

## Earth Day Using the News

The following activities correlate to the Florida Standards for middle and high schools. Science:

SC.912.CS-CC.1.1; SC.912.CS-CC.1.2; SC.912.CS-CC.1.4; SC.912.CS-CC.1.5; SC.912.CS-CC.1.7;  
SC.912.CS-CP.3.2; SC.912.CS-CS.3.1; SC.912.CS-PC.2.3; SC.912.CS-PC.2.4; SC.912.E.6.4;  
SC.912.L.17.10; SC.912.L.17.11; SC.912.L.17.12; SC.912.L.17.13; SC.912.L.17.14; SC.912.L.17.15;  
SC.912.L.17.16; SC.912.L.17.17; SC.912.L.17.20; SC.912.L.17.8; SC.912.N.1.3

**Language Arts:**

LAFS.912.L.1.1; LAFS.912.L.1.2; LAFS.912.L.2.3; LAFS.912.L.3.4; LAFS.912.L.3.5; LAFS.912.L.3.6;  
LAFS.912.RH.1.1; LAFS.912.RH.1.2; LAFS.912.RH.1.3; LAFS.912.RH.2.4; LAFS.912.RH.2.5;  
LAFS.912.RH.2.6; LAFS.912.RH.3.7; LAFS.912.RH.3.8; LAFS.912.RH.3.9; LAFS.912.RI.1.1;  
LAFS.912.RI.1.2; LAFS.912.RI.2.4; LAFS.912.RI.2.5; LAFS.912.RI.2.6; LAFS.912.RI.3.7;  
LAFS.912.RST.1.1; LAFS.912.RST.1.2; LAFS.912.RST.3.7; LAFS.912.SL.1.1; LAFS.912.SL.1.2;  
LAFS.912.SL.1.3; LAFS.912.SL.2.4; LAFS.912.SL.2.5; LAFS.912.SL.2.6; LAFS.912.W.1.1;  
LAFS.912.W.1.2; LAFS.912.W.1.3; LAFS.912.W.2.4; LAFS.912.W.2.5; LAFS.912.W.2.6;  
LAFS.912.W.3.7; LAFS.912.W.3.8; LAFS.912.W.3.9; LAFS.912.W.4.10



An ecosystem is a biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment. In other words, an ecosystem is a community of living and nonliving things that work together. Think about all of the different parts of the ecosystem that make up your county. Make a list of all of the interacting organisms in what would be in a county. Next, look for articles, photos and advertisements in the *Tampa Bay Times* that illustrate these ideas. Make a list of all of the parts of a county ecosystem that you find in *Times* newspaper. Choose some of the most important parts and create a cartoon depicting this ecosystem.



The National Ocean Service defines an invasive species, also known as an exotic or nuisance species, as “an organism or plant that is introduced into a new environment, where it is not native.” Invasive species can be in the form of plants or animals. The nonnative dwellers can be hazardous to an ecosystem. Look for articles in the *Tampa Bay Times* that focus on local ecosystems, and invasive and threatened species. Pay special attention to the information about the effects of human activities and invasive species on ecosystems. Keep track in your journal of the articles you find. Choose one of the topics you have read about to do further research. Write a feature-style newspaper article about what you have discovered. Share this article with your class.



Think about the importance of the environment as it relates to the future of mankind and the quality of life. Deforestation is a hot topic when it comes to the environment. Whether we are talking about urban or traditional forests, trees and plants play an important role in the environment. With your class, make a list of ways these concepts are interconnected. Next,

in a small group, look for articles in the *Tampa Bay Times* about the environment, such as preservation, conservation, recycling, pollution or any other topics you discussed with your class. Based on the information you read in these articles, write an editorial on the importance of protecting your environment. Use the editorials in the newspaper as models.



Technology plays a big role in protecting, restoring and taking care of the environment, whether it is documenting species, knowing the pH balance of a waterway or tracking a species' habitat. Write down all the ways technology is used or can be used to document and protect ecosystems and habitats. Look in the *Tampa Bay Times* for examples of how technology is used by other organizations and services in your community. Research this subject on the Internet, as well. Now that you have learned what you can do to help conserve Florida wildlife, ecosystems and habitats, create a new technology that can be used in these efforts: a computer program, application, database or other type of interactive system. Write a blog post about your innovative idea. Share your idea with your class.



According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the best way to help imperiled species survive is to participate in beach and park or roadside cleanups in your area, volunteer your time to educate others and contribute to organizations who administer management, educational and research programs. Look in the *Tampa Bay Times* for articles about conservation and how you can help make your community environmentally sound. Using ads in the newspaper as models, create an ad or public service announcement to promote a conservation initiative. Think about the dynamics of the ads you see in the newspaper (images, words, placement of items, colors). Think about ways to draw people's attention to your ad and message. Next, design an ad for the print edition of the *Times* and for the website. How is the ad in the print edition going to be different than the web version of the ad? Write a fully developed paragraph showing the differences in the ads and what your main point of the ads is. Share your ad and the information in your paragraph with your class.



Although April 22 is officially Earth Day, every day is Earth Day for people who care about the environment. Find an article in the *Tampa Bay Times* that discusses an environmental issue. Clip or print the article. Read the article closely. Underline or highlight the main points and facts. Circle any statements you think are opinions. In full sentences, respond to the following questions:

- What is the environmental issue being discussed?
- Is the issue of local, national or international concern?
- Who is most directly impacted by this issue?
- Do you feel this issue is important to the future of our environment? Why or why not?
- What piece of information do you feel is missing in this article?

Share what you have learned with your class.



Define the words “reduce,” “reuse” and “recycle” on a piece of paper. With another student, look through the *Tampa Bay Times* for words, photos and advertisements depicting household items. Cut out or print the words and images and put them into one of these three categories: reduce, reuse or recycle. Design a poster promoting the three R’s in your school. Use some of the images and words you found in the newspaper for ideas for your poster. Share what you have learned with your class.



Did you know that a person creates an average of 4.5 pounds of trash per day, according to the Environmental Protection Agency? If you multiply that amount by the number of students in your classroom and then in your school...that is a lot of trash! By reducing the number of items in your lunch that must be thrown out, or by only using those that can be eaten, reused, recycled or composted, you can make a difference in your environment and the environment of the future. Create your own waste-free and healthy lunch menus for one week. Make sure to pack only what you can eat, reuse, recycle or compost. Using the advertisements in the *Tampa Bay Times* as a model, create an advertisement for your waste-free lunch week. Share your menus and ad with your class.



There are ongoing conflicts between human usage of Earth’s resources and what plants and animals need to survive. Things human beings do on land affect the entire planet. Look through the *Tampa Bay Times* for articles or pictures that indicate conflict between how humans use the environment and the needs of plants or animals. Read the articles and think about the main ideas and conflicts presented. Explain in a fully developed paragraph the information presented. Is there a solution to this conflict? What issues are presented? Create a visual display that represents either or both sides of the conflict. Share your display and article with your class.

Activities written by Jodi Pushkin, Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education  
For more information, contact [ordernie@tampabay.com](mailto:ordernie@tampabay.com).

© *Tampa Bay Times* and Florida Press Educational Services 2018