

Meaningful Earth Day Activities for Kids and Preschool Children

www.kidsacademy.mobi

Each year, on April 22, more than one billion people across the globe come together to observe one of the largest holidays celebrated worldwide: Earth Day! Originating in 1970, this holiday was created to bring a new awareness to cleaning up and saving the planet. Today, it is an important day that can help your child develop appreciation and compassion for others and nature while learning about science! Let's dive deeper into the importance of this global holiday before discovering easy and fun Earth Day activities.



Why Celebrate Earth Day?

Oftentimes, it takes a tragedy to bring about something good in the world. Back on January 28th, 1969, an oil well blowout in Santa Barbara, California spilled millions of gallons of oil in the Pacific Ocean. As a result, tens of thousands of animals ranging from birds to aquatic wildlife died as a result of the spill. Outraged, environmental activists

worked with members of congress to make new laws to protect the environment, as well as establishing Earth Day in 1970. Ever since, the holiday has spread across the world, now celebrated in over 193 countries!

Even so, today many American adults get caught up in their own daily grind and oftentimes forget about celebrating this important day. Since it is not a Federal holiday, Americans go to work and carry on as usual on April 22nd each year. However, considering the current political landscape surrounding climate change, there has never been a more critical time to focus on celebrating and preserving our planet.

As we know, kids represent our future, and they will one day run the earth we leave them. As parents and teachers, it's important to instill a healthy appreciation for our Earth. In turn, children will not only take care of the planet, but they will study important science concepts, and will work on building compassion for nature and others, as well as forming early reasoning skills by studying cause and effect relationships.

Besides the obvious benefits, let's not forget that Earth Day activities for kids can be a lot of fun! Kids have a blast working creatively on posters and making recycled crafts. Speaking of fun things to do, keep reading to find ideas for cool hands-on projects as well as reading and writing activities!

Hands-On Projects for Honoring Earth Day

There's no better way to celebrate than with art projects that upcycle items from around the house! Check out the following activities that can be made in the classroom or at home:



Mosaic Murals Made from Jar Lids or Bottle Caps

Whether you're doing this as a family or planning for your classroom, mosaic murals made from recycled bottle caps or jar lids is a fun-filled project everyone will love! Simply task your family or students with collecting caps before making a large poster mural to decorate your home or classroom.

What You'll Need:

- Clean bottle caps or jar lids in a variety of sizes or colors
- Poster board or butcher paper
- Hot glue gun
- Pencil

What to Do:

- It's helpful to make a plan ahead of time to determine what type of mural your family or class could make. For instance, in a school with a classroom size of 20 kids can make a much larger mural than a small family of 4. Decide what type of scene to make. Popular ideas include rainbows, trees, or other easy-to-create scenery.
- Use a piece of poster board or butcher paper and create the desired scene by first sketching with a pencil.

- Next, start collecting jar or bottle caps! Depending on the mural, instruct your family or class to collect colors of lids that will complete the mural.
- After or during collection, begin making the mural by gluing the caps or lids to the poster board using the hot glue gun.
- When finished, stand back and take in the sight of a beautiful mural made from upcycled bottle caps!

DIY Garden Watering Can

Perfect for toddlers or even preschoolers or older, this simple project will recycle a commonly used and thrown away household container to create a new product that can be handy in the garden or indoors!

What You'll Need:

- An empty and cleaned ½ gallon milk jug
- Small nail
- Hammer
- Markers, stickers, or any other supplies desired for decoration

What to Do:

- First, be sure that the milk jug is empty and cleaned so that no milk or liquid remains in the jug. Make sure to choose a jug that has a secure plastic lid and a handle.
- Help your child use the hammer to poke holes in the top of the lid using the nail. Be sure to choose a small nail, and make multiple small holes to allow for a stream that flows much like a showerhead in the bathroom.
- Next, encourage your child to decorate the jug in any way that he chooses! Use markers to color pictures, or glue decorations as your child wishes. Keep in mind that cold water can create condensation, so fill with lukewarm water.
- Fill the jug and secure the lid. Now help your child water the garden! This container could be used again and again for both indoor or outdoor plants. Make one for each child or family member and encourage kids to care for and take care of flowers and vegetation properly.

Lego Bricks Mini Planters

Now here's an idea that will intrigue any Lego-loving child! Great [for kindergarteners](#) or older elementary students, this activity will have kids planting miniature cacti or succulents in their very own homemade Lego pot.

What You'll Need:

- Lego bricks

- Potting soil
- Mini succulent or cactus plants from your local garden center

What to Do:

- First, determine what size planter you'll need based upon the size of your plants. For instance, take a potted plant and place it on top of your Legos as your child is building.
- Build the planter around the existing plant. Be sure to use a flat Lego platform as the bottom platform to support the Lego pot. Build the bricks around the it, and when finished building, remove the potted plant from the middle, placing it back in the middle of the Lego container, but this time without the pot it came in when it was purchased. Add soil to pack in the roots and fill the space in the Lego pot.
- When watering, place the Lego planters in a shallow pan to catch any small amount of leakage, or place them outside.
- Watch as your child enjoys these cool and easy-to-make containers as Lego bricks are used to make something truly useful and beautiful!

Writing and Reading Activities

Earth Day activities for children can also help kids build literacy skills as well as studying science and nature! Check out these ideas for a cross-curricular study session:



Read some books

Your child has likely read books about Christmas, Easter, Halloween and every holiday in between. Believe it or not, there are also books written just for Earth Day! Prep for this important worldwide holiday by finding themed books. Some popular series that have include the holiday in the title itself, such as Clifford, Fancy Nancy easy readers, The Magic School Bus series, and the Biscuit book series. After reading, be sure to talk about the importance of preserving the Earth, and encourage your child to write their own books!

Research an environmental group or activist

An awesome activity for older kids, like for middle school and high school, take to the internet and practice those research skills by finding environmental organizations or activists. Help your child learn what these activists do to help the environment, and encourage kids to write letters to them to express their interests or opinions on hot button environmental issues.

Write letters to legislators about environmental concerns

Taking the above suggestion one step further, get your child involved in the political landscape by writing to local or national legislators to express concerns about environmental laws or the need for additional legislation to tackle current issues. Help your child research the EPA and the current politics affecting the world today, and urge legislators to act accordingly. Not only will your child be researching environmental concerns that affect them, but they will learn how to take an active role as a future voter and citizen!

Nature walk and journal keeping

For the little ones, honor the day by going on a nature walk! Before heading out, create and take a journal to record observations along the way. Make drawings, or find and collect small items to use as artifacts and visuals, and help your child write about what she sees, focusing on cause and effect relationships. For instance record how the soil and flora look if it's been dried out, or after a lot of rain. Cultivate your child's interest and love for the environment by simply looking around and writing about what he sees.

Earth Day activities are simply any projects that kids can do to help them build pride in the earth and motivate them to take care of it for future generations. Observe this April 22nd by trying the above ideas for both projects and literacy activities, but don't forget to honor the Earth all year long by respecting the environment and finding ways to recycle or bring attention to environmental concerns! For even more resources, download our Gifted and Talented app to find quality learning games, videos, worksheets, and more!

