

# Earth Day Game

## • Keep 'em Reading •

Grades  
K-2, 3-5

by | Dr. D. Jackson Maxwell

The necessary task of teaching basic skills and facts can be laborious and dull for both librarians and students. Introducing students to research materials, online sources, and searching techniques is a series of lessons that few look forward to but must be taught to empower students in locating and utilizing information. By interjecting games into the lesson and incorporating gaming techniques as a part of the curriculum, librarians can entice students to more readily learn these necessary skills.

The following story and accompanying activity can be used to introduce students to researching techniques using both print and online resources. While the game is simple and designed for elementary aged students, the informative story and reference links can be useful to secondary students. In addition, the activity helps students learn about unfamiliar topics such as Earth Day, its history, celebration, and associated events.

Gaming is an important motivating tool to interest both avid and reluctant readers. Games encourage students to take a chance on researching and reading about unfamiliar topics by providing a competitive challenge. As educators, librarians can further enhance children's natural curiosity by connecting learning to gaming. So give the following research links and story a try, and then measure your students' learning based on their ability to successfully complete the accompanying activity.

### The Premise

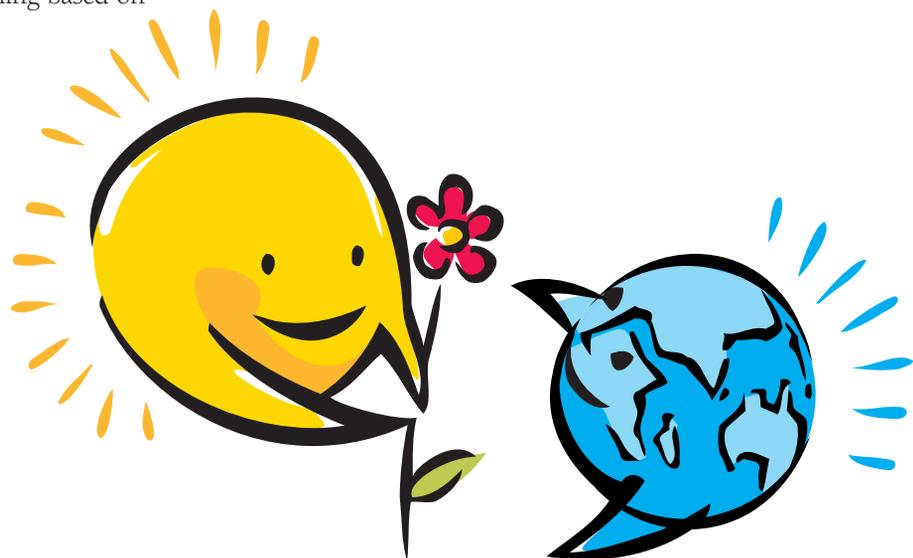
As spring begins with flowers blooming and leaves returning to the trees, the month of April introduces a new holiday that with gains increasing attention each year—Earth Day. Earth Day is held April 22 and began in the United States but is now celebrated by people around the world.

### The Earth Day Game

Have students explore the topic using teacher provided books and pre-selected Web sites such as those suggested at the end of the article. After completing the initial research, the students should read the provided story on page 3. Then, either individually or in groups, have the students play the game on page 4 to test and reinforce their newly acquired knowledge.

#### Answer Key

1. Environment; 2. Earth Day; 3. Pollution;
4. Ecology; 5. Gaylord Nelson; 6. Smog; 7. Litter;
8. Parades; 9. Solar Power; 10. Conservation; 11. Celebration; 12. Clean Air Act; 13. Erosion; 14. Acid Rain; 15. Congress; 16. Recycling;
17. Carpooling; 18. Landfills; 19. Pet Adoption;
20. Habitats.





## Earth Day Resources

### Additional Reading

- Ansary, Mir Tamim. *Earth Day*. Heinemann Library, 2002.
- Christofferson, Bill. *The Man From Clear Lake: Earth Day Founder Senator Gaylord Nelson*. University of Wisconsin Press, 2004.
- Cooper, Jason. *Earth Day (Holiday Celebrations)*. Rourke Publishing, 2003.
- Lowery, Linda. *Earth Day*. Carolrhoda Books, 1991.
- Margaret, Amy. *Earth Day*. Rosen Publishing Group, 2002.
- Marx, David F. *Earth Day*. Children's Press, 2001.
- Moehn, Heather. *World Holidays: A Watts Guide for Children*. Rosen Publishing Group, 2000.
- Murphy, Stuart J. *Earth Day-hooray!* HarperCollins, 2004.
- Nelson, Robin. *Earth Day*. Lerner Publishing, 2003.
- Roop, Connie & Peter. *Let's Celebrate Earth Day*. Millbrook Press, 2001.
- Ross, Kathy. *Every Day Is Earth Day*. Millbrook Press, 1995.
- Sanders, Nancy I. *Earth Day*. Scholastic, 2003.
- Steffoff, Rebecca. *The American Environmental Movement*. Facts On File, 1995.

