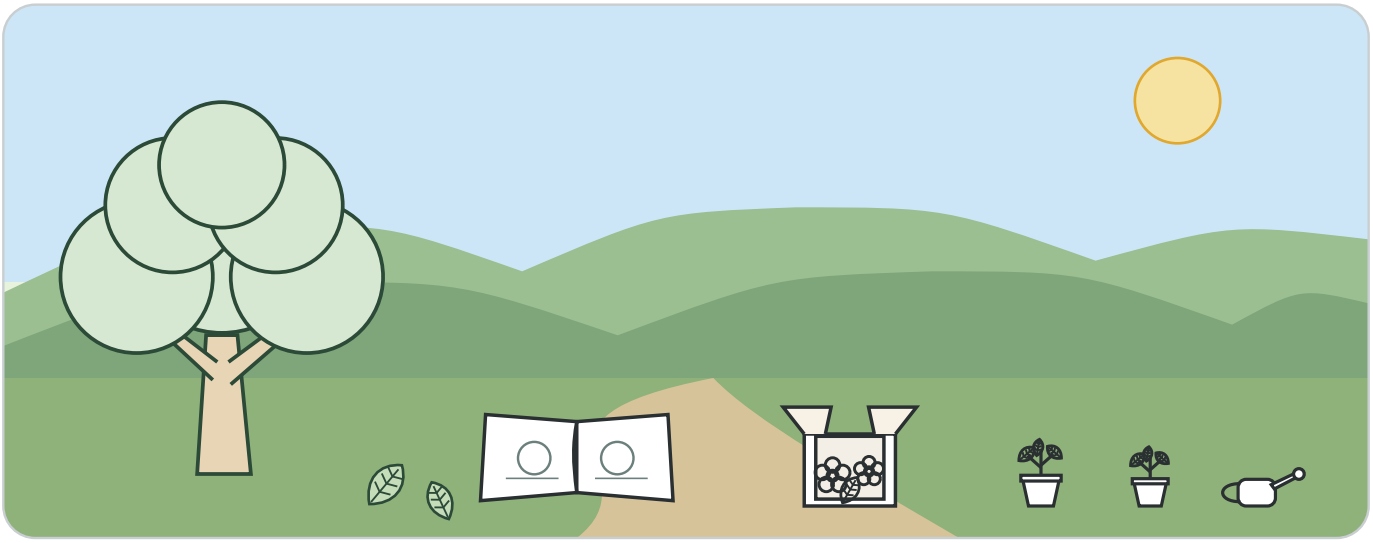
What Do You Give the Earth?

Classroom Companion

Sheryl Dotson · Magsico Press · Grades K–2 · Ages 5–8



Ms. Hazel's atlas, Sam's box, and young native plants in a Pennsylvania spring woods.

Inside the companion

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TEACHER GUIDE | GRADES K–2 | AGES 5–8

Start Here

What Do You Give the Earth?

Designed to accompany **What Do You Give the Earth?** by Sheryl Dotson. Access to the book is required for the complete lesson.

A Wondering Heart™ | Atlas of Holidays · 12 spreads · Ages 5–8 · Grades K–2

What do you give the Earth?

Children will name one way people in the story care for Earth and describe a gift of care they can give. Use the story, one paper sort, and an exit question.

One complete 45-minute lesson

5 min
Invite predictions

Read the title. What might someone give the Earth?

12 min
Read aloud

Read Spreads 1–12. Pause at Spreads 2 and 4 using companion p. 4.

8 min
Talk together

Discuss many ways to care. Revisit Spreads 9–12 and Sam's box.

15 min
Try the gift sort

Follow companion p. 5. The story shows cleanup, mending, sharing ideas, and planting with care.

5 min
Reflect

Ask for one gift from the story and one way the child can help.

Prepare and print

Teacher: Use pp. 2, 4 and 5 from one copy or a screen. Keep the script and uncut card sheet out of student view. The exit guidance is on p. 19.

Pairs or small groups: Print one p. 6 per group. An adult cuts eight cards and four labels. Hide C–F and the MEND AND REUSE and SHARE AN IDEA labels until the teacher script calls for them.

No-print choice: Write the same eight examples on scrap cards. Make four labels. Keep the same reveal order.

Optional worksheets and the certificate: Choose individual sheets from the menu on p. 7. Print US Letter at actual size. The separate Coloring & Fun Pack is optional.

