A Whole MONTH of Earth Days!

April is here, and that means Earth Day is just around the corner! This year, I realized that ALL our April issues have an Earth Day spin.

This issue about a beach blanketed in beautiful sea glass also covers pollution, conservation, and the environment’s effect on things created by people.

In 1816, the world experienced “the year without a summer!” This article shows how one part of the world can affect the rest of the planet.

“Beach of Glass” is your “official” Earth Day issue. But I think all four articles tell important stories about this planet we call home!
Editor’s Picks for April
Every month, our editor Blair highlights her favorite activities from the Teacher’s Guide. Here are her picks for April.

Plant Science Chart
Get more details on page 4.

Debate It!
Get more details on page 6.

Main Idea and Details
Get more details on page 8.

Be a Reporter!
Get more details on page 10.

Find these and other awesome printable activities online at www.scholastic.com/sn2!
This Plant Stinks!
Lesson Plan

1. Preview the Issue
Provide students with some background on plants and what they need to survive.

Build background knowledge
(10 min.)
Pass out or project the video printable.
Then watch our video “What Do Plants Need?” Afterward, use the printable to discuss the following questions:
1. What is one thing that plants need? (Answers include: light, water, nutrients)
2. Why do plants need it? (Answers include: to make food; so they don’t dry out; to stay healthy)
3. The video shows plants that get what they need in unusual ways. What is one unusual way that you learned about in this video? (Answers include: climb up tree trunks; store water; eat insects)

Preview vocabulary (3 min.)
Next, play the online vocabulary slideshow. This issue’s featured words are pollen, nutrients, mucus, and nectar.

2. Read the Issue
Set a purpose for reading (5 min.)
- Pass out the issue, and discuss the cover. The poem will likely lead to a lot of giggles! Then ask children why they think the plant stinks. Could that possibly help the plant in some way? How?
- Next, read the As You Read prompt on page 2: “Think about what helps each gross plant survive.” Encourage children to think about this prompt as they read.

Read together (20 min.)
Pass out the Read and Think printable. Use it to check comprehension as you read the issue together, pausing to ask the questions.

3. Focus on Science and ELA Skills
You can use our printable worksheets to focus on important science and ELA skills. Here’s how.

ELA Focus: Vocabulary (15 min.)
- Use the Word Work printable to deepen students’ understanding of the words pollen, nutrients, mucus, and nectar.

Reading Objective:
Children will explore plants that have very unusual—some may say gross—adaptations!

Science Focus:
plant parts, form and function

ELA Skills:
key details, vocabulary, drawing and writing

Page 4 Skill:
read a glossary

Vocabulary:
pollen, nutrients, mucus, nectar

CCSS:
RI.2.1, RI.2.4, RI.2.10, W.2.8, SL.2.3

Guided Reading Level: M
Lexile Level: 520L

Key
Video
Vocabulary
Printable
Editor’s Pick
Editor’s Pick: Create a Chart

(20 min.)

(Go to page 2 to see more Editor’s Picks.)

With the Three Gross Plants printable, children can synthesize the information they’ve learned into a chart. For each plant, children draw what it looks like, tell what makes it gross, and explain how being gross helps it survive.

Have children complete the chart independently or with a partner. When finished, point out how their charts put everything they learned from the issue into something they can read at a glance. They’ve just created their own nonfiction visual text feature!

From the Archive

Here are two past issues you can use to extend your lesson on unusual plants:

Would You Eat These Wacky Foods? from April 2018. This issue teaches children about mutations that can make fruits and vegetables look strange. It also informs kids that these unusual-looking foods are just as good as the usual ones, and they should not be wasted!

Rainbow Plants from April 2019. This colorful issue explores beautiful, rainbow-colored plant parts, from roots to petals.

Differentiation Station

You can find a higher-Lexile-level version and a lower-Lexile-level version of the article online at www.scholastic.com/sn2.

Higher-Lexile level: 580L
Lower-Lexile level: 500L
**Reading Objective:**
Children will evaluate arguments for and against protecting a beach filled with sea glass.

**Science and Social Studies Focus:**
environmental protection

**ELA Skills:**
key details, vocabulary, opinion writing

**Page 4 Skill:**
nonfiction text features

**Vocabulary:**
sea glass, souvenirs

**CCSS:**
RI.2.1, RI.2.4, RI.2.10, W.2.1, SL.2.3

**Guided Reading Level:**
K

**Lexile Level:**
530L

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### 1. Preview the Issue
Provide students with some background on ocean conservation.

