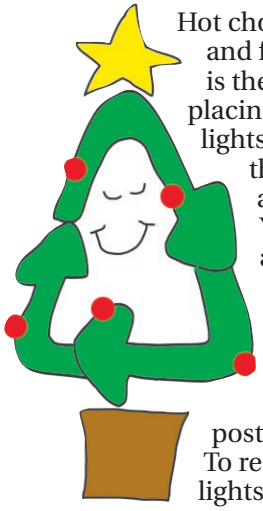
Recycle your holiday tree!



Hot chocolate, yummy foods, holiday music, and family all around. At the center of it all is the tree. We all join in the excitement of placing our favorite ornaments, twinkling lights, and other special touches in just the right spots to make the tree unique and special. But as we ring in the New Year, it will be time to clear the tree away. Whatever type of tree your family enjoys, it can have new life after the season has ended.

If your family has a real, cut tree, recycle it. When the trees are recycled, they are turned into mulch or compost and reused in gardens and landscapes. To recycle your tree, remove all ornaments, lights, and other decorations, as well as the tree stand. Contact your city or town hall to find out when and where trees will be collected at the curb. You can also recycle your real tree at the yard waste compost lots located throughout the District. Real trees can be dropped off during daylight hours when the gates are open. The lots may be closed during bad weather. Please call the office at 800-777-5462 or visit www.niswmd.org if you want to check when a compost lot is open.

If you have a real tree attached to a ball of dirt and roots, replant it. Be sure to give your tree the best chance to thrive by digging a good-sized hole before the ground freezes.

If you have an artificial tree, carefully pack it up for next year. If you'll be replacing it next year, donate the old one to a charitable organization, like Goodwill. Or, keep the tree to make an extra room merry next year. You could decorate the extra tree in a fun theme or with special, hand-crafted ornaments made from reused items around the house.

When the celebrating season is over, keep our earth happy by giving your tree new life.

Don't forget to reduce and reuse!

Nearly everyone recognizes the chasing-arrows symbol. When we see it, we think about recycling. But what about reducing and reusing? If we reduce what we buy and reuse what we have, we make a LOT less trash! This is better than recycling.

This holiday season, keep up the great work by recycling what you need and use, but also take a look at what you can do to reduce and reuse by following these tips:

- Take good care of what you already have. For example, be careful with your cell phone or other devices so you don't drop and break them.
- Mend torn clothing and fix broken toys.
- Find new uses for things you have finished using. For example, shoeboxes are good containers for your collections. Empty dairy tubs and takeout containers are great for small building block parts or craft supplies.
- Wash and reuse water bottles, lunch bags, and snack containers.
- Borrow instead of buying things you will only use once, like DVDs, books, and games.
- Trade toys, books, and games with friends to share and enjoy. (Make sure it is OK with your parents first.)
- Give away or sell usable clothes, furniture, books, sporting goods, and anything else you don't need. Someone else might love to have it!
- Buy used items whenever possible. You will save money while you help the environment. There are many shops and online sites that sell used items.
- For more creative ideas on ways to reduce your daily and holiday waste, visit https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/nature/reduce-your-waste/ or the EPA blog, https://blog.epa.gov/2016/12/21/creative-ways-to-cut-your-holiday-waste/.

Looking for a cool gift idea?

As you're deciding what to get family and friends for the holidays, consider making a homemade mask for each person. This would be a great way to reduce the waste of disposable masks while giving your family and friends a gift they will remember and love! You can even use fabric left over from previous craft projects. Here is a link for where you can purchase materials and instructions on how to make masks: www.joann.com/projects/face-masks-and-coverings/. You can also search online for "homemade mask instructions."

Got plastic bags?

Holiday shopping brings all sorts of delicious foods, special gifts, and excitement into the house. But it can also bring more plastic bags into your home, too. Here are some great ideas to help make your holidays greener and our earth happier by reducing your family's plastic bag use.