For kindergarten, the reading and discussion can come first, with the game and reflection in a second meeting. Children can point, draw, act or dictate. The core lesson uses ordinary paper and pencils.

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TEACHER GUIDE | STANDARDS & GRADE BANDS

Standards at a Glance

What Do You Give the Earth?

Use the chart to identify skills practiced. For K–1, read directions aloud and accept pointing, drawing, oral answers or dictation. Grade 2 learners can give a reason and support it with a detail from the story. A short activity does not assess every part of a standard.

Activity · companion page	Grades K–1	Grade 2
Read-aloud and talk · 2, 4	RL.K.1, RL.1.1 SL.K.1, SL.1.1	RL.2.1, SL.2.1
Characters and voices · 8, 14	RL.K.3, RL.1.3	RL.2.6 (voice prompt)
Vocabulary · 9	L.K.4, L.1.4a	L.2.4e (glossary clues)
Retell in order · 10	RL.K.2, RL.1.2	RL.2.2 (retelling)
Comprehension · 11–12	RL.K.1, RL.1.1	RL.2.1, RL.2.2
Atlas trip map · 13	Locate a place with support	Match a place to its gift
Write or draw a gift · 16	W.K.1, W.1.1	W.2.1 (opinion and reason)
Garden Count · 15	K.CC.B.5, 1.OA.C.6	2.OA.A.1; 2.OA.C.4
Gift sort · 5–6	Sort and describe gifts	Explain a choice with a story detail

Science connection. Using things longer means throwing less away. Native plants grow naturally in a place. When native wildflowers bloom, bees and butterflies can find food there. Planting is just the beginning: the friends will keep checking the plants as they grow. These ideas connect to caring for land, water, and living things.

Optional civics discussion · D2.Civ.3.K-2. Why might a class have a rule about caring for a shared garden or a shared classroom? When could the same kind of care help at home?

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TEACHER GUIDE | READ ALOUD

Read, Talk & Wonder

What Do You Give the Earth?

Before reading

Read the title. What might someone give the Earth? What do the children already know about Earth Day? Invite a question about caring for a place they know. Children may discuss the story instead of sharing family practices.

During reading · two planned pauses

Spread 2. What is Sam looking for? What does Ms. Hazel say Earth Day is? Earth Day is April 22, a time to celebrate our planet and help care for it.

Spread 4. At Yosemite National Park, volunteers help pick up litter. Volunteers are people who choose to help. How can taking something away be a present? Listen for Sam's idea about the trash. Then read on through Spreads 5–8 to see other ways people care.

After reading · choose a question to revisit

Spreads 3–4. When was the first Earth Day held in the United States? What did people gather for? How is picking up litter a gift?

Spreads 5–6. Why mend a jacket for Earth Day? What does Sam notice about his box? What happens at the festival in Tokyo?

Spreads 7–8. How can a picture give someone an idea? What are native plants? Why does Ms. Hazel say planting is just the beginning?

Spreads 9–11. How do the friends fix the cart? What do they plant, and why will they keep checking the plants?

Spread 12. What present did Sam find? How has the box changed? Why does Ralph want to help again tomorrow?

Words to say together

An atlas is a book of maps. Earth Day is April 22, a time to celebrate our planet and help care for it. Volunteers are people who choose to help. Native plants grow naturally in that part of the world. To mend is to repair something so it can be used longer.

Guide the conversation

The woodland friends are fictional. The country examples are based on documented Earth Day activities. Say "at this school" or "some celebrations." Communities may celebrate on April 22 or nearby dates, and activities vary within each country. Similar activities happen in many places. Invite pointing, partner talk or acting. Personal sharing is optional.

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CORE LESSON | TEACHER SCRIPT | 15 MINUTES

Many Ways to Give

What Do You Give the Earth?

Keep this page with the teacher. Give each pair or small group one prepared set from companion p. 6. At first, show only A, B, G and H and the two starting labels, CLEAN UP and PLANT AND CARE. Hide C–F and the other two labels. Story connection: Spreads 4–11.

1. Start with examples

Place A and B under CLEAN UP. Put G and H under PLANT AND CARE. Ask, “What is alike in each group?” Children can point to taking trash away or to plants that will need care.

2. Notice what is missing

Show C alone, the mended jacket. Ask, “Does this card fit either place? What could we do?” Accept “neither” and give children time to suggest another group.

3. Name a new group

Now reveal MEND AND REUSE. Place C under the label and add D, the garden cart. Ask why using something longer can be a gift. Sam also keeps a perfectly good box.

