

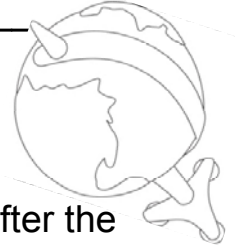


Maggie's Activity Pack

Name _____

Date _____

Earth Day



It was a warm spring day in Michigan. It was nice to see the sun after the long winter. But Melissa wished it wasn't so warm. Her dad said she needed to work in the yard. She had really wanted to be with her friends today, but her parents said no. "We want to plant new trees. It's your job to rake and get the yard ready. You live in this house, too."

Melissa wiped the hair from her face. She sighed, "Why do they need to plant more trees? We have enough in the yard. All they have to do is look at the pile of leaves out there. More trees?" Melissa groaned. "That's the last thing this yard needs!"

She walked into the kitchen. It was time for a break. Melissa grabbed a glass. She filled it with ice and turned on the faucet. "Ahh...a nice tall glass of cold water is just what I need," she said.

The two things Melissa just did – getting the yard ready to plant trees and having a big glass of water are two things the Earth Day Network wants people to think about. Earth Day is more than what happens on April 22. Did you know there is a group of people who think about the health of our planet? They want others to do their part to good care of Mother Earth, too. Many people all over the world take part in Earth Day programs. They make sure we use the Earth's resources, like water and trees, wisely. But, just as Melissa is doing in her yard,

keeping the Earth healthy, takes hard work, too. And this work can begin right in your own backyard!

Like Melissa you can clean up the area around your house. Look at your doors and windows. Do they let air in or out? This wastes money and natural resources.

You can help in your community, too. Maybe you and your friends want to pick up litter. You can encourage your neighbors to use water wisely. There may be a company that is polluting the air or a stream in your town. You could write a letter to that company.

All people can think about the impact they have on our planet. What is your ecological footprint? That is the amount of land and water you need to support what you use and throw away. You may be shocked to learn that if everyone lived as you do, it would take 7 Planet Earths to support us!

The Earth Day Network has many goals. One is quite amazing. A program called “Trees Across America” encourages people to plant 285 million trees across the United States! This is one tree for every American. Planting trees is important. In the past 30 years, the United States has lost over 30% of its trees in cities. This is a loss of over 600 million trees. Trees do so much for us. We breathe in oxygen. We breathe out carbon dioxide. Trees take in that carbon dioxide. They give off oxygen. This means they are necessary to the balance of life on Earth. Trees also act as filters. They take harmful pollution out of our air and water. Large trees in the yard can protect your house from becoming too cold in the winter or too hot in the summer. That means they save your parents money on their heating and cooling bills. But, as you’ve read, the United States has lost too many city trees. And the city is where 80% of Americans live. So it is important to plant more trees in these areas. The Earth Day Network also wants people to plant trees in important watershed

areas. The Chesapeake Bay, the Mississippi River Valley, Puget Sound, and the Great Lakes region where Melissa lives, are some of these areas.

Another goal of the Earth Day Network is to help people understand the importance of clean water. Many people have to travel a long way to get clean water. They can't just turn on the faucet. In Mongolia, many children must walk miles to get water. This means these children can not go to school. Small Russian villages use out-dated wells for water. Children often are sent to pump water. They must carry these heavy buckets back to their homes. The Earth Day Network is working to help places like the village of Mbabala in Tanzania. They are sinking wells that will provide clean water. Their information will help all of us understand the need for clean water in our world.

There are many ways you can take part in Earth Day. Look around your house, neighborhood, and community. How can you help? What will you do on Earth Day? What hopes do you have for people all over the globe this Earth Day?