- **REFUSE** a plastic bag if you don't need it. Carry one or two items in your hands. Or, when possible, choose paper bags, which are accepted at all recycling centers.
- **REUSE** plastic shopping bags by taking them back to the store and refilling them with groceries where allowed. Make sure the bags are clean and dry.
- **REPURPOSE** bags around the house. Larger plastic bags can be used as trash liners for small waste baskets. Smaller bags, such as bread bags, can be used to store food or to pick up dog waste.
- **RECYCLE** empty, clean plastic bags and film, such as shopping bags, dry cleaning bags, shipping "pillows," bubble wrap, and plastic wrappers from cases of water bottles and other drinks when and where possible. Plastic bags are accepted for recycling in take-back bins in local retail stores, such as Kroger, Walmart, Target, and Lowe's. If you aren't comfortable walking into stores right now, save your plastic bags and wraps at home until events change. Plastic bags are super compressible and take up little space. NOTE: Plastic bags and wraps are NOT accepted at the recycling centers.
- **REPLACE** plastic bags with reusable shopping bags whenever possible. Bring your own or buy them in the store checkout line. As always, reusable bags should be cleaned often and allowed to dry completely between uses. If your family doesn't have reusable bags, you can find or make some. Search around the house for extra tote bags and store shopping bags. You can even make your own bags with old T-shirts; simply look for instructions to "make a T-shirt bag" online.

How do I clean my reusable bags?

Keep your family healthy by washing your reusable bags regularly. Fabric bags can be placed into a washing machine or washed by hand with laundry detergent and then placed into the dryer or hung to dry. Reusable plastic bags can be wiped with a disinfecting wipe or spray or washed by hand with warm, soapy water. Air-dry indoors or outdoors in the sun.

For added safety, clean bags after each use and especially after bringing home meat or seafood.

Electronics + recycling = E-cycling

Be sure to "e-cycle" all of the electronics that your family no longer wants and can't fix or give away. Unwanted cell phones and electronics can be recycled every Friday, from 8 a.m. to noon, at the District's Ashley facility, located on State Road 4, one mile east of I-69. A small fee may apply for some items. Many Best Buy and Staples stores also accept electronics for recycling.

Recycling electronics keeps hazardous materials, such as lead and mercury, out of the landfills. It also conserves resources, recaptures useful metals, reduces pollution, saves energy, and helps create jobs.

Every litter bit hurts

Litter is stuff that ends up on the ground or blown into trees, lakes, rivers, or oceans that shouldn't be there. It could be juice boxes, plastic bags, food wrappers, cigarette butts, or other trash. Litter can cause people and animals to get sick, and it makes everything look ugly and messy. Sadly, littering has gotten a lot worse during the COVID-19 pandemic.

NEVER put masks, wipes, or latex gloves in the recycling bin.

Single-use face masks, gloves, cleaning wipes, and take-out food containers now litter streets, beaches, parks, and store parking lots. Some people act like the "don't litter" rules don't need to be followed now. They are very wrong. To keep people, animals, and nature healthy, we need everyone to work together to place all trash and recyclables where they belong!

Unwanted, used, disposable face masks, gloves, and wipes belong in the trash can. If they are thrown on the ground or left in a shopping cart or parking lot, this trash is likely to stay there because people are concerned that it may contain COVID-19 germs. Disposable face masks and gloves are made of mostly plastic, with other materials mixed in, which is why they are not recyclable. Plastics break into smaller and smaller pieces in the environment and take hundreds of years to break down completely.

According to a study by Keep America Beautiful, an organization that has been working for 65 years to help reduce litter in our country, if an area already looks littered, people think it is okay to throw more trash there. So please do your part to put litter where it belongs, especially during these stressful times. If we all choose to stop littering, people and wildlife will be healthier and our roads, streams, and other areas will be more beautiful than ever before. Thank you for doing your part!

Which types of COVID trash are recyclable?

The pandemic has changed a lot in our lives. Many students are attending some or all of their classes online, and some parents are working from home. We see people wearing face masks and gloves in stores, schools, and almost everywhere. Soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, disinfecting wipes, and plastic bags are being used more than ever. Many families are choosing to have groceries delivered or to pick up takeout food instead of going to stores or dining inside restaurants. Boxes and shipping envelopes are piling up in homes due to increased online shopping. And, while we are keeping ourselves healthier by doing all of these things, we are also creating a lot of waste in the process. With all of this waste, it is important to know what to do with it.