#### Build background knowledge
(10 min.)

- Pass out or project the video printable.
- Then watch our video “Save Our Seas.”
- Use the printable to discuss the following questions:
  1. What is one reason the ocean is important to humans and animals? *(Possible answer: Oceans are home to many plants and animals.)*
  2. Why is pollution bad for the ocean? *(It can hurt the animals that live there.)*
  3. What is one way kids can help keep the oceans clean and healthy? *(Answers include: Don’t put trash in the water; don’t take rocks and shells home; volunteer and spread the word.)*

#### Preview vocabulary
(3 min.)

Next, play the online vocabulary slideshow. This issue’s featured words are sea glass and souvenirs.

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### 2. Read the Issue

#### Set a purpose for reading
(5 min.)

- Pass out the issue, and discuss the cover. Ask: “What do you think would happen if every person who visited the beach took a handful of sea glass home with them?”
- Next, read the As You Read prompt on page 2: “Think about whether this beach should be protected.”
- Encourage children to think about this prompt as they read.

#### Read together
(20 min.)

- Pass out the Read and Think printable.
- Use it to check comprehension as you read the issue together, pausing to ask the questions.

### 3. Focus on ELA Skills

You can use our printable worksheets to focus on important ELA skills. Here’s how.

#### ELA Focus: Vocabulary
(15 min.)

- Use the Word Work printable to deepen students’ understanding of the words sea glass and souvenirs.
Editor’s Pick: Opinion Writing
(20 min.)
(Go to page 2 to see more Editor’s Picks.)

- Pass out the Debate It! printable. Have children use the magazine for reference to fill in both sides of the sheet.
- Next, have them read what they wrote and evaluate which reasons are stronger. Finally, they will decide on their opinion and write it in one sentence at the bottom of the page.
- Then have a debate! Have children take turns reading reasons from the “Yes” and “No” sections on their printables. When everyone has had a chance to share a reason, vote! Did the debate change anyone’s mind about the opinion they wrote down?

4. Assessment:
Reading Checkpoint

- Pass out the Reading Checkpoint to review key concepts from the issue and assess students’ proficiency on key nonfiction reading skills.
- Go online and download our Assessment Tracker. This handy chart will help you keep track of students’ progress on these key skills throughout the year.

From the Archive
Here are two past issues you can use to extend your lesson on nature conservation:

- A Plastic Straw Problem from May/June 2019. This issue presents the debate about a plastic straw ban. On the one hand, plastic straws can harm the environment; on the other, plastic straws are necessary for certain people with disabilities.
- Take Only Pictures, Leave Only Footprints from April 2018. This issue teaches children how and why to protect nature while enjoying its beauty.

Differentiation Station
You can find a higher-Lexile-level version and a lower-Lexile-level version of the article online at www.scholastic.com/sn2.

Higher-Lexile level: 550L
Lower-Lexile level: 520L
This Is the World’s Most Dangerous Cat!

Lesson Plan

1. Preview the Issue
Provide students with some background on endangered animals.

Build background knowledge (10 min.)
- Pass out or project the video printable.
- Then watch our video “What Are Endangered Animals?” Afterward, use the printable to discuss the following questions:
  1. What does it mean when a type of animal is endangered? (It is in danger of dying out forever.)
  2. Pick one of the endangered animals from the video. (Answers will vary.)
  3. Why is this animal endangered? (Answers will vary.)

Preview vocabulary (3 min.)
Next, play the online vocabulary slideshow. This issue’s featured words are fierce, predator, endangered, habitat, and tracking collars.

2. Read the Issue
Set a purpose for reading (5 min.)
- Pass out the issue, and discuss the cover. Are children surprised that this tiny cat is so dangerous? Why do they think such a dangerous cat would need help? Remind them of what they learned about endangered animals in the video.
- Next, read the As You Read prompt on page 2: “Think about how scientists are trying to help the black-footed cat.” Encourage children to think about this prompt as they read.

Read together (20 min.)
- Pass out the Read and Think printable. Use it to check comprehension as you read the issue together, pausing to ask the questions.

3. Focus on ELA Skills
You can use our printable worksheets to focus on important ELA skills. Here’s how.

ELA Focus: Vocabulary (15 min.)
- Use the Word Work printable to deepen students’ understanding of the words predator, fierce, endangered, and habitat.
Editor’s Pick: Main Idea and Details: Differentiate Your Teaching (15 min.)

