

Dear Educator,

Help your students celebrate Earth Day on April 22, 2021 in an exciting new way! Random House Publishing and the curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired have teamed up to bring you this free teaching resource, **Earth Day with The Lorax**, to help get students and families excited and involved in this year's Earth Day campaign theme, *Restore the Earth*.

Based on the environmental messages in Dr. Seuss's timeless book, *The Lorax*, the activities in **Earth Day with The Lorax** can set the stage for students and their families to find practical ways they can help protect resources and make their communities greener and healthier—the goal of the *Restore the Earth* theme.

Please share this teaching kit with other teachers in grades 3-5 at your school. Although these materials are protected by copyright you may make as many copies as you need for educational purposes.

Please comment online at [ymiclassroom.com/feedback-thelorax](https://www.yميعlassroom.com/feedback-thelorax) to let us know your thoughts on this program. We look forward to your feedback.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief
Young Minds Inspired



For questions, contact us toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or by email at feedback@ymiclassroom.com.

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Dr. Seuss™

Earth Day with *The Lorax*

Target Audience

Students in grades 3 through 5 and their families

Program Objectives

- Promote environmental literacy and encourage an understanding of community improvement activities as well as conservation
- Integrate English/Language Arts lessons with environmental education
- Provide ideas for community action and improvement for students and their families

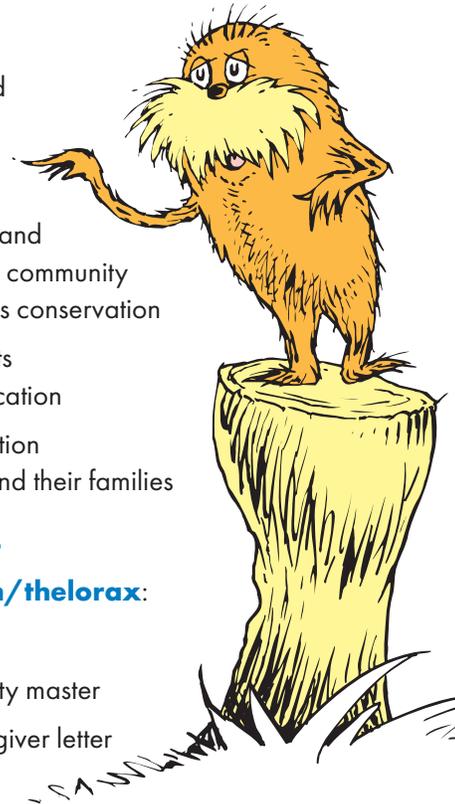
Program Components

Available at [ymiclassroom.com/thelorax](https://www.yميعlassroom.com/thelorax):

- This teacher's guide
- One reproducible student activity master
- One reproducible parent/caregiver letter
- Standards alignment chart

About *The Lorax*

A young boy arrives at the house of the Once-ler, who tells him that this barren valley was once filled with beautiful Truffula Trees, but he cut them down to get soft tufts, which he used to manufacture a garment called a Thneed. He says that after the first chop, a small creature called the Lorax appeared and told him to stop, but the Once-ler wouldn't stop. So the Lorax brought Brown Bar-ba-loots, Swomee Swans, and Humming-Fish to show the Once-ler who was being harmed by the destruction. But the Once-ler didn't care. He kept chopping until the last Truffula Tree was gone. So the Lorax departed, leaving only the word "UNLESS" engraved on a pile of stones, and the Once-ler secluded himself in his tower, reflecting on the lessons of the Lorax. After he tells his story, the Once-ler gives the young boy the last Truffula Tree seed and asks him to make things better by replanting the forest. Only then, he says, will the Lorax and his friends return.



How to Use This Teaching Kit

This program is designed to supplement Earth Day 2021 activities in your school and community. Photocopy the activity sheet and parent/caregiver letter to distribute to each student. Send home copies of the letter for students to share with parents, or share it in email correspondence with families. To learn more about the 2021 Earth Day *Restore the Earth* campaign, visit the *Earth Day Network* at www.earthday.org/earth-day-2021.

Activity: Restore the Earth with *The Lorax*

Begin the activity with a discussion on the Earth Day 2021 theme, *Restore the Earth*. Ask students to share their ideas for what “restore” means. Explain that restoring the Earth means we focus on ways to protect and conserve our natural resources right now and for the future. Remind students that our connection to the natural world—to plants, animals, and land—is important because these resources are crucial to life, health, and well-being. Explain that the **Earth Day with The Lorax** activities will help them think of ways they can help restore the Earth just by taking small actions in their own communities.

Part 1. Read the *The Lorax* with your class or share the summary on page 1. Explain that when the Once-ler cuts down all the Truffula Trees, he sets off a chain of cause/effect relationships that impact the environment. Cause/effect relationships mean that one event causes another event to occur. Have students complete the cause/effect relationship scenarios in Part 1 and add their own examples.

Answers: 2. The pond becomes polluted; 3. The Humming-Fish have to leave; 4. The skies become polluted; 5. Answers will vary.

Next, lead students in a discussion about environmental cause and effect scenarios in our world today. Student ideas may include deforestation and habitat destruction, plastic pollution, other land and water pollution, energy consumption, etc. Ask students to share how these real-world scenarios are similar to or different from those in *The Lorax*. Ask why the book still has a message for us today.

Then ask students how the Once-ler, as well as Thneed-buyers, could have practiced the 3Rs — Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle — to make sustainable decisions that help conserve resources for today and future generations, and how the cause/effect relationships would have been different. Ideas might include: Thneeds could have been recycled at thrift stores, reducing demand for new ones and less demand for Truffula fruit; The Once-ler could have planted new Truffula Trees to maintain a constant source of Truffula fruit; The Once-ler could have invented better machines that didn't pollute the air and water; The Once-ler could have invented machines that harvested Truffula fruits without chopping down the entire tree, etc.