"It is really important to be aware of the choices you make every day," said Allyson Mitchell, executive director of the Indiana Recycling Coalition. "Kids can have a huge impact by reducing, reusing, and recycling and encouraging others to do the same."

Here are some tips to help you go green and keep people, animals, and our environment healthy:

- Don't litter.
- Choose *reusable* cloth face masks, gloves, and cleaning cloths when it is safe to do so.
- Refill soap and hand-sanitizer bottles instead of replacing them. This keeps more non-recyclable handpumps out of the landfills.
- Place all disposable gloves, face masks, and wipes into the trash, *not* the recycling.
- Flatten cardboard boxes before recycling them.
- Recycle all cardboard, paperboard boxes, paper and junk mail, clean paper bags, plastic bottles, cans, and glass bottles and jars. Remember to keep items clean, empty, and dry.
- Plastic disposable forks, spoons, knives, straws, cups, boxes, and lids are NOT recyclable. Throw them into the trash.
- Plastic bags do not belong in the recycling. Collect them and take them to the special bins for recycling in the front of many grocery and home improvement stores.

- When ordering takeout food to eat at home, tell the restaurant you don't need plastic forks, spoons, and straws. Just use what you have at home and create less waste!
- When possible, refuse plastic bags at the grocery store. Choose reusable bags, if permitted, or paper, which is more easily recycled.
- If someone in your home is sick, place all waste — including recyclables — into a plastic bag, tie it shut, and place it into the trash. This will keep the workers at our recycling sorting facilities safe and healthy.
- Not sure if something is recyclable? Visit www.niswmd.org or call us at 800-777-5462. We are happy to answer all of your questions.

Meet Asvini, an environmental superstar

Do you think you are too young to help the environment? Think again! At the age of 11, Asvini Thivakaran has already received more environmental awards than most adults. Her work started when she was in second grade, after she received some battery-powered toys at Christmastime. She wondered what sort of chemicals were inside the batteries in her toys and then wondered what happened with the batteries once they didn't work anymore.

Asvini was surprised to learn that even when batteries have lost their power, some still contain dangerous metals and chemicals that should not go into the landfill. Her parents urged Asvini to use rechargeable batteries when possible and to recycle all used batteries at the recycling center in her hometown of Round Rock, Texas. Asvini was concerned that many people in her town might not be able to take their batteries all the way to the recycling center, and she didn't want the chemicals from the used-up batteries to end up in the landfill. So, with her parents' and teachers' help, Asvini got permission to place special battery recycling bins in her school and at the local library. Asvini put up posters and urged people to recycle their batteries using her collection bins. In two years, she collected over 65,000 batteries for recycling!

Since then, Asvini has created lots of environmental videos and has given presentations at her school and around the United States. She has made videos about using less paper, cleaning up litter, recycling electronics, and more.

"I am very passionate about the environment," she noted. "I really want to save all the living things on this planet earth."

An example of this is Asvini's most recent project urging people to dispose of masks, wipes, and gloves properly. Her YouTube video, "COVID-19 Waste: Trash-Free Water," is being promoted on the Keep America Beautiful website. You can watch her videos and learn more at the Asvini's Planet website, www.asvinithivakaran.com.

"We all need to think about earth every day, not just on Earth Day only," notes Asvini. "We kids are the future generation, and we all need to act now to save the planet. There is no other planet we have to live on. We don't need to wait for the adults to solve the problems or guide us."

Asvini hopes her videos will inspire other kids to join her in doing small things to help care for the environment. What will YOU do?

Relax, Recharge, and Recycle

You finish your homework and pick up your game controller, but no matter how hard you press the buttons, it won't work. It's time for new batteries. When you find the new batteries you need, what should you do with the old ones? So much to do and think about when all you wanted was to sit down and play a video game! We count more and more on battery power to keep all of our favorite devices working. Here is what you need to know to make life with batteries easy and green.

Some batteries are single-use and some are rechargeable. Single-use batteries are "alkaline." These are like little pre-charged packages of energy. When you put an alkaline battery into a device, the metals inside the battery begin to create energy immediately. When the battery is out of energy, it can no longer be used, which is why we call them "dead batteries."

