

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 reduce, reuse, 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 K-2 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



Questions? Contact YMI toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or by email at feedback@ymiclassroom.com.

THE PEANUTS GANG CELEBRATES EARTH DAY

Program Objectives

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

Target Audience

Students in grades K-2 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 will learn about the important role that living and non-living things play in shaping the health of an ecosystem.



Ask students to close their eyes and imagine their favorite place outdoors. What do they hear? What do they see? Ask them to open their eyes and share their responses, then write them on the board. Which of the things they shared are living? Are any of them non-living? Point out that in nature, both are important. They are part of an ecosystem. An ecosystem is a group of living and non-living things that interact with each other in a specific place. An ecosystem can be small like a pond or big like a forest. But in every ecosystem, those that live in it depend on each other 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 of a rock (a non-living thing) to keep cool.

Ask students to imagine what might happen if someone threw litter into the pond. Do all non-living things help an ecosystem? (No; litter can hurt the fish or other animals.) Could a living thing hurt an ecosystem? (Yes; living things that do not belong there could hurt it. For example, a human stomping around a small pond could destroy it.)

Pass out the activity sheet, review the directions, and read the cartoon in Part 1 with students. 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.

In Part 2, tell students that it's important to take care of our Earth's ecosystems, and we can start with the area near where we live. What ecosystems are part of their neighborhoods? Help students brainstorm ways they can take care of ecosystems and write them on the board. For example, they could pick up litter, observe but don't touch bird nests, stay on trails at parks, don't pick wildflowers when hiking, etc.

Older students can write ways they can help take care of their local ecosystems on the sheet, while younger students can copy some ideas from the board.

Answers — Part 1: Living things (duck, fish, frog, plants); non-living things (rocks, litter). Part 2: The box, can, and cups don't belong. Answers for caring for ecosystems 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.

Tell students that you are going to play a guessing game. First, have them copy your movements as you act out the stages of tree growth, but do not tell them you are a tree. Start low to the ground as a "seed" and sprout up. Then slowly "grow," standing up slowly and stretching out your arms. Finally, stand tall, stretch your arms

out fully, and "leaf out" by spreading your fingers wide. Now ask them to guess what you (and they) are. If they need help, give them clues such as "I sometimes provide fruit and nuts for animals," and "Sometimes I change color in the fall." After students guess correctly, quiz them about the stages of a tree's life. How did they act out each stage? What happens to some trees in the spring (they develop buds), summer (they bloom and/or create fruit), fall (they store energy as their leaves change color and fall), and winter (they go dormant)? Then connect this discussion to their work in Activity 1 by brainstorming how the stages of a tree's life cycle help an ecosystem (they contribute to the needs of other "members" of the ecosystem by providing shade, leaf mulch, fruit and/or nuts, etc.).

Now pass out the activity sheet, review the directions, and read the Peanuts comic strip. Things trees give us could include wood, fruit, nuts, oxygen, furniture, paper, shade, animal homes, etc.

After students have finished writing their poems and coloring them, have them cut them out and put them together on a bulletin board to create a tree mural.

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. You will need an empty plastic water bottle for visual reference.

On a board, make three columns labeled reduce, reuse, and recycle. Tell students that one way they can take care of the Earth is by following these three ideas — known as the three Rs — in their homes, at school, and in their community.

Pass out the activity sheet, review the directions, and read the Peanuts comic in Part 1. 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.

Next, hold up an empty plastic water bottle. What could you do with it to reduce, reuse, and recycle? Ask students to share ideas. For example, you could reduce plastic waste by switching to a metal water bottle. You could reuse the plastic bottle by using it to hold flowers, or by refilling it with water from a water fountain. You could recycle it by placing it in a bin for recyclable plastic.

Write students' ideas in the columns on the board as you continue to prompt discussion of ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle at school, at home, or in the community. Examples might include reducing electricity use by turning off lights, reusing fabric bags instead of using plastic ones, and being sure that you recycle plastic bottles in bins designed for that purpose.

