

news {..BYTES..}

for eEditions

grades 2-5

1 Money For the Rain Forest

The South American nation of Brazil and a group of partners are creating a \$215 million fund to expand protected areas of the Amazon rain forest by more than 34,000 square miles. More than half of Brazil's land area is covered by rain forest, and the expansion covers an area about the size of the U.S. state of Indiana. The conservation effort is being paid for by the the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Wildlife Fund, philanthropies and others, in addition to the Brazilian government. Protecting natural areas like rain forests is an issue facing communities all over the world. As a class, discuss natural areas in your community or state that you think should be protected. Use points from the discussion to write a poem, rap or rhyme telling why protecting one area would be a good idea.

Common Core State Standards: Demonstrating understanding of figurative language; applying knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts; engaging effectively in a range of collaborative discussions.

2 Amazing Lucy Li

At age 11, Lucy Li has become the youngest golfer to qualify for the U.S. Women's Open. And she did it in what Hall of Famer Juli Inkster called "mind-boggling" fashion. To qualify, Li shot rounds of 74 and 68 at the Half Moon Bay golf course in California in regional competition. Her 36-hole score of 142 beat a talented field by seven strokes, despite winds gusting to 20 mph. Breaking age barriers is not new for Li, and some in the Ladies Professional Golf Association find it troubling. "How do you keep the love and thrill alive when you're a 'veteran' player at 17?" asks the Golf Channel's Kay Cockerill. The Women's Open will begin June 19 in Pinehurst, North Carolina. Young athletes often make news. In the eEdition, find a story about success of a young athlete. Read the story closely and write a paragraph summarizing its key points. Write a second paragraph detailing skills the athlete needed to succeed.

Common Core State Standards: Reading closely what a text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; citing specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions.

3 Help!

Every once in a while it's good to review the features of your eEdition. A good way to do that is to click on the "Help," "Introduction" or "Information" icon. Usually this is in the toolbar at the top of the page. Whatever it is called, this icon is the "How To" button for your eEdition. Then check out the navigation arrows, which usually are in the toolbar. They often are labeled "First," "Prev," "Next," and "Last." Click on each. Then write a sentence describing how each allows you to move through your eEdition. Finish by writing a short paragraph summarizing the advantages of using the navigation arrows and comparing it to the way people read a printed newspaper.

Common Core State Standards: Producing clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to the task; conducting short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

4 Quack!

How old is Donald Duck? It may be hard to believe, but the world first met the popular Disney character 80 years ago this month. Donald made his debut on June 9, 1934 in a Silly Symphonies cartoon called "The Wise Little Hen." Since then, Donald has been joined by hundreds of other Disney cartoon characters to entertain children. There are many animated and cartoon movies out this summer and fall. Search the eEdition for articles about animated movies, or talk about ones you would like to see. As a class, use a large piece of white butcher paper, pencils and markers to draw a mural of your favorite cartoon characters to hang in a school hallway.

Common Core State Standards: Using drawings or visual displays when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or points; conducting short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

5 Alien Life

Alien life will be discovered somewhere in the universe by the year 2034, astronomers predict. Astrobiologist Seth Shostak told a U.S. Congress committee, "At least a half-dozen other worlds ... might have life in our solar system [and] the chances of finding it are good. ..." This could happen within 20 years, he predicted, "depending on the financing." Another scientist testified before the U.S. House

Common Core State Standards: Writing opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information; citing specific textual evidence when writing or speaking.

Committee on Science, Space and Technology that in space, there are "plenty of places where life could emerge and evolve." For many years, the search for life elsewhere in the universe has been a goal of space missions for America's NASA space agency. As a class, find a story about a space mission in the eEdition or the website www.nasa.gov. Read the story closely and discuss how the mission could aid the search for life in the universe. Write a short editorial for the eEdition discussing the mission.

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grades 6-8

1 Two Share Spelling Trophy

For the first time in more than 50 years, the Scripps National Spelling Bee has crowned two champions to share the title. The rare co-championship came after the two front-runners each spelled a dozen words correctly in a row. The co-champions are Sriram Hathwar, 14, of Painted Post, New York, and Ansun Sujoe, 13, of Fort Worth, Texas. Although they hoisted a single trophy together onstage, each got one to take home and each got more than \$33,000 in prizes. In both school and careers, it is important to spell words correctly. Incorrect spelling can give people the impression you are careless in school, or unprofessional at work. In the eEdition, find a career for which correct spelling would be important. Write a paragraph explaining the importance of spelling to the career, and how incorrect spelling could have a negative effect.

Common Core State Standards: Conducting short research projects that build knowledge about a topic; producing clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to the task.

2 Shipping Imperils Whales

It's not unusual for a whale to be struck by a ship on occasion, but the rate has been much higher recently along the U.S. Eastern Seaboard. To reduce the number of collisions, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is urging mariners to pay closer attention to protective rules and abide by speed limits and distance restrictions. Government experts say the whales may have been drawn into shipping lanes when following food sources closer to shore. The quest for food has led to an increase in the number of humpback whales in waters off the state of Massachusetts, experts note. Interactions between humans and wildlife can sometimes cause problems. In the eEdition, find a story or photo involving a species of wildlife. Do additional research on the species and write a paragraph or short essay on problems that could arise from interaction between the species and people.

Common Core State Standards: Writing informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly; citing specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions.