4. Name one more group

Reveal SHARE AN IDEA. Place E (Tokyo) and F (a school in India). Ask how a picture, a poster, or a festival activity can give someone an idea about caring for Earth.

5. Check the big idea

Ask, “Sam’s box seemed empty. What present did the friends give?” Listen for more than one kind of gift. Ask, “Does one right gift mean every place must give the same gift?”

Connect the game to the book

The friends see cleanup at Yosemite, repairs at a celebration in Canada, learning and music in Tokyo, pictures at this school in India, and native planting at a school in Langa. Then they mend the cart, plant native wildflowers, and agree to keep checking the plants. Sam’s present is helping take care of their home. If a child sorts a card with a thoughtful reason that differs from the label, listen and help them explain. Use the exit question on p. 19.

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CORE LESSON | ADULT PREPARATION

Gift Cards & Labels

What Do You Give the Earth?

Prepare one set per pair or small group. Cut out eight cards and four labels. Show A, B, G and H first, with CLEAN UP and PLANT AND CARE. Hide C–F and the other two labels. Reveal the rest in the order on p. 5.

A At Yosemite, volunteers pick up litter.

B Sam says they are giving a present by taking the trash away.

C A helper mends a jacket at a celebration in Canada.

D The friends fix a wobbly garden cart.

E In Tokyo, children join activities to learn about caring for Earth.

F At this school in India, children make pictures and posters.

G At a school in Langa, students plant native trees and other plants.

H The friends plant native wildflowers and will keep checking them.

Group labels (cut apart)

CLEAN UP

MEND AND REUSE

SHARE AN IDEA

PLANT AND CARE

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TEACHER GUIDE | CHOOSE AFTER READING

Optional Activity Menu

What Do You Give the Earth?

Choose one sheet to revisit the book. Print one copy per learner for your choice. Times are estimates.

Sheet	Activity	Minutes	Spreads
8	Meet the Friends	5–7	1–12
9	Words to Discover	8–10	2–8, 11
10	Story Sequencing	8–10	1–12
11	Think About the Story · K–1	5–8	1–12
12	Think, Write & Explain · Grade 2	10–15	2–12
13	Follow Our Atlas Trip	10–15	3–8
14	Who Said It?	5–8	1–12
15	Garden Count · math	8–10	10–11
16	What Would YOU Give the Earth?	8–12	9–12
17	Earth Day Wonderer certificate	1–2	12

Low-print choices

Read a card aloud, act out a story line, or retell Sam's search in pairs. On p. 10, learners can number the cards directly. On p. 13, they can point to places and tell a partner the gift. For a cut-and-glue version of p. 10, add a blank sheet and glue.

Invite a spoken, drawn, pointed or dictated response. Find answers and examples on pp. 18–19. Print the p. 17 certificate if you wish.

Just for fun

The separate three-page Coloring & Fun Pack has a color-by-number, a garden coloring sheet, and a little Earth Day crossword. Families can print any page on its own.

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OPTIONAL STUDENT SHEET | CHARACTERS

Meet the Friends

What Do You Give the Earth?

Name _____ **Date** _____

Color each little picture. Tell a partner what one friend does in the story.



Ralph · the rabbit

asks questions and waters the plants



Rocky · the robin

sings and finds Japan on the map



Sam · the squirrel

carries the box and looks for a present



Ms. Hazel · the tortoise

brings the atlas and helps them plant



Gus · the groundhog

pushes the cart and digs in the garden

Which friend would you like to learn with? Why?

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OPTIONAL STUDENT SHEET | VOCABULARY

Words to Discover

What Do You Give the Earth?

Name _____ **Date** _____

Earth Day
April 22; a time to celebrate our planet and help care for it

atlas
a book of maps

volunteers
people who choose to help

native plants
plants that grow naturally in that part of the world

mend
to repair something so it can be used longer

care
to look after something, such as checking plants as they grow

Use the word bank to finish each sentence.

atlas · volunteers · mend · native · care · Earth

1. Ms. Hazel opens her _____, a book of maps.
2. _____ are people who choose to help.
3. Some people _____ a jacket so they can use it longer.
4. _____ plants grow naturally in that part of the world.
5. The friends will keep checking the plants with _____.
6. Sam wanted to give a present to the _____.

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OPTIONAL STUDENT SHEET | RETELL THE STORY

Story Sequencing

What Do You Give the Earth?

Name _____ **Date** _____

Number the circles from 1 to 6. Or cut out the cards and glue them in story order on another sheet.