Rechargeable batteries are made so that when the energy is drained, they can be recharged in a special charging unit or be plugged in with a charging cable. They can be used again and again, and many can be charged up to 1,000 times before they need to be replaced.

Whether you are using single-use alkaline batteries or rechargeable batteries, it is best to recycle them when you are finished using them. Recycling batteries reduces waste, conserves resources, and keeps dangerous materials out of our landfills. Both rechargeable and disposable household batteries can be placed in the designated battery boxes at the recycling stations located throughout the District. Find the location nearest your home at www.niswmd.org. Lead-acid batteries, such as car batteries, are not accepted in these boxes. Both lead-acid and household batteries are accepted at the District's Ashley facility on Friday mornings, from 8 a.m. to noon, during the household hazardous waste program hours. Remember — batteries do not belong in household trash or your curbside recycling bin!

The next time you need new batteries for that game controller, remote, or other device, wouldn't it be nice to have exactly what you need all charged up and ready? With rechargeable batteries, you don't need to make as many trips to the store for new batteries. Keep two sets so you always have a set in use and another set charged and ready to go. You will feel great knowing that you are keeping our planet green by reducing waste and energy use.

Paper flood

Do you like to bring in the mail? It's fun and exciting to be the first one to see what is waiting in the mailbox. If you're lucky, maybe there will be something with your name on it! Some days, it can be disappointing when there is a flood of mail but none of it is anything you or your parents really want. This type of unwanted mail is known as "unsolicited" mail — or, as you probably call it, "junk mail."

Each day, the U.S. Postal Service processes and delivers 181.9 million pieces of mail. That's a lot of paper! You probably recycle almost all of the paper your family doesn't want or need. Help your parents remember to shred important bank account and similar documents to protect your family's privacy. (Paper shreds go into the trash.) You can also cut up magazines and catalogs and create a collage or use them for other art projects.

It would be even better to slow the flood of mail into our homes so that we have less junk mail in the first place. Your parents can ask to have their names removed from mailing lists by calling or emailing companies directly. They can also switch to email bills and notices instead of print mail. Your family can ask favorite charities to send fewer donation requests per year.

For more ideas and tips like this, visit http://ecocycle.org/junkmail.

NORTHEAST INDIANA SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

2320 West 800 South
P.O. Box 370
Ashley, IN 46705

800-777-5462
www.niswmd.org
info@niswmd.org

A SCRAMBLED MESS

Mia is trying to learn more about how electronics are made. But she needs your help because some of these words are scrambled. Unscramble the words in bold and use them to complete the sentences.

1. Cathode ray tubes (the picture tubes in older TVs and computer monitors) contain_____ , so it is important to recycle them.

aeld

2. Metals like _____ and _____ are used to make circuit boards.

opcepr lodg

3. Cell phones and other electronics require several _____ _____ elements.

earr raeht

4. In larger electronics, such as computers and televisions, _____ make up about one-fourth of these products by weight.

cistlaps

5. Newer _____ _____ monitors and televisions weigh one-fifth less than older cathode ray tube monitors and TVs.

lfta esrcen

Turn Back Time

In 1987, the Mobro 4000 barge carried a load of garbage up and down the eastern seaboard of the United States in search of a landfill that would accept the waste. People across the country followed the barge's progress. How did the people know about the Mobro 4000? Circle the two items that don't belong. (**Hint:** Look at the date when this happened.)