3 New Trains Are Too Wide

Oops. France's national railway operator signed contracts worth more than \$4 billion to buy 341 new regional trains for the European nation, but it turns out they are too wide for about 15 percent of the country's rail stations. With emergency renovations under way – costing an extra \$68 million – the government has ordered an investigation. The mistake has become the butt of jokes, as well as the target of a public outcry. Government actions can often be targets of criticism or humor. In the eEdition, read about a government action that is causing debate. Draw an editorial cartoon for the eEdition, offering a humorous or critical view of the issue.

Common Core State Standards: Reading closely what a text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; using drawings or visual displays when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or points.

4 Search For Sports

Your eEdition offers many ways to gather information. You can scan stories page by page as you would with a print newspaper, or you can use search features to zero in on information. This is especially useful if you are a sports fan. Pick a team that interests you from the sports section of the eEdition. Then use the search features of the eEdition to see how the team has been making news. Write a paragraph summarizing the most interesting or important reason the team has been in the news. Then write a paragraph describing how having search features makes the eEdition a valuable resource for gathering information.

Common Core State Standards: Writing informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly; citing specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions; conducting short research projects to build knowledge.

5 Concussion Research

In response to a plea from President Obama, millions of dollars have been earmarked for research designed to improve concussion safety in youth sports. At a White House conference, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and U.S. Department of Defense launched a \$30 million research fund, and the National Football League pledged an additional \$25 million to promote safety in youth sports.

Common Core State Standards: Writing opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information; citing specific textual evidence when writing or speaking.

It's time to stop expecting athletes to "suck it up," the president said, urging a change in sports culture so that head injuries would be taken more seriously. A lifelong sports fan, Obama said he himself may have suffered mild concussions more than once in his youth while playing football. As a class, discuss ways that youth sports could be made safer, particularly ways to reduce the risk of head injuries. Use points made in the discussion to write a short editorial for the eEdition, detailing one way to make youth sports safer. You may consider rules changes as well as equipment.

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grades 9-12

1 It's Called 'Mega-Earth'

Astronomers have identified a new planet with 17 times the mass of Earth. Its official name is Kepler-10c, but it's being referred to informally as a "Mega-Earth." Named "Kepler" because it was discovered by the U.S. Kepler Space Telescope, the planet already is providing new insights about planets in space. In the past, it had been assumed that any planet with more than 10 times the mass of Earth would hold onto so much hydrogen that it would balloon into a gas giant. Kepler-10c suggests that plus-size planets can stay rocky, with clearly-defined surfaces, making the existence of life more possible. With new advances, scientists are learning more about space every year. Find a story about a space mission in the eEdition or online. Use what you find to draw a series of comic strips illustrating the mission's goals and achievements.

Common Core State Standards: Conducting short research projects that build knowledge about a topic; using drawings or visual displays when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or points.

2 Egyptian Prodigy Seeks Asylum

An Egyptian science prodigy visiting the United States has refused to return to his homeland in northern Africa, where he is known as "The Little Inventor." The 17-year-old teenager, who was in the U.S. to report on his original research, is said to be seeking asylum and protection here because he risks prosecution and imprisonment at home. The teen, Abdullah Assem, was arrested previously in Egypt on charges – which he denied – that he had taken part in illegal protests against the military-backed government. With 1,000 other students from around the world, he had been attending a science fair in Los Angeles, California. Political freedom is an important issue around the world. In the eEdition or online, find a story about a person or group seeking greater political freedom in another country. Read the story closely and write a letter to the editor raising awareness about the person or cause.

Common Core State Standards: Reading closely what a text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; citing specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions.

3 eEdition Politics Search

It's more than two years away, but 2016 race for president already is getting attention from political leaders. President Obama cannot run for a third term, so both Republicans and Democrats are talking about potential candidates. With family or friends, talk about the issues being discussed most by political leaders and potential candidates. Make a list of issues and candidates getting the most attention. Use the advanced search function to search the eEdition for a day or a week to see how many times each issue or candidate comes up in the news. Finish by creating a bar graph to show your results.

Common Core State Standards: Conducting short research projects that build knowledge about a topic; organizing data using concrete objects, pictures, tallies, tables, charts, diagrams and graphs.

4 Polar Bear a Newcomer

Polar bears appear to be a relatively new creature on Earth. They diverged as a species from brown bears less than 500,000 years ago, researchers have reported in the scientific journal Cell. By sequencing the polar bear's genome, they also have discovered several genes related to cardiovascular function that may explain how the polar bear subsists on a high-fat diet without suffering from clogged arteries and cardiovascular disease. Mapping the genes of living things was a breakthrough in science. In the eEdition or online, find another scientific breakthrough. Write a paragraph summarizing the breakthrough, whom it will benefit and when.

Common Core State Standards: Producing clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to the task; conducting short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

5 No Intermingling Online

In the Middle East nation of Saudi Arabia, Islamic religious leaders prohibit the intermingling of unrelated men and women socially. Now the ban should be extended to include online chatting, according to a senior Muslim cleric, who warns that "when women talk to men" on social media network sites, the devil is present. This religious prohibition, if enforced, could be far-reaching, since about half of

the nation's 27.3 million people use the Internet, an estimated 6 million use Facebook and online chat forums are common. Saudi Arabia is a theocratic monarchy in which the Sunni form of Islam is the official state religion. Residents do not have the broad rights Americans are guaranteed by the first 10 Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. As a class, review the rights guaranteed by the 10 amendments known as the Bill of Rights, especially those in the First Amendment. In teams or pairs, find stories in the eEdition or online that deal with these rights in some way. Pick one and write a summary of how the right applies to the issues or people in the story.

Common Core State Standards: Writing informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly; citing specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions.

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