○ The friends learn how people in several countries care for Earth.	○ Sam comes along with an empty box, looking for an Earth Day present.
○ They plant native wildflowers, and Sam draws flowers on his box.	○ Ms. Hazel explains Earth Day and opens her atlas.
○ Sam says their present was helping take care of their home.	○ They fix a wobbly garden cart and fill the box with pots.

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OPTIONAL STUDENT SHEET | COMPREHENSION, GRADES K–1

Think About the Story

What Do You Give the Earth?

Name _____ **Date** _____

Listen to each question. Circle the best answer.

1. When is Earth Day?

May 1 April 22 June 21

2. When was the first Earth Day held in the United States?

1870 2000 1970

3. What is Sam looking for?

a present for Earth a bigger atlas a lost acorn

4. What do volunteers do at Yosemite?

give a concert open a café pick up litter

5. Why mend a jacket for Earth Day?

a jacket must be new

using things longer means throwing less away

it makes the jacket heavier

6. What do the friends plant?

native wildflowers an egg tree a picnic

Draw your favorite part of the story.

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OPTIONAL STUDENT SHEET | COMPREHENSION, GRADE 2

Think, Write & Explain

What Do You Give the Earth?

Name _____ **Date** _____

Write a full sentence. Use details from the story.

1. What does Ms. Hazel say Earth Day is?

2. How can taking something away be a present for Earth?

3. Why mend a jacket for Earth Day? What does Sam notice about his box?

4. What are native plants, and why do the friends plant native wildflowers?

5. Why does Ms. Hazel say planting is just the beginning?

6. What present did Sam find? How does his box change by the end?

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OPTIONAL STUDENT SHEET | GEOGRAPHY

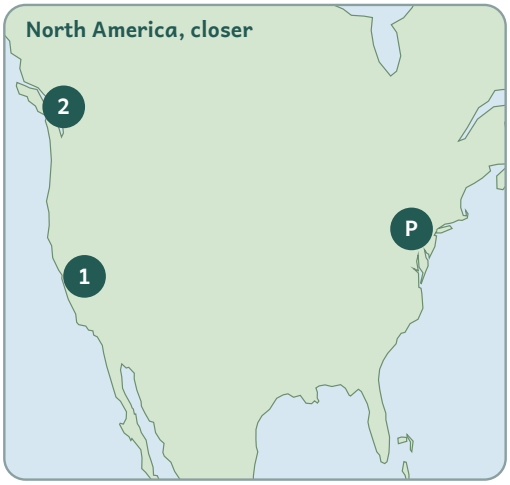
Follow Our Atlas Trip

What Do You Give the Earth?

Name _____ **Date** _____

Find each numbered place. Use the key and the close-up of North America. Point or trace with your finger. The friends learn through Ms. Hazel's atlas; they do not travel to each country.





Key

1. Yosemite, United States: volunteers pick up litter
2. Mission, British Columbia, Canada: some celebrations include repairs
3. Tokyo, Japan: a festival in a park
4. New Panvel, India: pictures and posters at this school
5. Langa, South Africa: native plants at a school

P. Pennsylvania, United States: the friends' woodland home

Name one place and how people there care for Earth.

Grade 2: Choose two places. How are their gifts alike or different?

Land outlines: Natural Earth 1:110m land, public domain. Markers show approximate locations, not country borders.

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OPTIONAL STUDENT SHEET | READING AND CHARACTER VOICES

Who Said It?

What Do You Give the Earth?

Name _____ **Date** _____

Who said each line? Write the speaker's name.

Name bank

Ralph · Rocky · Sam · Ms. Hazel · Gus

1. "What's that for?" _____
2. "But what do you give the Earth?" _____
3. "Let's see what people do around the world," _____
4. "Show us!" _____
5. "I could help with the music!" _____
6. "A picture can give someone an idea," _____
7. "Their gift will keep growing!" _____
8. "Yes. We helped take care of our home." _____

Give the character a voice

Choose a line and read it aloud. What feeling does your voice show? Tell a partner or write your idea.

_____

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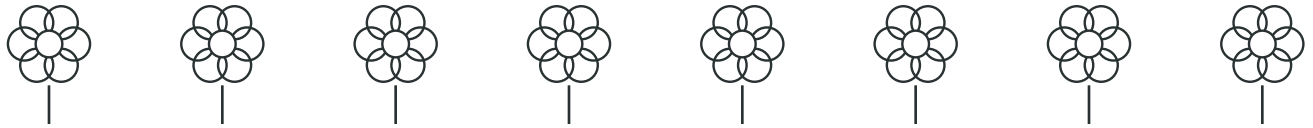
OPTIONAL STUDENT SHEET | MATH

Garden Count

What Do You Give the Earth?