A. National and local TV news stations covered the Mobro's progress.

B. Video was uploaded each day to YouTube and shared on Facebook and Instagram.

C. Newspapers reported on the ports where the Mobro tried to stop and unload garbage.

D. People in each town where the Mobro stopped would tweet about it on Twitter.

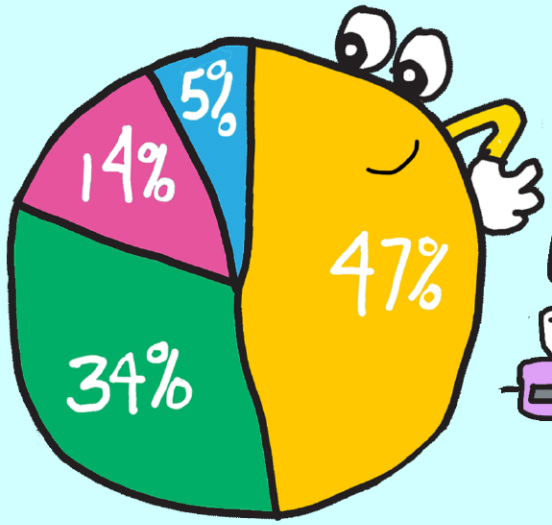
E. Time magazine published an article titled, "Don't Be a Litterbarge."

GRASPING GRAPHS

Graphs are an easy way to look at data (information). A pie graph (or pie chart) is a special graph that uses "pie slices" to compare amounts of things relative to each other.

Anytown, USA hosted an electronics recycling drive. Below is the pie graph representing the percentage of each type of item collected.

Items Collected at Anytown Electronics Recycling Drive



Televisions **Computers** **Printers and Accessories** **Other**

Use the information from the pie graph to answer these questions:

1. What color is used to represent computers collected? _____
2. What items represented 47% of total collections? _____
3. Were more computers collected than televisions? _____
4. What percentage of total collections were printers and accessories? _____
   What is this as a fraction? _____
5. What category of items is most likely to include smartphones? _____

Bonus: What other types of e-waste may have been collected and included in the "other" category? _____

_____

Inspect to Detect

Homo means "**same**" and **Nym** means "**name**" (sound), so homonyms have the same sound.
Hetero means "**different**" and **Graph** means "**writing**" (spelling), so heterographs have different spellings.

Reading and writing can be a mystery. Some words are read out loud exactly the same but are spelled differently. Depending on the spelling, the words mean different things. You need to think like a detective looking for clues and read the entire sentence to figure out the correct way to use each word.The word sets in each sentence include special types of **homonyms**, called **heterographs**, which include words that are pronounced the same but have different meanings, depending on the spelling. Circle the correct heterograph for each sentence.

1. After the holidays, our family drops off our (**fur, fir**) tree to be chipped and turned into mulch.
2. Can I please have (**sum, some**) help repairing my backpack so I don't have to buy a new one?
3. The students picked up trash along the (**beach, beech**).
4. I think people buy (**to, too, two**) much bottled water because water from the tap costs less and tastes great.
5. Have you (**seen, scene**) my reusable shopping bags?
6. My parents dropped off the (**led, lead**) based paint at the Household Hazardous Waste collection.
7. Alexa made a gift (**four, fore, for**) her grandmother with recycled paper.
8. Mr. Chen (**tied, tide**) a knot in the trash bag before placing it into the bin.
9. Could you hand me a (**piece, peace**) of paper so I can write a poem about trees?