(Go to page 2 to see more Editor’s Picks.)

- We’ve provided you with two versions of the Main Idea and Details printable: one for students who need more scaffolding, and one for those who need less.
- The first version helps guide students through the graphic organizer by providing them with the main idea and prompting them to summarize each section of the article.
- The challenge version provides the same graphic organizer, but we’ve left each section blank for children to fill in on their own.

4. Assessment: Reading Checkpoint

- Pass out the Reading Checkpoint to review key concepts from the issue and assess students’ proficiency on key nonfiction reading skills.
- Go online and download our Assessment Tracker. This handy chart will help you keep track of students’ progress on these key skills throughout the year.

From the Archive

Here are two past issues you can use—one that will extend your lesson on endangered animals and another that will introduce children to two special wild cats:

- Orangutan School from April 2019. This issue shows children how people are helping baby orangutans survive in the wild.
- Two Wild Friends from September 2017. In this issue, children meet a lion cub and a tiger cub that are best buddies!

Differentiation Station

You can find a higher-Lexile-level version and a lower-Lexile-level version of the article online at www.scholastic.com/sn2.

Higher-Lexile level: 580L
Lower-Lexile level: 510L
The Volcano That Stopped Summer

Lesson Plan

1. Preview the Issue
Provide students with some background on extreme weather.

Build background knowledge (10 min.)

- Pass out or project the video printable.
- Then watch our video “Wild Weather.”
- Afterward, use the printable to discuss the following questions:
  1. What is a swirling, funnel-shaped cloud called? (a tornado)
  2. What is one thing that could happen during a hurricane? (Answers include: Water could fill the streets; houses and cars could be damaged.)
  3. Describe what it is like during a drought. (There isn’t any rain for a long time; there can be a heat wave.)

2. Read the Issue
Set a purpose for reading (5 min.)

- Pass out the issue, and discuss the cover. Ask children if they have any idea how a volcano could change a whole season. They can look at the sky in the picture for a clue! (The erupting volcano has made the sky look dark and cloudy.)

- Next, read the As You Read prompt on page 2: “Think about the different ways the volcano changed the weather.” Encourage children to think about this prompt as they read.

Read together (20 min.)

- Pass out the Read and Think printable. Use it to check comprehension as you read the issue together, pausing to ask the questions.
3. Focus on ELA Skills
You can use our printable worksheets to focus on important ELA skills. Here’s how.

**ELA Focus: Vocabulary**
(15 min.)

- Use the *Word Work* printable to deepen students’ understanding of the words *erupted* and *crops*.

**Editor’s Pick:**
*Report the 1816 News!* (25 min.)

(To see more Editor’s Picks, go to page 2.)

- Pass out the *Be a Reporter!* printable. It’s a great way for children to summarize the key details of the issue by completing a newspaper article about it. The printable even lets children create their own text features: They can write an engaging headline and draw a visual of an old-fashioned bicycle.

- When they have completed the page, children can be “newsies” and try to “sell” their papers by reading their headlines and exciting parts of their articles aloud!

4. Assessment: Reading Checkpoint

- Pass out the *Reading Checkpoint* to review key concepts from the issue and assess students’ proficiency on key nonfiction reading skills.

- Go online and download our *Assessment Tracker*. This handy chart will help you keep track of students’ progress on these key skills throughout the year.

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From the Archive
Here are two past issues you can use to extend your lesson on weather phenomena:

- **The Day It Rained Fish!** from March 2019. This issue explains how waterspouts can sometimes cause fish and other animals to “rain” from the sky!

- **Wild, Wild Wind** from March 2018. This issue shows children the amazing things wind can do, like carve rock and make trees grow sideways!

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Differentiation Station
You can find a higher-Lexile-level version and a lower-Lexile-level version of the article online at [www.scholastic.com/sn2](http://www.scholastic.com/sn2).

Higher-Lexile level: 630L
Lower-Lexile level: 540L
A Teacher Favorite: Read Aloud

This great feature gives emergent readers and auditory learners an extra comprehension boost. It’s also perfect for modeling fluency!

You can choose normal or slower speed.

Click here to hear the issue read aloud.

Words are highlighted as they’re read aloud.

Find it online at www.scholastic.com/sn2.
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