

Booklist

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A Simple Question: The Story of Straw
Filmmakers Collaborative SF, DVD,
Running time: 34:30. Library cost: \$29.95.
<http://www.asimplequestion.org>

In 1992, after Laurette Rogers' fourth grade class watched a film on endangered species, a student asked, "What can we do to help save the endangered animals?" This simple question led to the formation of STRAW (Students and Teachers Restoring a Watershed) and a classroom project in which the kids helped restore a creek-side habitat to help save the California freshwater shrimp population. Featuring current and archival (1992) footage and interviews with past and present students, teachers, and environmentalists, this inspiring program showcases the classroom efforts in which students planted trees and shore up creek beds to help stop erosion. The kids (many of whom are seen in the 1992 footage and in current interviews) learned to work together and talk to local and political leaders about the importance of helping the environment. Peter Coyote's soothing narration ties together the information and footage. STRAW continues today and now sponsors an annual workshop that teaches educators how to carry on similar projects in their own schools and communities. A welcome addition to school and public libraries, this well produced, tightly edited program is just the thing for spurring similar hands-on activities and for encouraging kids to get involved.

— *Debra McLeod*