Bonus: Write one sentence using the heterographs "**sun**" and "**son**." _____

_____

_____

JUST IN TIME

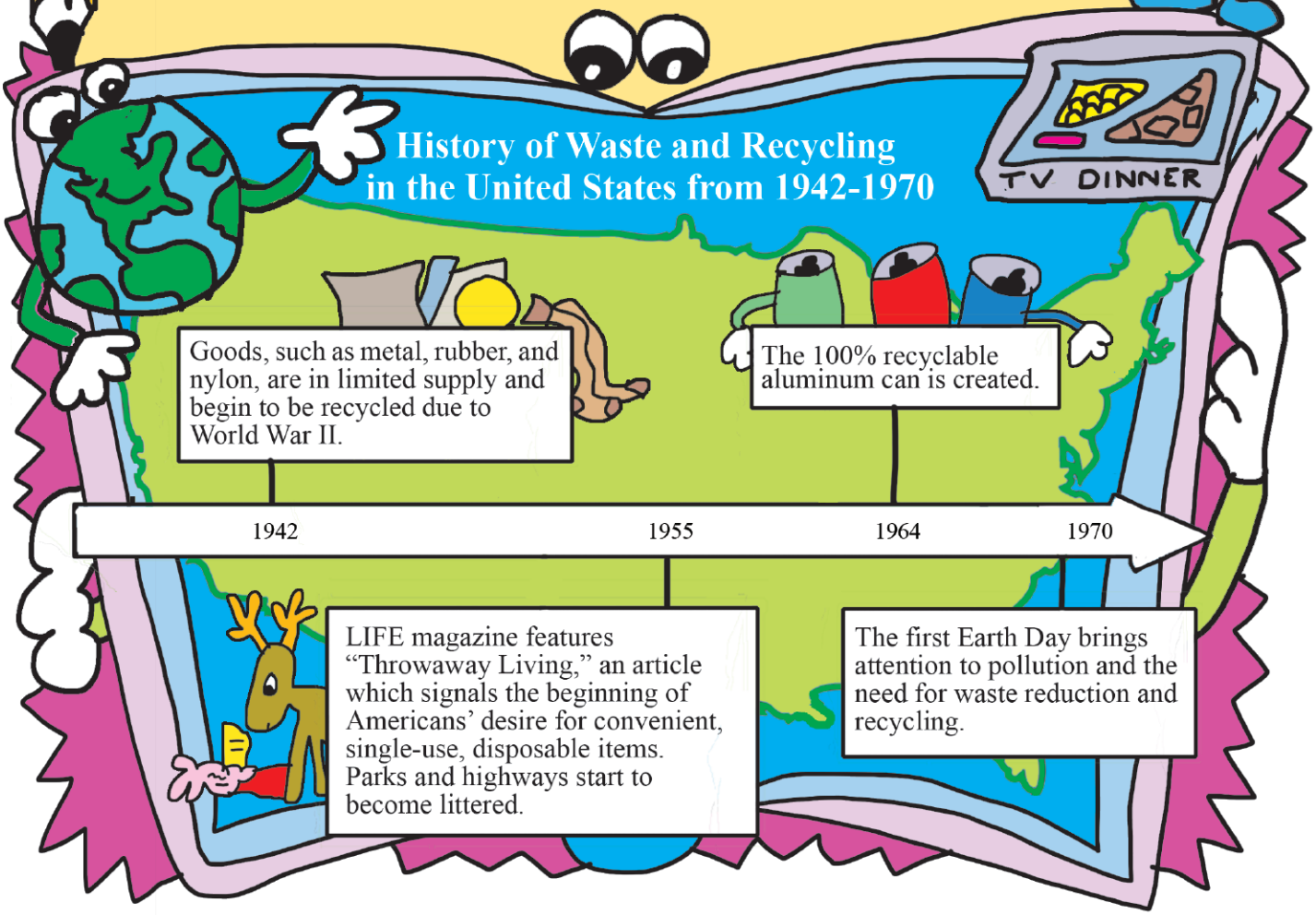
A timeline is a type of graph that is used to show the passage of time in a straight line. Timelines are especially useful in showing historical events in relation to each other. Below is a timeline showing a small part of the history of recycling in the United States. Use the timeline to answer these questions.

1. What year was the 100% recyclable aluminum can created? _____
2. During the time period shown on the timeline, what were the two major reasons that caused Americans to recycle more and waste less?

   _____

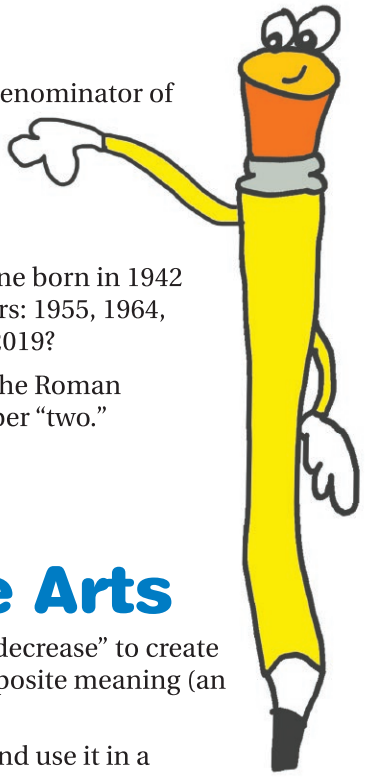
   _____
3. When did parks and roadways begin to get littered? _____

   Why? _____
4. When was the first Earth Day? _____
5. Which happened first, the first Earth Day or World War II? _____



Reuse Ideas

Math



- What is the common denominator of 1/5, 7/50, and 47/100?
- Solve these problems:
  1/5 + 47/100 = ___
  47/100 - 17/50 = ___
- How old would someone born in 1942 have been in these years: 1955, 1964, 1970, 1987, 2000, and 2019?
- In "Just in Time," find the Roman numerals for the number "two."

