



This time there are four Rs—Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and READ! Tap into this timely and important topic to generate a little reading heat! “Green” tips abound, and there are no better champions of the message than motivated kids. And don’t forget—libraries are the ultimate “reuse” institutions!

SETTING THE SCENE

Recycling Center: Create a recycling center reading area in your classroom or library. Attach a corrugated cardboard roof to a wall in back and support it with front corner poles (perhaps lumber or PVC pipe uprights with “feet” to make them freestanding). Equip your center with recycling bins and a reading chair made of old tires. Set a tire on the floor and another upright in the middle of the bottom tire, resting against the wall, to make the back. Cover the tires with a rug or throw to avoid rubber stains. Make a bookshelf of bricks and boards to display books on recycling. Add a “We Recycle” sign with the familiar triangle arrows logo, and some bumper stickers from the “Get Your Green On ...” theme materials. If there’s room, add a jigsaw puzzle with a recycling theme on a small table.

“Get Your Green On” Bulletin Board: Back your bulletin board with reusable fabric instead of paper.

Green burlap is a good choice. Title your board “Get Your Green On @ Your Library!” and decorate it with bookmarks or bumper stickers from the theme materials. Announce upcoming activities on signs made in the shape of the recycling triangle logo. Post a booklist of titles from your collection related to taking care of the planet, with appropriate book jackets. Or use the board to display kids’ Green Tips flash cards (page 4), stories, or other theme-related creations.



Book Display: Make an attractive book display surface from materials you’ve rescued from the trash. You might paint or refinish discarded furniture; decorate and up-end old buckets, bins, or boxes; or cover wood stacking palates with used wrapping paper. Be sure to identify your display surface with wall text that explains what it is and how you’ve reused it.

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Green Incentives: Theme bookmarks, plantable bookmarks, water bottles, bumper stickers, book bags, or T-shirts from the “Get Your Green On” materials or individual earth-friendly soaps can be used as incentives for reaching reading goals or prizes for winning games or contests. Or be creative and put together simple craft kits from recycled materials, like used jewelry beads and thread. Plain cloth napkins, tied to a couple of nontoxic fabric markers, make nice craft kits that encourage saving paper.



work your way to “Greentown” with appropriate illustrations, or travel along a recycling arrows logo, marking starting and ending spots. Sixty spaces are about right. Provide player pieces and dice or a numbered spinner, and a noisemaker (whistle, bell, or horn), rescued from discarded games or made from discarded items. Mark about half of the spaces on your board with one of the following symbols, in random order and about equal numbers: A drop for water, a light bulb for electricity, a notepad for paper, and a fuel pump for fossil fuels. Kids will take turns rolling the dice and moving along the path. When they land on a space with a symbol, they must quickly (within ten seconds) think up a tip for conserving that particular resource. Sound the noisemaker when the time is up. If they come up with a practical tip, they keep their place on the board. If not, they move back two spaces. First child to reach the goal wins a small prize.

Kaboose Earth Day Games: Bookmark this site, <http://resources.kaboose.com/games/earthday.html>, where young kids can play two online recycling games.

Smog City 2, www.smogcity2.org/index.html. This sophisticated online game for older kids lets you explore factors that affect air quality and use an air pollution simulator to control it.

Online Recycling Game, www.lawrencekidsrecycle.org/concentrate.html. This concentration game shows common waste items and offers tips for handling them in eco-friendly ways.

Recycling Relays: Set up a row of recycling bins marked for plastic, glass, metal, and paper at one end of a room. Gather clean used recyclable items that match the bin categories, free of sharp edges or other dangers, and divide them randomly, but in even numbers, into several boxes. Divide kids into teams with equal numbers and



GAMES/CONTESTS

Landfill Bill: This fast-paced online game challenges kids to place flying trash in the correct recycling bin before it lands in the junkyard: <http://kidsturncentral.com/games/landfillbill.htm>.

Word Puzzles: Go to pages 7 and 8 for a crossword puzzle and a tile puzzle.

Poster Contest: Have kids create posters with catchy slogans and effective illustrations to encourage earth-friendly habits. You might judge these in age groups, or in categories like “Most inspiring,” “Most colorful,” “Best researched,” etc.

Go Green Game: Work with a group of children to create a “Go Green” board game. Design a game path on poster board, divided into spaces large enough for two-four game pieces. You might start from “Smog City” and

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line them up behind a starting line across the room from the bins. Give each team a box of recyclables. When you say “GO,” the first child in each team grabs an item from its box, runs to the appropriate bin, drops it in the item, runs back to his or her team, and taps the next child in line, and so on. The first team to empty its box into the correct bins and return to the starting line wins. You might want to color code the items in each box, so you can easily identify misplaced items.

