

# Earth Matters

Your Earth is the ground you stand on. Your school, house, community and roads are built on Earth. You swim in the Earth's oceans. You drink Earth's waters. You eat Earth's plants. You breathe Earth's air. Earth is where you live. Earth is home.

Many people around the world will be celebrating **Earth Day** on or around April 22. The purpose of the day is to call attention to the Earth and its many wonders and problems.

This year, the theme of Earth Day is Restore Our Earth. Many organizations and individuals will focus on three days of climate action on April 20-22.

## Kids matter, too

What can kids do to help restore our Earth? We've gathered some ideas to help you do your part.

1. Ask your family to unsubscribe from catalogs that come in the mail to save trees. They can check out [catalogchoice.org](http://catalogchoice.org).
2. Look into volunteering for the Great Global Cleanup ([cleanup.earthday.org](http://cleanup.earthday.org)).
3. Study how much you use **single-use plastic** (items like disposable water bottles, disposable cups, plastic dinner ware, etc.). Try to use reusable water bottles and silverware instead. Talk to your school principal about switching to reusable items in the cafeteria.

4. Suggest that your family carry reusable bags in the car for groceries and other items you buy.
5. While you're at the grocery store, choose items that came from nearby sources, such as local farms or orchards. Or shop at farmers markets nearby.
6. Gather your family for a litter pickup day. Litter spoils how things look, but it's also harmful to people, animals and the environment.
7. Think about planting one or more trees. Trees help reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, provide fruits and flowers, and give birds and small animals a place to live.
8. Walk or ride your bike whenever you can, rather than having someone drive you. Most cars burn gasoline, which adds to air pollution.
9. Turn off the water while you brush your teeth, and take showers instead of baths to save water.
10. Help your family gather up clothes, toys and other items you no longer use to be donated rather than thrown away. Many products have years of use left in them!



## Air Quality Index

The **Air Quality Index (AQI)** is a way we can learn about whether air in some cities is good or bad.

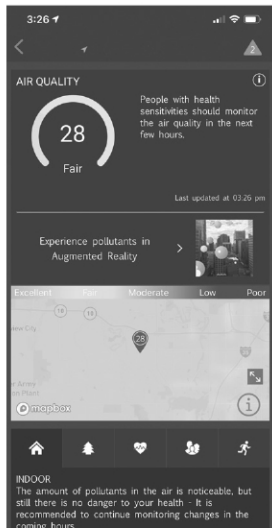
The Environmental Protection Agency, or EPA, is in charge of this index.

On the days with higher numbers, the air can be unhealthy for some people to breathe.

The Air Quality Index uses numbers from 0 to 500. The higher the number, the greater amount of pollution there is in the air. You might be able to keep track of the AQI on your smartphone, or hear alerts on the radio or TV, or read about them in the newspaper.

## What is air pollution?

Air pollution comes mainly from things we use, such as cars, airplanes, spray cans and manufacturing plants. They release chemicals into the air, which sometimes causes **smog** in cities. Smog makes it hard for some people to breathe, including kids who have asthma.



## Resources

### On the Web:

- [bit.ly/MPairquality](http://bit.ly/MPairquality)

### At the library:

- "Mario and the Hole in the Sky" by Elizabeth Rusch
- "What a Waste: Trash, Recycling and Protecting Our Planet" by Jess French



## Try 'n' Find

Words that remind us of Earth Day are hidden in this puzzle. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally, and some letters are used twice. See if you can find:

AIR, ANIMALS, CATALOGS, CLIMATE, COMMUNITY, DAY, EARTH, ENERGY, HOME, INDEX, LITTER, LOCAL, PLANTS, PLASTIC, POLLUTION, QUALITY, RESTORE, SMOG, TREES, WATER.

Y T I N U M M O C S H T R A E  
E G X W A T E R G B M N Q A N  
T H O M E U X O C G O M S I Y  
A V Z P O L L U T I O N U R O  
M R L O C A L E R O T S E R P  
I H O X T A N I M A L S S L D  
L Q U A L I T Y Y V E E A P A  
C P C U L I T T E R E N S L Y  
X I B E N E R G Y R T Z P M P  
I N D E X S Y C T S Z A R K M



## Cook's Corner

### Tortilla Wraps

#### You'll need:

- 4 eggs, hard-cooked with shells removed
- 4 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon dried dill weed

#### What to do:

1. Chop eggs. Mix with next 3 ingredients to make egg salad.
2. Lay tortillas flat on plates.
3. Spread 2 tablespoons of egg salad in center of each tortilla.
4. Place lettuce on top.
5. Fold in 2 edges from opposite sides of tortilla so they touch.
6. Take one other edge and roll it up. Makes 5 wraps.



\* You'll need an adult's help with this recipe.

1. To keep from being harmed; guard (7-letter verb)

□ □ □ □ □ □ □

2. Free from pollution or dirt (5-letter adjective)

□ □ □ □ □

3. Something thrown out with little or no value (5-letter noun)

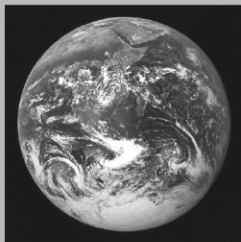
□ □ □ □ □

4. Paying attention; being aware of possible trouble (7-letter adjective)

□ □ □ □ □ □ □

1. Molly will \_\_\_\_\_ plants from snow with a cover.
2. Juanito picked a \_\_\_\_\_ towel from a folded pile.
3. Mrs. Peters carried \_\_\_\_\_ outside to the garbage.
4. Karli was \_\_\_\_\_ not to cut herself on the broken glass.

ROOTONYM®  
by Jan & Carey Orr Cook



Study the definition. When you know the missing word, fill in the letter boxes and the sentence blanks.

Answers: Protect, Clean, Trash, Careful

## Mini Jokes

**Earl:** What does a cloud wear under its raincoat?  
**Eva:** Thunderwear!



## Eco Note

Climate scientists have warned that shifts to greener technologies to supply the world's energy needs may not happen fast enough if the world warms more than 2 degrees Celsius. Nations will have to cut their carbon emissions in half within the next 10 years to keep global heating within the 1.5-degree "safe" range.

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## For later:

Look in your newspaper for articles about Earth Day activities.

**Teachers:** Follow and interact with The Mini Page on Facebook!



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