English/ Language Arts

- Change the prefix on "decrease" to create a word that has the opposite meaning (an antonym).
- Choose the adjective and use it in a sentence:

  recharge recharged rechargeable
- Write these words in ABC (alphabetical) order:

  copper cathode computers collection can
- In "Inspect to Detect," find a word that starts with an S and is a synonym of *tally* or *total*.

Science

- Select the term that doesn't belong:

  computer smartphone battery television
- A battery is an engineering solution. What problems does it solve?
- List five ways to save energy in your daily life.
- Complete this analogy:

  rechargeable : battery :: _____ : bottle

Social Studies

- Take another look at "Turn Back Time." What do the clues tell you about types of media available in 1987 and today? How has media changed since 1987?
- What year was the first video posted online on YouTube?
- Is "Time" magazine still published today? When was it first published?
- Who was President of the United States in 1987?

Journal Writing Prompts

- Using the letters in the word "rechargeable," make as many words as you can. You can use the letters more than once.
- What is your favorite activity over winter break? Why?
- Create a story about a funny dream using these words: litter, magazine, beach, and winter.
- List five things in your room that you no longer use. Why don't you use them? Are they clothes you have outgrown? Toys for a younger child? Things you forgot you had? Do you still need them? Could someone else use them?

Extension Activity

In "Roundabouts," students will practice their visual discrimination, vocabulary, spelling, and logic skills to identify terms related to waste reduction and reuse.

Roundabouts

Name: _____

Directions: Each circle of letters spells a word or term about reducing waste this winter, but it's up to you to find out what the words are! For the first four, you start at one of the four corners and then follow the letters around in a circle. You will need to figure out which corner. Remember that the circle may go clockwise or counterclockwise. For the last four, the first letter might be anywhere, so you'll need to find it.

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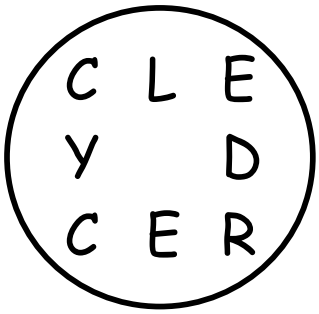
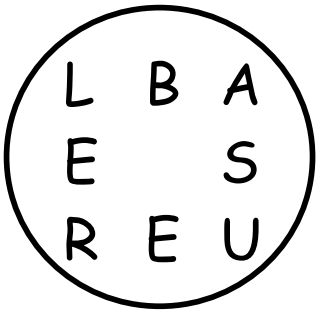
1. 

2. 

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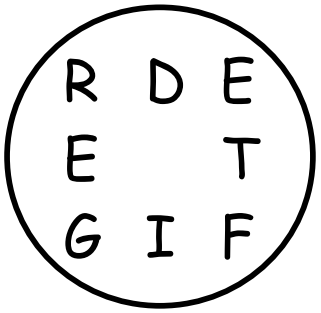
4. 

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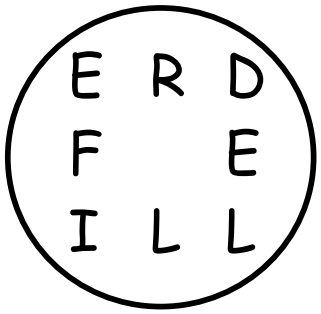
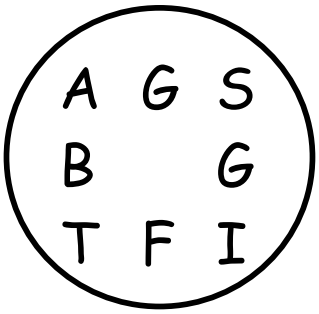
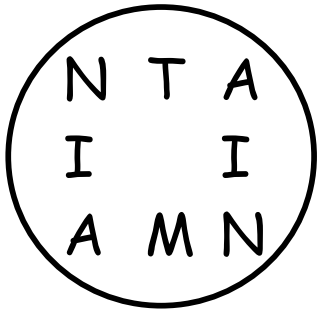
6. 

