

THE PEANUTS GANG CELEBRATES EARTH DAY

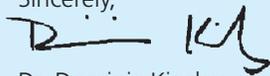
Dear Educator,

The beloved Peanuts gang has shown care for the Earth through cartoon strips that have delighted generations. This Earth Day, let Snoopy and his friends show your students and their families how they can help protect our planet with these standards-based educational activities developed by Peanuts Worldwide and the curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired. Easy to implement, the lessons provide creative activities to complement English Language arts and STEM curricula.

Your students will love joining the Peanuts gang as they explore ecosystems, discover the value of trees, and learn how they can reuse, reduce, and recycle at school, at home, and in the community. Every lesson can be taught remotely or in the classroom, and each activity includes suggestions for extensions that the whole family can enjoy.

Please share this program with other grade 3-6 teachers at your school. And let us know your opinion of the program by visiting ymiclassroom.com/feedback-peanuts-takecare. We look forward to your comments and suggestions.

Sincerely,



Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief
Young Minds Inspired



Program Objectives

- Inspire a sense of responsibility toward taking care of the Earth
- Support language arts and STEM skills

Target Audience

Students in grades 3-6 and their families

How to Use This Program

Download, photocopy, and distribute the three reproducible activity sheets to all students, or share the PDFs through your school's digital platform if you're connecting with students remotely. Students will need pencils, crayons, or markers to complete the activity sheets. Have students share their completed sheets with their families so that they can do the activities at the bottom of each sheet together. Visit ymiclassroom.com/peanuts-takecare for standards alignment.

**Activity 1
The Earth Around Us**

In this activity, students learn about the importance of healthy ecosystems.

Ask students to close their eyes and imagine their favorite place outdoors. It could be somewhere close to home or a treasured vacation spot. What do they hear? What do they see? Now ask them to open their eyes and share their responses. How does nature make them feel?

Pass out the activity sheet, review the directions, and read the cartoon in Part 1 together. Why does Snoopy say that "Woodstock feels that he's led a very full life"? Point out that Woodstock is expressing an appreciation for nature and how natural settings help uplift our spirits and our lives. Tell students that this appreciation for nature is common in the story of the Peanuts gang.

Now point out the similarities and differences in what students shared about their favorite outdoor places. Because our world is so diverse, animals and plants need different things and therefore, live in different environments. The Earth is made up of ecosystems, which are communities of interacting organisms and their physical environment. Ask students to name examples of ecosystems (forests, ponds, grasslands, streams, tidepools, lakes, deserts, etc.).

Tell students that an ecosystem can be small like a pond or big like a prairie. But in every ecosystem, the living things in it depend on each other and on some non-living things to survive. For example, in a pond, water plants depend on sunlight (a non-living thing) to grow, and fish might depend on the plants for food. A frog might hide under the shade



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of a rock (a non-living thing) to keep cool. Anything that interferes with the natural balance of an ecosystem can put all its living organisms in danger. One of those dangers can be humans when they interfere with that balance.

Ask students to think about why it is important that their local ecosystems stay healthy. How can we as humans help? Let students share their thoughts. Ideas might include picking up litter, observing but not touching bird nests, staying on trails at parks, not picking wildflowers when hiking, etc.

Have students complete Part 1 of the activity in small groups, pairs, or individually. Answers to both parts will vary.

Extension: Take your students on a virtual field trip to visit different ecosystems. Check out PBS Learning's large collection of virtual field trips at <https://kcts9.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/nature-works-everywhere-virtual-field-trips/> to visit coral reefs, rainforests, and more.

Activity 2 Tree Tales

In this activity, students will learn about the critical role trees play in a healthy environment and how we can use the valuable resources they provide us responsibly.

Ask students to recall when they imagined themselves in their favorite outdoor setting in Activity 1. What kinds of plants were around them? Were there trees?

Discuss with students how they think trees help an ecosystem stay healthy. Examples may include providing shelter, oxygen, shade, wood, fruit and nuts, and nutrients for plants as dead leaves decompose, adding beauty to an outdoor space, cleaning the air, and preventing erosion.

Pass out the activity sheet, review the directions, and read the Peanuts comic strip in Part 1 together. Do students think Linus and Lucy value trees? If trees help the organisms in an ecosystem, how can we help trees in return? Examples may include planting trees, caring for trees in our yards by pruning them and watching for diseases, etc.

Answers (Part 1): **Across:** 1. shade; 4. shelter; 6. oxygen; 7. beauty; 8. fruit. **Down:** 2. erosion; 3. nutrients; 5. wood. Part 2 answers will vary.

Extension: As a class, consider taking care of trees by participating in an environmental outreach such as the Canopy Project, an Earth Day initiative that encourages people to plant trees for a dollar. See <https://www.earthday.org/campaign/the-canopy-project/>.

Activity 3 Reuse It — or Lose It!

In this activity, students learn how to follow the principles of the three Rs: reduce, reuse, and recycle, and they take a pledge to be responsible users of the environment.