ARTS/CRAFTS

Recycling Symbol Art: Copy the standard triangle arrows recycling symbol on page 10, on unused backsides of paper or recycled paper. Have children decorate the arrows with colors, words, and designs that send a “green” message. Use the artwork to decorate your classroom or children’s room.



Another R—Rescue! Have a workshop to rescue and restore used or broken toys or games for donation to a homeless shelter or children’s hospital waiting room. Invite families to bring in toys that are destined for the trash because of repairable imperfections. Provide a variety of craft materials and leftover parts from other discarded toys and see what magic you can work to restore items to usable condition. “New” toys for kids who need them, the satisfaction of providing meaningful service, and less to the landfill—everybody wins!

Eco-smart Shopping Bags: Supply or have kids bring in canvas shopping bags. Provide fabric paints and markers in bright colors and let them customize their bags with personal symbols or earth-friendly slogans.



RECIPES

Earth-friendly Snacking:

Whatever snacks you serve, be sure to use reusable bowls or cups and minimize waste whenever possible. Some

disposables are made from recycled materials, and plastic flatware can be washed and reused.

Go Organic, Go Local: Stress organically grown local produce in program snacks—locally grown fruit or juices made from it, breads from local grains, etc. Talk about the benefits to the environment in avoiding dangerous chemicals and in minimizing the use of fossil fuels to move foods from place to place. You might even take children to a local farmer’s market to show the variety of healthy, locally grown choices available.

Rice Krispie Earth Treat: This fun idea is reprinted from the KinderNature Web site, <http://kindernature.storycounty.com/>. Here are the ingredients and directions:

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup margarine
- 40 regular marshmallows
- ½ tsp. vanilla
- 6 cups Rice Krispies®
- Green and blue food coloring

Directions:

Melt margarine and marshmallows over medium heat in a large pot, stir in vanilla and Rice Krispies. Divide into two bowls. Add green food coloring to one bowl and blue food coloring to the second. Stir. Allow the children to take a scoop from the blue bowl and a scoop from the green bowl and mash them together in a ball (the earth).

Smiley-face Earth: Make a cake or cookies decorated to look like the earth, wearing a smiley face of green icing. Green Kool-Aid emphasizes the point!

Earthworms: Talk about the vital role earthworms play in keeping our soil clean and healthy to “grow green.” Then honor these tiny-but-mighty eco-heroes by serving a treat of chocolate pudding, covered with a layer of ground up chocolate sandwich cookie “dirt” and nicely populated with gummy worms.



WRITING PROJECTS

Green Tips Flash Cards: Challenge children to develop Green Tips flash cards for use at school or at home. Provide index cards (made from recycled materials). On one side, kids will write a tip for reducing, reusing, recycling, or otherwise improving the health of the planet. On the other, they will draw a picture that illustrates the tip. Encourage kids to start establishing eco-friendly habits by quizzing themselves and each other to remember the tips from the pictures. Tips are everywhere! If you need help getting started, check out the books or Web sites mentioned on page 5–6.

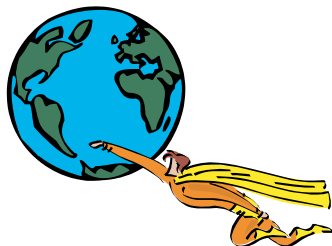
Letters to the Editor:

Encourage children to read books about dangers to our environment and look for local examples in the news.



Do many people in your community drive big, gas-guzzling vehicles? Are local industries polluting the air or water? Who uses excessive amounts of paper? Promote kid-power by having kids write about local problems in letters to the editor of the community newspaper. They should try to include helpful suggestions as well as criticism in their letters.

Super Eco-Hero: Invite kids to create a superhero whose job is to protect the health of the planet. They will write (and, of course, illustrate) stories introducing their superheroes, describing their superpowers, and explaining how they use them to combat eco-villains.



Environmental Folk Tale: Read *Paul Bunyan's Sweetheart*. Then challenge kids to take another well-known folk tale, fairy tale, or tall tale and rewrite it to carry an environmental message.