Name _____ **Date** _____

Imagine a new round of planting with the friends. These numbers are for practice; they are not a count from the story. Color the yellow flowers yellow and the purple flowers purple.



yellow purple yellow purple purple yellow purple purple

Part A · Grades K–1 · Count the flowers

Yellow flowers _____

Purple flowers _____

Flowers in all _____

Part B · Grade 1

Write the number that belongs in each space.

3 yellow + 5 purple = _____ flowers

Add 2 more flowers. 8 + 2 = _____ flowers in all.

Part C · Grade 2

Show your thinking. Use the back if you need room.

Gus plants 4 flowers. Ralph plants 4 flowers.
How many flowers are there? _____

There are 3 rows with 3 pots in each row.
How many pots are there?
3 + 3 + 3 = _____ pots



The friends have 6 young plants. They plant 2 of them.
How many are left to plant? _____

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OPTIONAL STUDENT SHEET | WRITE AND DRAW

What Would YOU Give the Earth?

What Do You Give the Earth?

Name _____ **Date** _____

Sam looked for a present and found one by helping take care of his home. What gift of care would YOU give? Choose an idea of your own.

Draw your gift.

I would give the Earth

_____

because

_____

Grade 2: How will you take care of this gift after the first day? Ms. Hazel says planting is just the beginning.

_____

_____

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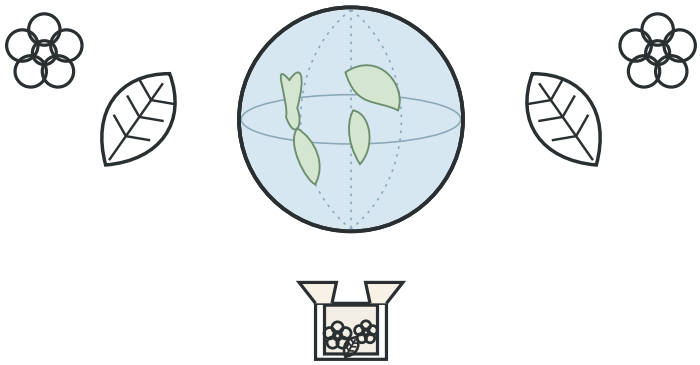
Earth Day Wonderer

Certificate

This certificate is proudly given to

_____

for enjoying **What Do You Give the Earth?**, learning many ways people care for our planet, and practicing a gift of care.



_____ _____

Teacher **Date**

TEACHER SUPPORT | ANSWERS AND EXAMPLES

Answer Key & Assessment

What Do You Give the Earth?

Page 8 · Meet the Friends

Ralph is a rabbit who asks questions and waters the plants. Rocky is a robin who sings and finds Japan on the map. Sam is a squirrel who carries the box and looks for a present. Ms. Hazel is a tortoise who brings the atlas and helps them plant. Gus is a groundhog who pushes the cart and digs in the garden. Accept an accurate story action. The coloring pictures show the story's woodland friends.

Page 9 · Words to Discover

1. atlas 2. Volunteers 3. mend 4. Native 5. care 6. Earth. Accept capital letters that fit the start of a sentence.

Page 10 · Story Sequencing

Read the six printed cards from left to right, top to bottom. Write 3, 1, 5, 2, 6, 4. A correct retell moves from Sam's empty box and his search for a present, to Ms. Hazel's explanation and her atlas, to learning about people in several countries, to fixing the cart, to planting native wildflowers and drawing on the box, and finally to Sam's present: helping take care of their home.

Page 11 · Think About the Story

1. April 22. 2. 1970. 3. A present for Earth. 4. Pick up litter. 5. Using things longer means throwing less away. 6. Native wildflowers.

Page 12 · Think, Write & Explain

1. Earth Day is April 22, a time to celebrate our planet and help care for it. 2. At Yosemite, volunteers pick up litter. Taking the trash away is a present. 3. Using things longer means throwing less away. Sam nearly threw his box away, but it is still a perfectly good box. 4. Native plants grow naturally in that part of the world. When the wildflowers bloom, bees and butterflies can find food. 5. The plants will need checking as they grow. Planting is just the beginning. 6. The present was helping take care of their home. The box starts plain, is drawn with flowers, and later holds garden tools.