Divide students into small groups. Give each group a piece of paper. Ask

students to name as many ways as possible to reuse the paper. For example, they could make a paper airplane, cut the sheet into smaller pieces as a notepad, etc.

Next, ask students if they would rather reuse or recycle the paper. Ask them if they have heard of “the three Rs”— reduce, reuse, and recycle. Point out that these are important ways in which we can help the environment, and that there is an order to them. First, reduce the use of natural resources such as water and products such as plastics and other materials that can be harmful to ecosystems. Then try to reuse what you can. Finally, recycle something rather than throwing it away.

Pass out the activity sheet, review the directions, and read the Peanuts comic in Part 1 together. Which of the three Rs is featured? Make a connection to the work students did in Activity 2 by asking them how recycling paper is related to taking care of trees.

Launch a discussion about the three Rs by naming some examples. We can reduce water and electricity use by turning off faucets and lights. We can reuse things such as cloth bags instead of using plastic ones that could potentially become litter. We can recycle paper, plastic, and other materials. Ask students to share their own ideas for following these principles at school, at home, and in their community.

Answers: Answers will vary in Part 1. Work with other teachers in your school to show student slideshows to lower grade classes. Consider using the student pledges from Part 2 to create a school bulletin board about following the three Rs.

Extension: In small groups or individually, have students create Earth Day posters to promote ways we all can reduce, reuse, and recycle at school and at home. Download Peanuts Take Care badges at ymiclassroom.com/peanuts-takecare for students to use in their posters. Display them around the school.

Resources

Taking Care of the Earth:

<https://www.factmonster.com/earth-day-taking-care-earth-every-day>

Background on Ecosystems:

<https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/ecosystem/384948>

YMI Microsite:

ymiclassroom.com/peanuts-takecare



TAKE CARE
WITH
PEANUTS

THE EARTH AROUND US



Part 1: Snoopy wants to visit an ecosystem, but he's not sure which one to choose. Help him by reading the paragraph below and then choosing one to research.

Ecosystems are "bubbles of life" made up of living and non-living things that all depend on each other to survive. Most ecosystems contain many kinds of life, including plants, insects, soil-based organisms, animals, and birds. They also contain non-living things such as soil, rocks, and sunlight. These things all work together to make a home for the creatures who live there. Anything that upsets the balance of an ecosystem such as litter, pollution, or even natural disasters, can harm or destroy it entirely.

1. Examples of ecosystems include tidepools, swamps, oceans, forests, streams, lakes, prairies, grasslands, deserts, coral reefs, and many more. Choose one from this site to research:
<https://www.dkfindout.com/us/animals-and-nature/habitats-and-ecosystems/>.

Write your choice here: _____

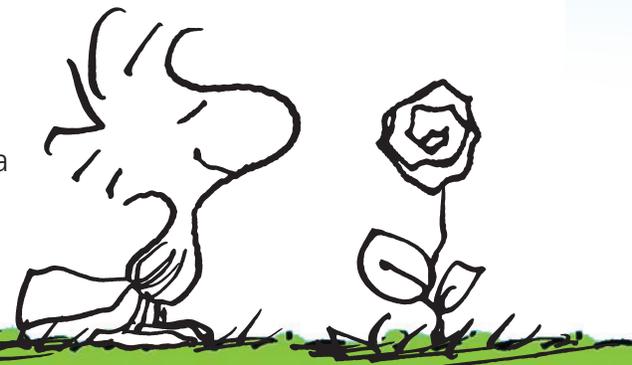
2. Describe the ecosystem's climate: _____

3. List three animals in your ecosystem and a habit each has. For example: lives in the water, is active at night, has a distinctive "call" it makes, etc.

- _____
- _____
- _____

4. Name some plants that live in your ecosystem: _____

Part 2: Now, use what you learned to create a poster or diorama of your ecosystem. Cut out and add the picture of Snoopy from the comic so he can imagine himself there on his visit.

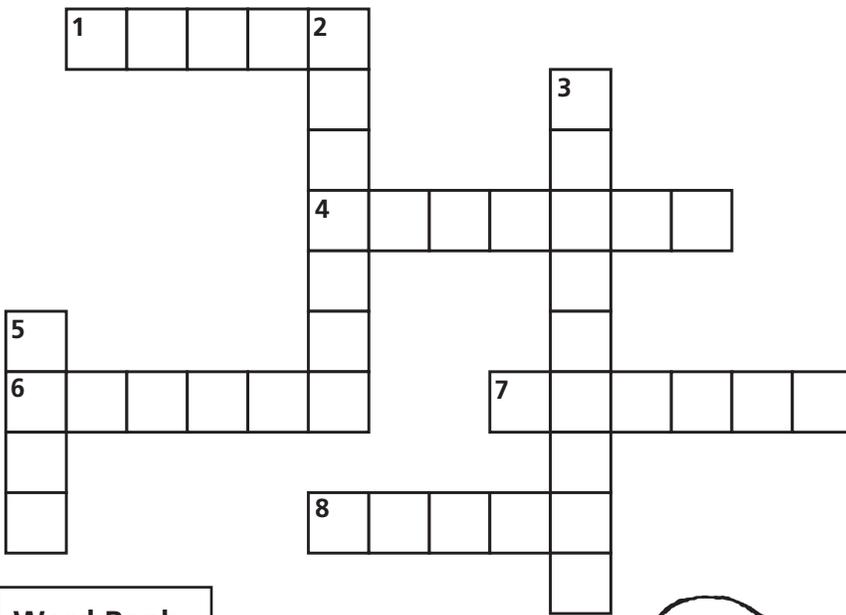


Families: Check your own backyard or take a trip to a nearby park or nature preserve to see what parts of an ecosystem you and your family can discover. Then look for ways you can help take care of nature in that ecosystem.

