Dear Educator,

The beloved Peanuts gang has shown care for the Earth through cartoon strips that have delighted generations. This Earth Day, let Snoopy and his friends show your students and their families how they can help protect our planet with these standards-based educational activities developed by Peanuts Worldwide and the curriculum specialists at Young Minds Inspired.

Easy to implement, the lessons provide creative activities to complement English Language arts and STEM curricula.

Your students will love joining the Peanuts gang as they explore ecosystems, discover the value of trees, and learn how they can reduce, reuse, and recycle at school, at home, and in the community. Every lesson can be taught remotely or in the classroom, and each activity includes suggestions for extensions that the whole family can enjoy.

Questions? Contact YMI toll-free at 1-800-859-8005 or by email at feedback@ymiclassroom.com.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief
Young Minds Inspired
In Part 2, tell students that it’s important to take care of our Earth’s ecosystems, and we can start with the area near where we live. What ecosystems are part of their neighborhoods? Help students brainstorm ways they can take care of ecosystems and write them on the board. For example, they could pick up litter, observe but don’t touch bird nests, stay on trails at parks, don’t pick wildflowers when hiking, etc.

Older students can write ways they can help take care of their local ecosystems on the sheet, while younger students can copy some ideas from the board.

**Answers** — Part 1: Living things (duck, fish, frog, plants); non-living things (rocks, litter). Part 2: The box, can, and cups don’t belong. Answers for caring for ecosystems will vary.

**Extension:** Take your students on a virtual field trip to visit different ecosystems. Check out PBS Learning’s large collection of virtual field trips at [https://kcts9.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/nature-works-everywhere-virtual-field-trips/](https://kcts9.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/nature-works-everywhere-virtual-field-trips/) to visit coral reefs, rainforests, and more.

**Activity 2 Tree Tales**

*In this activity, students will learn about the critical role trees play in a healthy environment and how we can use the valuable resources they provide.*

Tell students that you are going to play a guessing game. First, have them copy your movements as you act out the stages of tree growth, but do not tell them you are a tree. Start low to the ground as a “seed” and sprout up. Then slowly “grow,” standing up slowly and stretching out your arms. Finally, stand tall, stretch your arms out fully, and “leaf out” by spreading your fingers wide. Now ask them to guess what you (and they) are. If they need help, give them clues such as “I sometimes provide fruit and nuts for animals,” and “Sometimes I change color in the fall.” After students guess correctly, quiz them about the stages of a tree’s life. How did they act out each stage? What happens to some trees in the spring (they develop buds), summer (they bloom and/or create fruit), fall (they store energy as their leaves change color and fall), and winter (they go dormant)? Then connect this discussion to their work in Activity 1 by brainstorming how the stages of a tree’s life cycle help an ecosystem (they contribute to the needs of other “members” of the ecosystem by providing shade, leaf mulch, fruit and/or nuts, etc.).

Now pass out the activity sheet, review the directions, and read the Peanuts comic strip. Things trees give us could include wood, fruit, nuts, oxygen, furniture, paper, shade, animal homes, etc.

After students have finished writing their poems and coloring them, have them cut them out and put them together on a bulletin board to create a tree mural.

**Extension:** As a class, consider taking care of trees by participating in an environmental outreach such as the Canopy Project, an Earth Day initiative that encourages people to plant trees for a dollar. See [https://www.earthday.org/campaign/the-canopy-project/](https://www.earthday.org/campaign/the-canopy-project/).

**Activity 3 Reuse It — or Lose It!**

*In this activity, students learn how to follow the principles of the three Rs: reduce, reuse, and recycle, and they take a pledge to be responsible users of the environment. You will need an empty plastic water bottle for visual reference.*

On a board, make three columns labeled reduce, reuse, and recycle. Tell students that one way they can take care of the Earth is by following these three ideas — known as the three Rs — in their homes, at school, and in their community.

Pass out the activity sheet, review the directions, and read the Peanuts comic in Part 1. Which of the three Rs is featured? Make a connection to the work students did in Activity 2 by asking them how recycling paper is related to taking care of trees.

Next, hold up an empty plastic water bottle. What could you do with it to reduce, reuse, and recycle? Ask students to share ideas. For example, you could reduce plastic waste by switching to a metal water bottle. You could reuse the plastic bottle by using it to hold flowers, or by refilling it with water from a water fountain. You could recycle it by placing it in a bin for recyclable plastic.

Write students’ ideas in the columns on the board as you continue to prompt discussion of ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle at school, at home, or in the community. Examples might include reducing electricity use by turning off lights, reusing fabric bags instead of using plastic ones, and being sure that you recycle plastic bottles in bins designed for that purpose.

In Part 2 of the activity, consider using student pledges to decorate a bulletin board about ways we can take care of the Earth by following the three Rs.

**(Answers:** Reduce, reuse, and recycle, in that order.)

**Extension:** In small groups or individually, have students create Earth Day posters to promote ways we all can reduce, reuse, and recycle at school and at home. Download Peanuts Take Care badges at [ymiclassroom.com/peanuts-takecare](https://ymiclassroom.com/peanuts-takecare) for students to use in their posters. Display them around the school.

**Resources**

**Taking Care of the Earth:** [https://www.factmonster.com/earth-day-taking-care-earth-every-day](https://www.factmonster.com/earth-day-taking-care-earth-every-day)

**Background on Ecosystems:** [https://sciencing.com/information-kids-ecosystems-5780652.html](https://sciencing.com/information-kids-ecosystems-5780652.html)

**YMI Microsite:** [ymiclassroom.com/peanuts-takecare](https://ymiclassroom.com/peanuts-takecare)

Part 2: Look at the picture above. What items do not belong in this ecosystem? What are some ways we can take care of Earth’s ecosystems? Write your ideas on the back of this sheet.

Families: Check your own backyard or take a trip to a nearby park or nature preserve to see what parts of an ecosystem you and your family can discover. Then look for ways you can help take care of nature in that ecosystem.
In this Peanuts comic strip, we see that Lucy cares about trees. The Peanuts gang respects trees!

Earth Day is April 22. Celebrate by writing a poem about trees on these lines. (The lines don’t have to rhyme.)

**Trees are important!**

They give us ______________________________  
_________________________________________.

They give us ______________________________  
_________________________________________.

They give us ______________________________  
_________________________________________.

We should care for trees because they care for us!

**Families:** Celebrate Earth Day by asking family members to name what kind of tree they would be, if they could be a tree. Consider planting a tree as a family that you could care for, or find a local organization to which you can donate a tree.
PART 1: Sally is learning about how to take care of the Earth. Can you help her by filling in the blanks below? Choose from the words reduce, reuse, or recycle.

It was time for Sally to get ready for school. First, she brushed her teeth. She turned off the faucet while she brushed. This helps her _______________ the water she uses. Then she put her lunch in a cloth bag so she could _______________ the bag the next day. At school, the class cleaned out their desks. Sally saved all the paper she did not need so she could _______________ it.

PART 2: You can take care of the Earth like the Peanuts gang too! Read, sign, and color the pledge below.

I pledge to take care of the Earth, to care for ecosystems and trees, and to reduce, reuse, and recycle. I will be like the Peanuts gang and enjoy and protect our planet!

(Sign here)