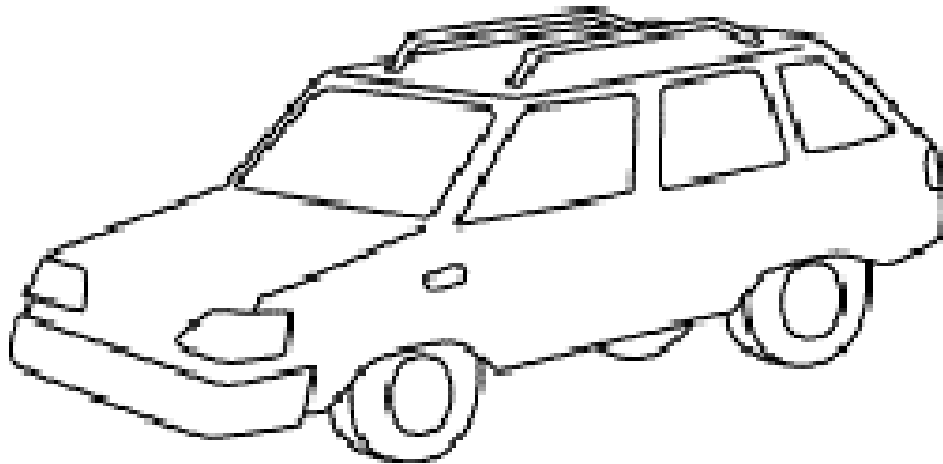




# Maggie's Activity Pack

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Funny Ideas May Be Good Ideas!



Some people have a new idea. They think algae can be used as gas. Would it be funny to use green algae in a car? Maybe! But we use plants like corn in fuel today. Why not use algae? It is not a food. It can grow well in water. This may be a funny idea. But people have new ideas all the time. Sometimes these new ideas help the Earth!

Dear Colleague,

This WAP discusses a new idea put forth by researchers at ExxonMobil. The thought involves using photosynthetic algae as a biofuel. Take a look at our companion primary or intermediate WAPs, "All It Takes Is One Great Idea!" for more information about this concept. As both titles suggest, we are highlighting the concept that ideas should always be embraced and considered. Too often, we are forced to focus on factual knowledge in today's test-taking educational atmosphere. Articles such as this help us point out to our children the value of new thoughts and ideas. After reading this article, ask your students to put on their "new idea" hats and write or draw a picture of ways they think algae fuel could be delivered to cars. What would an algae "gas" station look like? I can't wait to hear about these creative drawings - please share pictures or stories with us!

Around the same time I was writing this WAP, I was also rereading some poetry by one of my favorite children's poets, Aileen Fisher. She has some wonderful poems about weather and the seasons. One of her poems titled, "I Like It When It's Mizzly" celebrates rainy days (what a unique idea!) because they make the world appear "far away and make-believe, and frizzly." I loved this creative "take" on rain (since I was a child in elementary school – many, many years ago ☺), and it prompted me to view the green algae idea in a different way. Isn't it amazing how poetry and science can connect?

And speaking of ideas, this might be a word not easily decoded or part of your students' sight vocabularies. A few weeks ago, I presented some thoughts on developing sight words in your classrooms. Here are two more "new ideas" as to how to do this:

- Cut a rectangular hole from the middle of a flyswatter. Let your students swat the target words. What a way to allow students to release energy!
- Fill zip-lock bags with hair gel. You might want to add a few drops of food coloring if the gel is clear. Then use duct tape to seal the bags! (Really – use the tape...you don't want a mess!) Give each child a bag so they can "write" the sight words in the goo. It's fun and helps those children who really need to feel the letters of the words ☺

Let me know other fun and meaningful ways you use to help build those all important sight vocabularies!

Happy teaching,  
Kathy

**Goals:**

Students will read an article about ExxonMobil's initiative to use algae as a biofuel. They are encouraged to consider how this unusual fuel would be distributed. The Dear Colleague letter addresses development of sight vocabulary and presents an idea for using poetry to integrate with science. This activity is available on the emergent, primary, and intermediate levels and correlates with Content Standard C, Life Science, and Content Standard F, Science in Personal and Social Perspectives of the National Science Standards.