

Armenta Learning Academy

What is Earth Day and How Can We Help?

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On April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans took to the streets and parks and auditoriums to demonstrate on behalf of a healthy, sustainable environment. Having a rare political alignment, Earth Day achieved support from Liberals, Democrats, Republicans and independents. Earth Day also earned support from different social classes rich, poor, urban dwellers, farmers, businesses, and labor leaders. The first Earth Day led to the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and to the passage of the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act. Earth Day is now globally celebrated around the world.

Earth Day is not just one day out of the year. We need to stop and appreciate the Earth through lifestyle changes and daily effort. Help us to save our Earth. Take a minute and make a difference in the future of our world.



This is how we can make a difference:

- I. **Consume less energy.** You may already have seen on TV that California's government encourages everyone to save energy. By saving energy you will not only benefit the environment but also reduce your monthly bills. A general rule is to turn off lights in unoccupied areas and use shades and blinds on a warm summer day instead of the air conditioner. If you own florescent lights, keep them on all day instead of turning them on and off – it takes more energy to turn them on several times, then to keep them running all day. There are some environmentally friendly ways of achieving energy such as biomass, fuel cells, geothermal, hydroelectric, solar cells, wind etc. We hope to be able to achieve all our energy from these sources in the future.
- II. **Recycle.** Find the nearest recycling center and distinguish between different types of garbage. There is a huge difference between the gases that are formed when waste such as food waste, plastic, packaging, tires, electronic products, batteries etc are burned. If we separate them, then we will reduce our own expenses again. You may ask, how is recycling going to save us money? If we recycle our waste, we don't have to pay indirectly through taxes for someone else to recycle afterwards.
- III. **Drive less.** This seems to be a hard thing in to do California, but exploring adventures in our own neighborhood by biking, visiting our local beach, going to a new café, participating in different physical activities, instead of spending our weekend in a traffic jam would be an easy choice. For people who commute, find a partner you may share rides with. When we drive, carbon dioxide, a chemical, is released to the air. Too much of it will lead to disastrous effects. California is known for its smog build up resulting in serious health effects. By polluting our air, we are polluting our water simultaneously by acidic rain.
- IV. **Save water.** Take showers instead of baths, or not as often. Any left over water can be used to water plants instead of the sink. Turn off you sprinklers during the rainy season. Overall, try to use as little water as possible, and save as much as you can every day. The smallest drop could make the biggest difference in the long run.

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- V. **Protect your ground.** Don't throw any waste products on the streets or in the ocean. Volunteer to clean up instead! Be a good role model for other people by protecting your environment and preventing future health hazards.
- VI. **Educate yourself and others.** Learn more about the alternative fuels and teach others. What better way is there to convince people, than by sharing our own experiences. And last but not least, enjoy taking part in your community. Remember that we are here to make a change, prevent disasters, and make the world a better place. We are here to determine our future...not follow it.



Here are some more ways to celebrate and protect the Earth with your children:

- 🌍 **Put on an environmental awareness fair.** Feature “hot” environmental concerns such as Wildlife Issues, Global Warming and Energy Use, Forest Conservation, Air and Water Pollution, Biodiversity, or Sustainability.
- 🌍 **Address a local or global environmental problem at home.** With family, have each person brainstorm to decide on an environmental issue to investigate. Then instruct them to conduct research on the problem. Have each individual report their findings to the family, including any possible solutions identified.
- 🌍 **Do an environmental survey.** How much and what kind of energy, paper, and cleaning supplies are used monthly at your home? How much water is consumed? How much waste, and what type of waste is generated? Identify ways your home can reduce its use of energy and other resources. Report your findings to the family.
- 🌍 **Get creative!** Have your children write poetry, create art, or develop dramatic presentations on environmental themes.
- 🌍 **Expose your students to environmental issues.** Visit or contact an expert and have your child interview them about environmental issues. Assign your projects ahead of time that relate to the subject of the presentation.
- 🌍 **Adopt a local park, stream or beach, and clean it up.** Organize a clean-up day near your home.
- 🌍 **Set up an organic garden.** Make sure to incorporate a compost pile for biodegradable garbage (no meat!). When it turns to compost, use it in the garden.
- 🌍 **Develop an environmental policy for your home.** This is best as a collaborative effort among the family and neighborhood. Have the neighbor or community leader officially launch the policy on Earth Day.
- 🌍 **Create a community green map.** Your map should highlight all of the environmental assets in your community (such as parks, recycling centers, farmers’ markets, public transit stations, etc).
- 🌍 **Imagine the future.** Have your family write an essay or have a discussion answering the question: “What might the environment be like on Earth Day 2025?” Create a bulletin board or other display of essays and artwork in your classroom, or at a central location in your school.

Peace and care of Earth begins in the mind. On Earth Day we can think, pray and plan what we will do to restore and renew the wonder of life on our planet. At “New Day” when differences are forgotten as we share the wonder of nature’s new life and new beginning.

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