Part 2. Have students use the organizer to record actions they can take to help make a difference. Ideas may include: reducing food waste; planting vegetable and native plant gardens; using environmentally-friendly, non-toxic cleaning products at home; reducing the use of disposable plastics and other one-time use products; offering re-usable utensils, trays, and dishes in the school cafeteria; buying locally grown foods; taking shorter showers conserving energy; promoting renewable energy like solar and wind; and using rechargeable batteries.

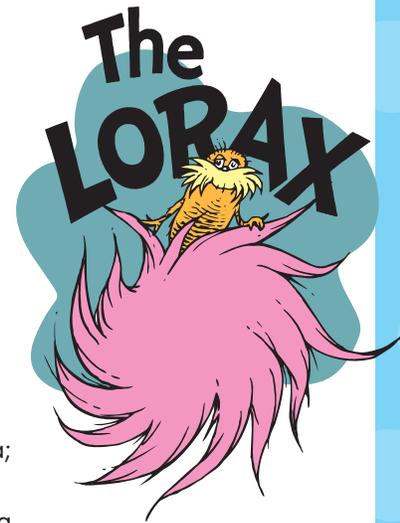
Help students organize into groups that will each focus on one action as the basis for a positive version of *The Lorax*. Have students brainstorm the initial outline of their story on the activity sheet, then use additional paper to write and illustrate the final draft. Remind students to write in rhyme about the benefits that could occur as people help restore the Earth. Have students share their work with one another as well as with the school community at large.

Extension Activities

- Help students explore the concept of sustainability through a simulation game such as the Popcorn Game found at www.peacecorps.gov/educators/resources/popcorn-generation/. Follow-up with a discussion and research about natural resources. Ask students whether the Once-ler could have made Thneeds in a way that also protected the environment and its natural resources.
- Help students practice STEM skills by discussing how the Once-ler could have used his engineering skills to harvest Truffula fruit without chopping down the entire tree.
- Assign student groups one of the 3Rs — Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle — to make presentations for each of these ecologically important habits.
- Have students make a mural or draw their own interpretation of a scene in *The Lorax*, then identify and label the natural resources.

Resources

- www.theloraxproject.com
- ymiclassroom.com/thelorax
- earthday.org/earth-day-2021





Restore the Earth with *The Lorax*

PART 1: In *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss, the Once-ler's actions caused many environmental problems for the Truffula Tree forest. Complete the cause/effect relationship chart below to show some of these effects. See the example for number 1. Then add an example of your own in the space for number 5.

Causes	Effects
1. People keep buying Thneeds.	1. The Once-ler cuts down more Truffula Trees to make more Thneeds.
2. The Once-ler keeps cutting down Truffula Trees to create more and more Thneeds.	2.
3. The pond is full of Gluppity-glup and Schloppity-schlop.	3.
4. The Thneed factory fills the air with smog.	4.
5.	5.

UNLESS
someone like you
cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get
better. It's not.



PART 2: Use the questions below to plan a new, positive version of *The Lorax* that tells what could happen when people take steps to help *Restore the Earth!*

1. Brainstorm ideas for environmental actions that help protect and conserve Earth's natural resources. Record them below.



★ _____

★ _____

★ _____

★ _____

2. Choose one action from your list and plan your story ideas below. Then use separate paper to write and illustrate your story in rhyme, like in *The Lorax!*

Positive Environmental Action: _____

Story Elements:

★ Characters: _____

★ Setting: _____

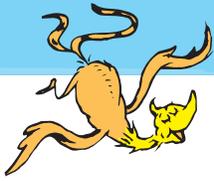
★ Story Beginning Idea: _____

★ Story Middle Idea: _____

★ Story Ending Idea: _____

Families: For more ideas and fun activities for Earth Day with *The Lorax*, go to:
www.theloraxproject.com





Dear Parents and Caregivers,

The Lorax, Dr. Seuss's timeless tale of Truffula Trees, Brown Bar-ba-loots, the Once-ler, and, of course, the Lorax, sets the stage for Earth Day events and discussions at home, as well as family actions that can help make your community greener and healthier.

The April 22, 2021 Earth Day theme is *Restore the Earth*. Review these suggestions and make a family plan to protect and conserve our natural resources!

Pandemic-Aware Ways to Celebrate Earth Day

- Make an Earth Day themed poster to display in your front window or door.
- Complete an earth-friendly project such as planning and planting a native plant and vegetable garden, decorating old CDs to hang in windows to prevent bird collisions, starting a compost pile, or making a rain capture system for your home.
- Participate in a litter clean-up event in your community.

The Lorax Family Discussion Ideas

In the words of the Lorax, "UNLESS someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not." Read *The Lorax* together. Follow up with an environmentally-focused discussion using these prompts:

- The book was written in 1971. Why do you think this book is still important today?
- How does this book inspire you to celebrate Earth Day?
- How can our family make earth-friendly decisions in how we live, what we buy, and what we value?

Make a Family Commitment to the Environment

As part of the 3Rs—Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle—there are many ways to help conserve and protect resources and the environment. Choose one or more of these ideas and make a commitment to practice them as a family:

- **Practice the 3Rs.** From food to plastics and packaging, it's important to lessen the impact of the waste stream that taxes the planet's resources. Buy only what you need and pay particular attention to re-use and reduce actions.
- **Monitor your energy use.** Conserving electricity and natural gas saves resources and money.
- **Conserve water.** Take shorter showers, run the washing machine and dishwasher with full loads at tap water temperature, use timers for irrigation, and turn off the tap while brushing teeth.



Go to
theloraxproject.com
for more ideas and fun
activities for Earth Day
with *The Lorax*.