### Internet Resources

#### Earth Day History

- [earthday.wilderness.org/history/](http://earthday.wilderness.org/history/)
- [earthday.envirolink.org/history.html](http://earthday.envirolink.org/history.html)
- [www.epa.gov/earthday/history.htm](http://www.epa.gov/earthday/history.htm)

#### Earth Day Games

- [www.kidsdomain.com/games/earthday.html](http://www.kidsdomain.com/games/earthday.html)
- [www.ecokidsonline.com/pub/index.cfm](http://www.ecokidsonline.com/pub/index.cfm)
- [www.seussville.com/games/lorax/](http://www.seussville.com/games/lorax/)

#### Web Sites of Interest

- Human Society of the United States  
[www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org)
- National Geographic Kids  
[www.nationalgeographic.com/kids/](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/kids/)
- National Wildlife Federation  
[www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org)
- Sierra Club  
[www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)



Dr. D. Jackson Maxwell is a National Board Certified Teacher and Library Media Specialist for Downtown Elementary School located in Memphis, Tennessee, and can be reached via e-mail at [maxwellj01@k12tn.net](mailto:maxwellj01@k12tn.net).

## The Earth Day Story

Earth Day began in 1969 at the urging of Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson. The 1960s were a time of change in the United States when an increased awareness and emphasis on the environment and global interdependence began to develop. Through Senator Nelson's advocacy, Congress passed legislation that included the Clean Air Act of 1970 and created the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Since that time, Earth Day has been a great success and has caused people to think about how to appreciate nature and protect it. Twenty million Americans celebrated the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970. After a twenty-year hiatus, 200 million people around the globe participated in the second Earth Day events in 1990. Senator Nelson was named the honorary chairman at the event. Earth Day has been celebrated every year since and has proven to be a lasting event. It is becoming a part of a global movement that is still growing. Today, people from more than 150 nations observe Earth Day.

Earth Day is celebrated with concerts, marches, parades, speeches, and gatherings of people concerned about the environment. Issues addressed include air pollution, smog, litter, global warming, ozone depletion, contaminated oceans and rivers, overflowing landfills, endangered animals, abandoned pets, species extinction, the loss of rain forests and deforestation, acid rain, erosion, as well as a host of other issues that pose potential dangers to the earth and the well being of all who inhabit it. Since its inception, Earth Day has focused on worldwide problems, but with increased awareness and research, solutions are now being found and implemented.

Recycling, cleaner emissions from factories and vehicles, increased fuel efficiency, protection of endangered species and their habitats, and soil and water conservation projects are only a few of the programs that are a direct result of the type of thinking inspired by Senator Nelson's Earth Day. This event has encouraged people to look toward the future for ways to conserve and protect the environment. Solar, wind, and hydroelectric power are gaining popularity, moving beyond the commercial and into the private sector with solar panels on homes, low flow faucets, etc. Battery, hydrogen, and hybrid cars have moved off the drawing boards and into everyday life replacing traditional fossil fuel burning models.

On Earth Day, special efforts are made to show concern for global issues. Some people opt for carpooling or riding a bike to work. Others pick up litter, collect recyclables, or use cloth bags for groceries. School children often plant trees. Others limit watering their lawns, start gardens, use public transportation, adopt pets, or simply take a nature walk.

Senator Gaylord Nelson started people thinking about ecology and the earth's future. From its humble beginning in 1970, Earth Day has grown from an event celebrated in a few U.S. cities to one observed by nearly every country around the world. Since its humble beginning, Earth Day has come a long way toward creating a more globally aware community that shares common concerns about the planet on which we all live.

# Earth Day Game

All of the words below have a special significance to the history of Earth Day celebrations. They are all contained in the story. So after reading the story, try your luck at filling in the missing vowels (a, e, i, o, u) to discover the Earth Day terms. Play the game either on your own or with a friend but whatever you do, have a great time learning about Earth Day!



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|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. ___NV___R___NM___NT   | 11. C___L___BR___T___N  |
| 2. ___RTH D___Y          | 12. CL___N ___R ___CT   |
| 3. P___LL___T___N        | 13. ___R___S___N        |
| 4. ___C___L___G___       | 14. ___C___D R___N      |
| 5. G___L___RD N___LS___N | 15. C___NGR___SS        |
| 6. SM___G                | 16. R___C___CL___NG     |
| 7. L___TT___R            | 17. C___RP___L___NG     |
| 8. P___R___D___S         | 18. L___NDF___LLS       |
| 9. S___L___R P___W___R   | 19. P___T ___D___PT___N |
| 10. C___NS___RV___T___N  | 20. H___B___T___TS      |