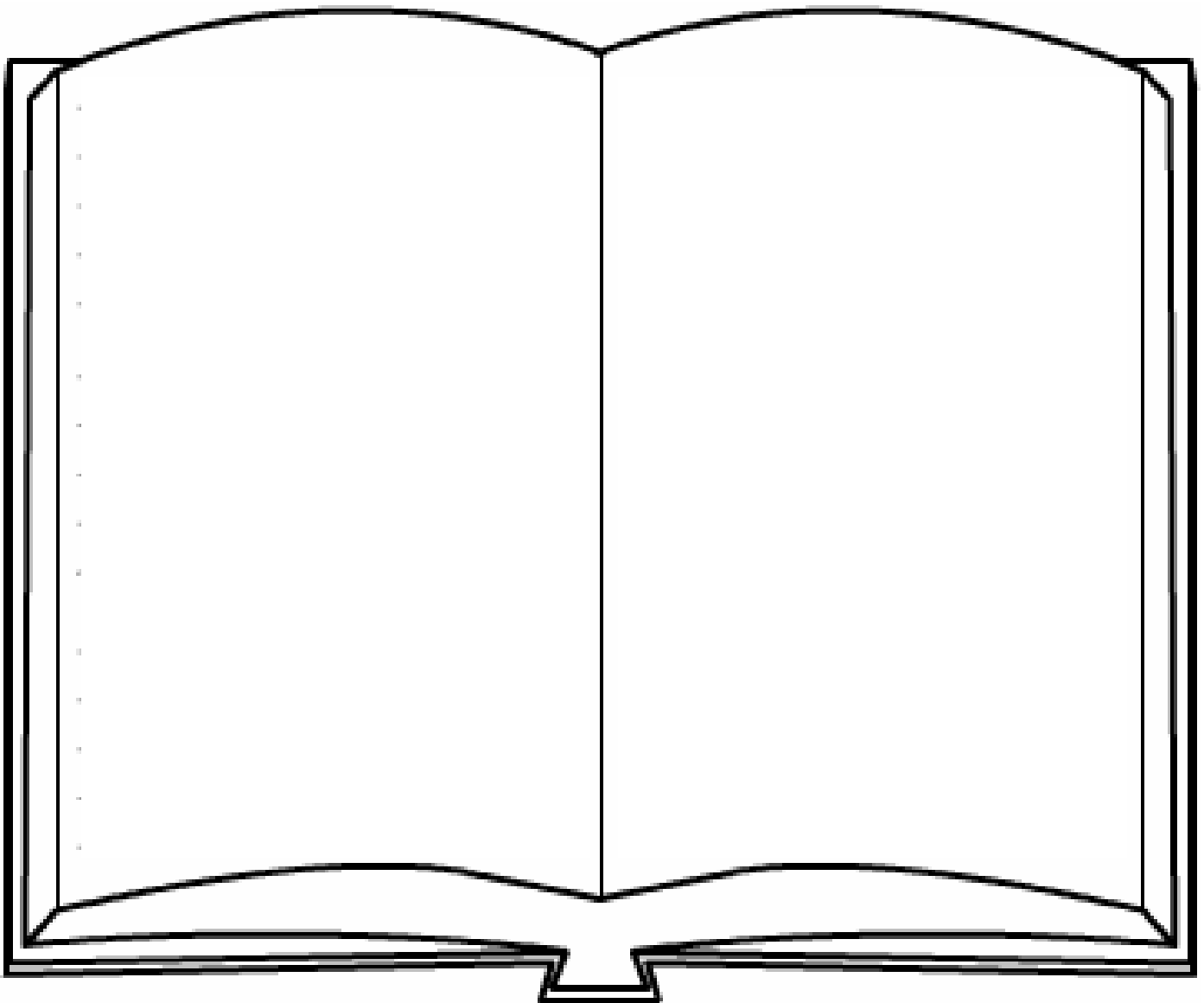


Reading and Writing in the Content Areas: Science

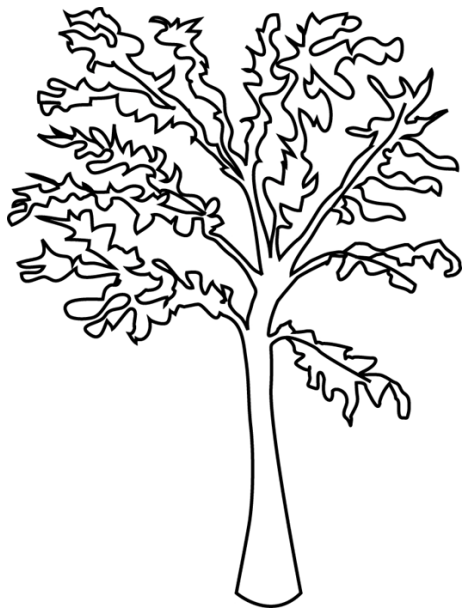
Answer these questions. Sometimes you will look back in the article.

Sometimes you will need to use the information in the article AND your own thoughts to help you write an answer. Some questions ask you to just give your ideas.