In Part 2 of the activity, consider using student pledges to decorate a bulletin board about ways we can take care of the Earth by following the three Rs. (**Answers:** Reduce, reuse, and recycle, in that order.)

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://scienking.com/information-kids-ecosystems-5780652.html>

YMI Microsite:

ymiclassroom.com/peanuts-takecare



TAKE CARE
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THE EARTH AROUND US



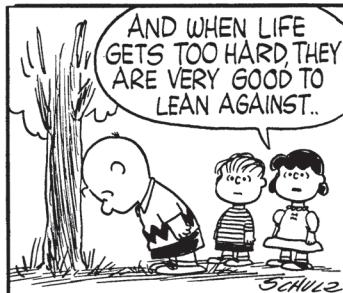
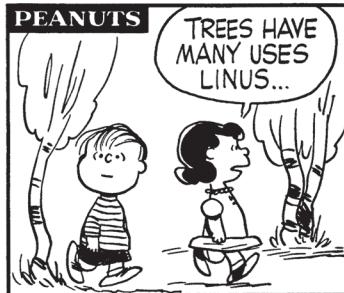
Part 1: Look at the ecosystem below. Circle the living things. Draw a box around the non-living things.



Part 2: Look at the picture above. What items do not belong in this ecosystem? What are some ways we can take care of Earth's ecosystems? Write your ideas on the back of this sheet.

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.

**TAKE CARE
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TREE TALES



In this Peanuts comic strip, we see that Lucy cares about trees. The Peanuts gang respects trees!

Earth Day is April 22. Celebrate by writing a poem about trees on these lines.
(The lines don't have to rhyme.)

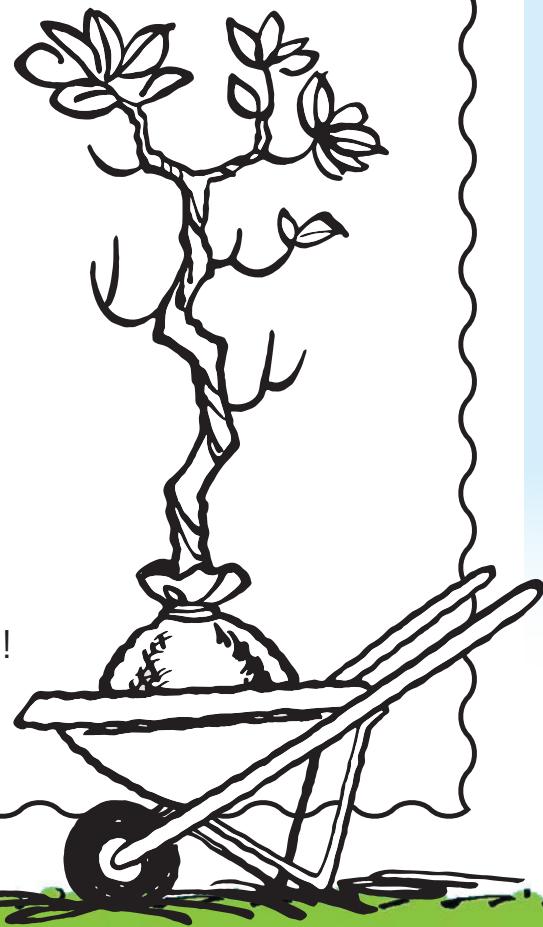
Trees are important!

They give us _____
 _____.

They give us _____
 _____.

They give us _____
 _____.

We should care for trees because they care for us!



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.

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REUSE IT — OR LOSE IT!



PART 1: Sally is learning about how to take care of the Earth. Can you help her by filling in the blanks below? Choose from the words **reduce**, **reuse**, or **recycle**.

It was time for Sally to get ready for school. First, she brushed her teeth. She turned off the faucet while she brushed. This helps her _____ the water she uses. Then she put her lunch in a cloth bag so she could _____ the bag the next day. At school, the class cleaned out their desks. Sally saved all the paper she did not need so she could _____ it.

PART 2: You can take care of the Earth like the Peanuts gang too! Read, sign, and color the pledge below.



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.