7. 

8. 

Teacher Keys

A Scrambled Mess

1. lead
2. copper, gold
3. rare, earth
4. plastics
5. flat, screen

Turn Back Time

B and D don't belong. (A, C, and E are true.)

Grasping Graphs

1. Green
2. Televisions
3. No
4. 14%, 14/100 or 7/50
5. Other

Bonus: Answers will vary, but may include cell phones, e-readers, tablets, digital cameras, MP3 players, and DVD and DVR players.

Inspect to Detect

1. fir
2. some
3. beach
4. too
5. seen
6. lead
7. for
8. tied
9. piece

Just in Time

1. 1964
2. World War II and the first Earth Day
3. 1955; Convenient, single-use, disposable products create a "throwaway" culture.
4. 1970
5. World War II

Roundabouts

1. Recycled
2. Reusable
3. Homemade
4. Regifted
5. Recharge
6. Refilled
7. Gift bags
8. Maintain

Skills and Standards

Activity	*Subject Areas*	*Skills Addressed*
Inspect to Detect	*English/ Language Arts*	Identifying relationships among words, including more complex homographs, homonyms, synonyms, antonyms, and multiple meanings; Applying foundational reading skills to build reading fluency and comprehension; Demonstrating command of grade appropriate spelling Grade 3: 3.RV.2.2; 3.RF.1; 3.W.6.2c; 3.RV.3.2 Grade 4: 4.RV.2.2; 4.RF.1; 4.W.6.2
Grasping Graphs	*Math*	Answering questions using provided data; Using observations to interpret the data in tables, line plots, and bar graphs; Reasoning abstractly and quantitatively; Writing tenths and hundredths in decimal and fraction notations Process Standards (all grades): PS.1; PS.2; PS.4; PS.5; PS.6 Grade 3: 3.NS.6; 3.DA.1 Grade 4: 4.NS.6; 4.DA.1; 4.DA.3
A Scrambled Mess	*Science*	Developing solutions that could be implemented to reduce the impact of humans on the natural environment; Describing methods humans currently use to extend the use of natural resources; Investigating ways individual communities protect the Earth's resources and environment Grade 3: SEPS.8 Grade 4: SEPS.8; 4.ESS.4
Just in Time	*Social Studies*	Interpreting timelines that show relationships among people, events, and movements in history; Understanding events and developments that brought important changes; Demonstrating an understanding of civic issues; Examining ways people have tried to solve environmental problems Grade 3: 3.1.4; 3.1.5; 3.2.7; 3.3.12; 3.3.13 Grade 4: 4.1.15; 4.2.6
	English/ Language Arts	Applying knowledge of text features to locate information and gain meaning from a text using charts and graphs; Explaining the relationships between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical text Grade 3: 3.RN.3.1; 3.RN.2.3; 3.RN.3.2 Grade 4: 4.RN.3.1; 4.RN.2.3; 4.RN.3.2
Turn Back Time	*Social Studies*	Reasoning abstractly and quantitatively; Evaluating information; Recognizing the role of the media in informing, persuading, entertaining, or transmitting culture Process Standards (both grades): SEPS.4; SEPS 7; ML.1
Article Text	*English/ Language Arts/ Media Literacy*	Reading and comprehending nonfiction, informational text; Applying context clues to determine meaning of unknown words; Determining meaning of content specific words and phrases in nonfiction text; Developing media literacy Grade 3: 3.RN.1; 3.RN.2.1; 3.RN.2.2; 3.RN.3.1; 3.RN.4.1; 3.RV.2.1; 3.RV.3.2; 3.ML.1 Grade 4: 4.RN.1; 4.RN.2.1; 4.RN.2.2; 4.RN.3.1; 4.RN.4.1; 4.RV.2.1; 4.RV.3.2; 4.ML.1