1. Imagine you are Melissa. Write a diary entry. Tell how you felt about cleaning your yard.



2. List 3 things trees do.



3. Give the Earth Day Network advice on how to meet their goal of planting so many trees.

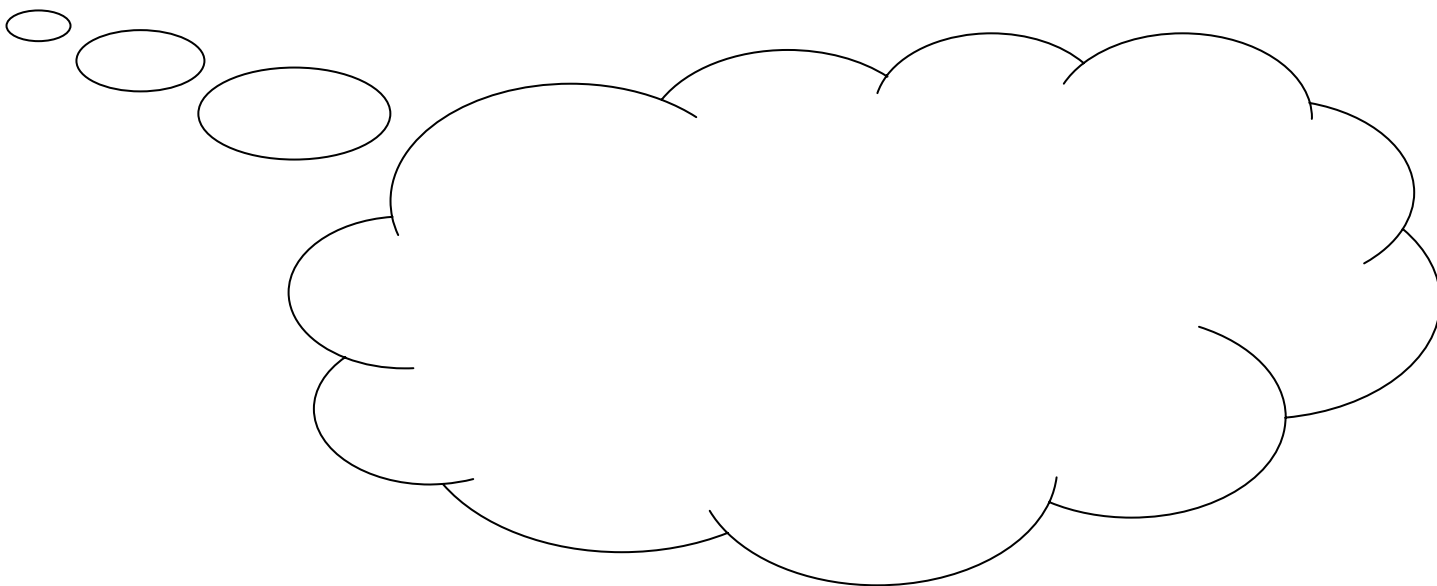
4. List 3 things we use clean water for.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

5. Imagine you are a child in Mongolia or a Russian village sent to get water.
What are you thinking about as you set off?



6. What might happen if people do not have clean water?

7. What are 3 things you can do on Earth Day?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

8. Do you think it is important that people do a project they enjoy on Earth Day?
Explain your thinking.



Dear Colleague,

We all want our students to develop higher level reading and writing skills. So many times, we have excellent material to help them do this when it comes to fiction, but nonfiction can be more problematic. We need to help our children see that the answer is not always there in the text. Getting away from that “dragnet” syndrome of “just the facts” is essential. The follow-up activity in this activity packet will help your students bring their higher level thinking skills to a nonfiction article. After they complete the activity, discuss with them which questions were easy to answer and what questions were more difficult. Talk about why this was. This type of discussion will give you insight into what types of questions your children need further practice with.

I encourage you to visit the Earth Day Network website at <http://www.earthday.net/>. You will find some good background material for your April activities here. I was shocked when I took the Environmental Footprint “quiz.”

Kathy

Answers to questions will vary.

Goals:

Children will read a nonfiction article about Earth Day. They will answer follow-up questions highlighting literal, inferential, and critical reading skills to achieve comprehension practice in the content area of science. This activity is available on both the primary and intermediate level.