TREE TALES



PART 1: Complete this puzzle to show off your “tree-mendous” knowledge about trees.



Word Bank
 oxygen
 nutrients
 wood
 beauty
 shade
 shelter
 fruit
 erosion



ACROSS

- 1. On a hot day, a tree is a great place to find some _____.
- 4. Trees provide _____ for animals who need homes.
- 6. Trees produce and release _____ into the air.
- 7. Trees can add _____ to any space.
- 8. Some trees produce _____ that animals and humans eat.

DOWN

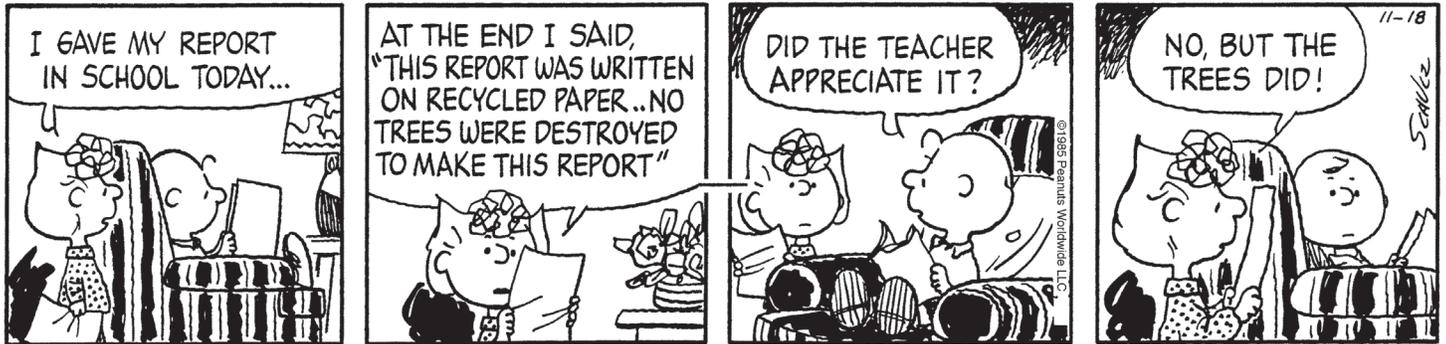
- 2. Trees can prevent _____, which happens when soil is washed or blown away.
- 3. When trees drop their leaves in the fall, the dead leaves provide _____ to plants.
- 5. Many trees are highly valued for their _____, which can be used to make furniture.

PART 2: We celebrate Earth Day on April 22, but April is also National Poetry Month. On a separate piece of paper, write a poem about trees in the shape of a tree, with words on branches sprouting from a trunk. Have fun and be creative. Your poem can rhyme or not — it’s up to you!

Families: Celebrate Earth Day by asking family members to name what kind of tree they would be, if they could be a tree. Consider planting a tree as a family that you could care for, or find a local organization to which you can donate a tree.

TAKE CARE
WITH
PEANUTS

REUSE IT — OR LOSE IT!



PART 1: Read the paragraph below and answer the following questions. Then create a slideshow to help teach younger students all about how to reduce, reuse, and recycle!

Follow the example of the Peanuts gang to take care of the Earth by reducing, reusing, and recycling! These are sometimes called “the three Rs.” First, reduce what you use or consume. Almost everything you buy uses natural resources, especially if you think about the energy it takes to make or produce goods and transport them. Reducing means using less water, electricity, gas, and even some products, like paper towels. Next, reuse what you can. Donate old clothing and other items to thrift stores so someone else can use them if you cannot. Reusing something instead of throwing it out can help someone else and saves space in a landfill. Finally, once you have reduced and reused as much as you can, recycle. Recycling is a way to process materials such as some plastics and paper into new materials that can be made into new products.

1. Which of “the three Rs” should you do first? _____
2. What is one way you can reduce what you consume? _____
3. What are two benefits of reusing items instead of throwing them away? _____

4. What does it mean to recycle something? _____

PART 2: Read and sign the pledge at right to take care of the Earth. Color it, cut it out, and hang it up in your classroom or at home.



I pledge to take care of the Earth,
to care for ecosystems and trees,
and to reduce, reuse, and recycle.
I will be like the Peanuts gang and
enjoy and protect our planet!

_____ (Sign here)

Families: Take care of the Earth by examining your own practices at home and improving (or implementing) ways you can reduce, reuse, and recycle.