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TEACHER SUPPORT | ANSWERS AND DISCUSSION

Answer Key & Exit Ticket

What Do You Give the Earth?

Pages 5–6 · Many Ways to Give

CLEAN UP: A, B. MEND AND REUSE: C, D. SHARE AN IDEA: E, F. PLANT AND CARE: G, H. Hide the MEND AND REUSE and SHARE AN IDEA labels when C first appears. Accept "neither" and listen for a reason. Reveal the new groups, add the matching cards, and end with the big idea: there are many ways to give the Earth a present. If a child places Tokyo with another group and can explain (for example, celebrating together), acknowledge the thinking and show why this lesson groups it with sharing an idea.

Page 13 · Follow Our Atlas Trip

1 Yosemite, United States: volunteers pick up litter. 2 Mission, British Columbia, Canada: some celebrations include repairs. 3 Tokyo, Japan: a festival in a park, with music, food, and activities for children. 4 New Panvel, India: at this school, children made pictures and posters. 5 Langa, South Africa: at a school, students planted native trees and other plants. P is the friends' Pennsylvania woods home. The friends learn through an atlas; they do not visit each country. Accept a place-and-gift match. For Grade 2, accept a reasonable likeness or difference supported by the story.

Page 14 · Who Said It?

1. Ralph 2. Sam 3. Ms. Hazel 4. Gus 5. Rocky 6. Ralph 7. Gus 8. Sam. For the read-aloud response, accept different voices or feelings when children explain how the words support their choice.

Page 15 · Garden Count

Part A: 3 yellow, 5 purple, 8 flowers in all. Part B: 3 + 5 = 8 and 8 + 2 = 10. Part C: 8 flowers; 3 + 3 + 3 = 9 pots; 4 plants left to plant. These numbers are practice, not a count from the story.

Page 16 · What Would YOU Give the Earth?

Accept a gift of care of the learner's choice and a reason. Children can draw, point, speak, write or dictate. For Grade 2, listen for an idea about ongoing care, such as checking plants as they grow.

Exit ticket · 5 minutes

Invite each child to finish: "One way people in the story care for Earth is _____." Then ask: "I can help by _____." Listen for a story gift such as picking up litter, mending, sharing an idea, or planting with care, and for a helping idea the child can really do.

Return to the book. On Spreads 4–8, revisit the country examples and the many kinds of gifts. On Spreads 9–12, notice how the friends mend, plant, and keep checking, and how Sam's box changes. Ask what present he found. Listen for helping take care of their home.

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TEACHER GUIDE | SOURCES AND PERMISSIONS

Teacher Notes & Sources

What Do You Give the Earth?

For the teacher. The woodland friends are fictional. The country examples are based on documented Earth Day activities. Communities may celebrate on April 22 or nearby dates, and activities vary within each country. Similar activities happen in many places. Use “at this school” and “some celebrations” with learners. Story references use Spread 1 through Spread 12.

Background and sources

Earth Day history · EARTHDAY.ORG. The April 22 observance began in the United States in 1970 and later expanded internationally.
https://www.earthday.org/history/

United States · National Park Service, Yosemite. Earth Day volunteer projects include litter cleanup. The park supplies tools and protective equipment.
https://www.nps.gov/yose/getinvolved/supportyourpark/dropinvolunteer.htm

Canada · BRIM, Repair Café. Mission’s Earth Day EarthFest includes a repair café. Services include sewing and other repairs.
https://www.wearebrim.ca/repair-cafe/

Japan · GO TOKYO, Earth Day Tokyo. The Yoyogi Park festival includes concerts, food, and children’s workshops.
https://www.gotokyo.org/en/spot/ev016/index.html

India · Mahatma International School, New Panvel. This school held coloring and poster activities to mark Earth Day.
https://mahatmainternational.ac.in/colouring-and-poster-making-competition-on-world-earth-day/

South Africa · WESSA, Langa High School Eco Club. The report documents Earth Day planting of indigenous trees and other plants, with ongoing garden care.
https://www.wessa.org.za/western-cape-langa-high-schools-eco-club-plants-more-than-20-indigenous-trees-earth-day/

Garden science · U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Suitable native flowering plants can provide nectar and pollen for pollinators. Choose plants suited to the garden’s region.
https://www.fws.gov/our-work/pollinators/how-you-can-help-pollinators

Printing and classroom use

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