on Black or dark grey blanket/fleece Brown blanket/fleece with litter or pictures of waste skips pinned to it Eco-scroll
Act 5 Scene 1	Sign "Bernie's mansion..." Blueprints (large sheet of paper with Ernests Eco Plan as title) Wallet Eco-entrepreneur of the year cup

