



EARTH DAY ACTIVITIES

GRADES 2/3

FOR USE WITH GOOGLETM SLIDES

1

What is Earth Day?

Earth Day is April 22. It is a day to remember how important the environment is and why we need to protect it. Many years ago people did not think about this. Water became polluted, the air was dirty, and trash was not thrown away properly. Also most people did not recycle. Earth Day was started to remind people how important it is to take care of the planet and to conserve natural resources. More people began to recycle and to reduce their energy use.

The first Earth Day was celebrated on April 22, 1970 with about 20 million people taking part. It was started by United States Senator Gaylord Nelson. There were speeches, marches and rallies. People became educated about why it's important to take care of the earth and ways to do it. As the years have passed countries all over the world celebrate Earth Day.



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1

Reading response questions

Move the magnifying glass over the letter of the correct answer.

What is the main idea of paragraph 1?

- Recycling is important
- Earth Day was started to remind people to take care of the Earth
- Water is cleaner than it used to be.



What is the main idea of paragraph 1? Highlight the answer.

- Earth Day is April 22
- Many speeches are given on Earth Day
- The origins of Earth Day

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2

The 3 R's

Reduce, reuse, recycle. This is a good way to remember ways we can keep the Earth clean. Reduce means to use less. We can reduce our use of natural resources. Reuse means to use something again. We can reuse boxes and plastic bags. Recycle means to turn something old into something new. We can recycle aluminum cans, plastic and paper. By doing these things we can help to protect the Earth and keep it clean for everyone.

Reduce

There are many ways to reduce your use of resources. You can buy items with less packaging. This will reduce the amount of trash you have to throw away. And if you don't need it don't buy it. Instead of using plastic bags given to you at the store bring your own bags to use. Also you can ask your parents to buy in bulk (many items packaged together). This also reduces the amount of trash you have to throw away and usually saves money as well.



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2

Reading response for What is Earth Day?

What is the main idea of paragraph 1? Highlight the answer.

- There are many ways to keep the Earth clean
- Aluminum cans can be recycled
- Plastic bags can be reused



What is the main idea of paragraph 2? Highlight the answer.

- Never reuse plastic bags
- It is easy to find ways to reduce your use of resources
- Plastic fills up landfills



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3

Reuse

Reusing items is one of the easiest ways to help the environment. Don't buy a disposable water bottle, buy one that you can wash and use again. Wash and reuse plastic storage bags and utensils. Buy cloth napkins and wash them after they are used. Ask a friend if they can use something that you no longer want. Ask your parents to have a yard sale and sell some of the things that no one uses. Remember, one person's trash is another person's treasure!

Recycle

When you recycle you use something again instead of throwing it away. Many things can be recycled including plastic, paper and cans. Glass plastic and aluminum cans are melted down first and then turned into new items. Never burn plastic materials because the fumes can be poisonous. Paper is made from wood pulp. Old paper is mixed with water and mashed back to a pulp. This pulp is then cleaned and rolled thinly to make new paper.



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3

Reading response for What is Earth Day?

Move the pointer in front of the letter of the correct answer.

What is the main idea of paragraph 1?

- Yard sales are a good way to get rid of items you no longer want
- Plastic utensils can be reused.
- Reusing items is a great way to help the environment

What is the main idea of paragraph 2?

- Many items can be recycled
- Paper is made from wood pulp
- Burning plastic releases poisonous fumes



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4

Energy

Energy makes things work. We get energy from coal, oil and gas (fossil fuels). These are used to make electricity, run cars, heat our homes and thousands more things. There is not an endless supply of these fuels, so we need to conserve energy, so we don't run out of them. There are many ways to save energy. Turn off lights and electrical appliances when you are not using them. Wash your clothes in cold water instead of hot water. Turn off the water when you brush your teeth. Cover up drafts in your house. This will keep the house warmer in the winter.

There are other places we can get energy from besides fossil fuels. A wind turbine is a machine that turns the wind's energy into electricity. A group of turbines is called a wind farm. One turbine can produce enough electricity for 600 houses. Solar energy is energy from the sun. Solar panels are used to capture the sunlight and turn it into electricity. Water can also be used. As water moves toward a waterfall or dam it will turn a huge turbine. The turbines then generate electricity.



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Reading response for What is Earth Day?

4

What is the main idea of paragraph 1? Circle the answer.

- There are many ways to save energy
- Energy comes from coal, oil and gas
- You should wash clothes in cold water



What is the main idea of paragraph 2? Circle the answer.

- Energy can come from different sources
- Turbines can be used to generate electricity
- Solar panels capture sunlight

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Fast Facts

- Recycling one aluminum can saves enough electricity to do these activities:
 - run a TV for 3 hours
 - listen to a full album on your iPod
 - light a 60-watt light bulb for 26 hours
- Using recycled glass uses 40% less energy than making products from all new materials.
- Every year we generate around 14 million tons of food waste. This is 106 pounds of food waste per person.
- The average American throws away 3.5 pounds of trash per day.
- Recycling one ton of newspaper saves 15 trees.
- Americans throw away 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour.
- In 2009, Americans produced enough trash to circle the earth 24 times.



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Making Good Choices

Read each sentence. If it describes something that could harm the environment move a thumbs down in front of it. If it describes something that can help the environment move a thumbs up.



Riding your bike to soccer practice instead of taking the bus.

Throwing away your soda can in the trash can.

Buying disposable plastic water bottles.

Taking your old toys to Goodwill so some other child can use them.



Leave the water on while you brush your teeth.

Save baby food jars to store your small Lego pieces.

Leave the lights on in your house after you go to bed.

Use old wrapping paper to make crafts.

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Earth Day Fact or Opinion

Facts

There are other places we can get energy from besides fossil fuels.

First Earth Day was started on April 22, 1970.

The average American throws away 3.5 pounds of trash a day.

We get energy from coal, oil and gas.

The 3 R's are reduce, reuse and recycle.

Opinions

Everyone should be made to recycle.

Earth Day is the most important holiday.

It should be illegal for stores to use plastic bags.

I care about the Earth more than anyone else.

Earth Day should be in June, not April.

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How I can help the Earth

I can recycle...

Type here

I can reuse...

Type here

I can reduce...

Type here

Earth Day is important because...

Type here



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These facts stick in my mind

Type here

Type here

Type here

Type here



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Let's Recycle



Sort the items by material.

Paper and cardboard

Aluminum

Glass and plastic



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