GEOGRAPHY

Best and Worst: Which countries of the world are the

most eco-friendly? The Environmental Performance Index, created by experts at Columbia and Yale Universities, ranks nations according to twenty-five indicators. You'll find the 2008 results at <http://epi.yale.edu/CountryScores>. Help children find the ten most eco-friendly countries in the world (Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Costa Rica, Austria, New Zealand, Latvia, Colombia, and France) on a map or globe. Talk about why some countries score higher than others, and some of the challenges Americans face if we hope to raise our score. An article on the ThomasNet Web site, at http://news.thomasnet.com/IMT/archives/2008/03/mother_nature_gets_a_scorecard_environment_index_metrics_performance_pollution_health.html?t=recent, can prepare you for this discussion.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Trash Talk: Take a field trip to an area landfill or recycling center. Have a staff member lead a tour, explaining where the trash comes from, how much they handle, and what happens to it. Or bring in a waste management professional to present a program about how trash is handled in your community, and efforts to reduce, reuse, recycle, and eventually dispose of used items in environmentally sound ways.



Packaging Patrol: Visit a local supermarket and have kids look for over-packaged items—things that are unnecessarily boxed or bagged in separate units inside an outer plastic carton, for example. Make notes about the items you find. List product names, brand names, manufacturers, etc. Take the list to the store manager and ask him or her to look for more earth-friendly alternatives, or write to the manufacturers asking them to reduce waste by minimizing packaging.

Tree Planting: Work together with kids to raise money and buy a tree to plant on your library or school

Get Your Green On

grounds, as recognition of the vital role of trees in keeping our air breathable. Or raise funds to buy or adopt an acre of rainforest. An online keyword search of “buy acre rainforest” will yield several organizations with ongoing programs.

MATH/SCIENCE ACTIVITIES

Pop Can Place Value: Use the story and lessons in *Earth Day—Hooray!* to introduce and work with the mathematical concept of place value.

Biodiversity and Balance by the Numbers: Read *Uno's Garden*. Point out some of the number exercises in the book, and set it out where kids can explore ecological and mathematical concepts related to balance in our environment.

Environmental Heroes: Display, read, and/or booktalk books from your collection about scientists or environmental activists, like *Julia Butterfly Hill* from the list of resources. Invite kids to read up on an environmental hero and share their new knowledge with the group.

Wasted Water! Offer kids this challenge: Plug the sink and let the water run while you brush your teeth. After you're done, use a measuring cup to measure how much water you used. Knowing that you could wet your toothbrush before and rinse afterward using a cup or less, subtract one cup from that total to determine the amount of water you wasted by keeping the faucet on for one brushing. Multiply that by two for morning and bedtime brushing, and then by seven for a week's worth of brushing. Finally, multiply that result by the number of people in your family to find the total amount of water your family would waste in a week using this unnecessary practice. Share and compare results, and encourage kids to turn off the tap!



“Going” Green: Invite kids to design land vehicles that run on eco-friendly power sources. This should be a creative exercise at the imaginative, rather than practical, level. Suggest categories such as wind power, sunlight, water power, or person power! Kids should draw pictures or make models of their vehicles, and explain the concept, if not the working details, of how they run.



INTERNET ACTIVITIES

Environmental Awareness Coloring Books: Go to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences site, <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/color.htm>, and choose from several coloring books for kids to color online or print and color on paper.

The Greenerator: Sign your class or library up for this fun Scholastic program to earn points, share tips, and try strategies for going green. Lots of ideas and challenges to involve kids in helping their schools, families, and communities develop eco-friendly habits. www.scholastic.com/actgreen.

Eco-Hero Quiz: Have kids take a brief quiz assessing their habits and suggesting simple ways to be more eco-friendly, at <http://us.dk.com/static/cs/us/11/features/madewithcare/homepage.html>.

2008 Environmental Report Card, <http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/explorations/kercc/index.htm>. View the results and participate in a poll to rate the nation on its environmental track record. Eye-opening!



Get Your Green On

Green Squad! This Natural Resources Defense Council site takes kids on a virtual tour of a school, looking for earth-friendly practices and problems and offering solutions. Ideas can be applied to a real-life campaign in your school. www.nrdc.org/greensquad/intro/intro_1.asp. For a similar activity featuring home instead of school, try www.lawrencekidsrecycle.org/house_tour.html.

EPA Climate Change Kids Site,

<http://epa.gov/climatechange/kids/version2.html>. Informative, kid-friendly slide shows and quizzes about global warming, the water cycle, and the carbon cycle.

Reduce! KidsTurn Central offers tips for reducing the amount of trash we create through wasteful daily habits, <http://kidsturncentral.com/holidays/earthday4.htm>. A companion page at <http://kidsturncentral.com/holidays/earthday2.htm> has similar tips for reusing and recycling.



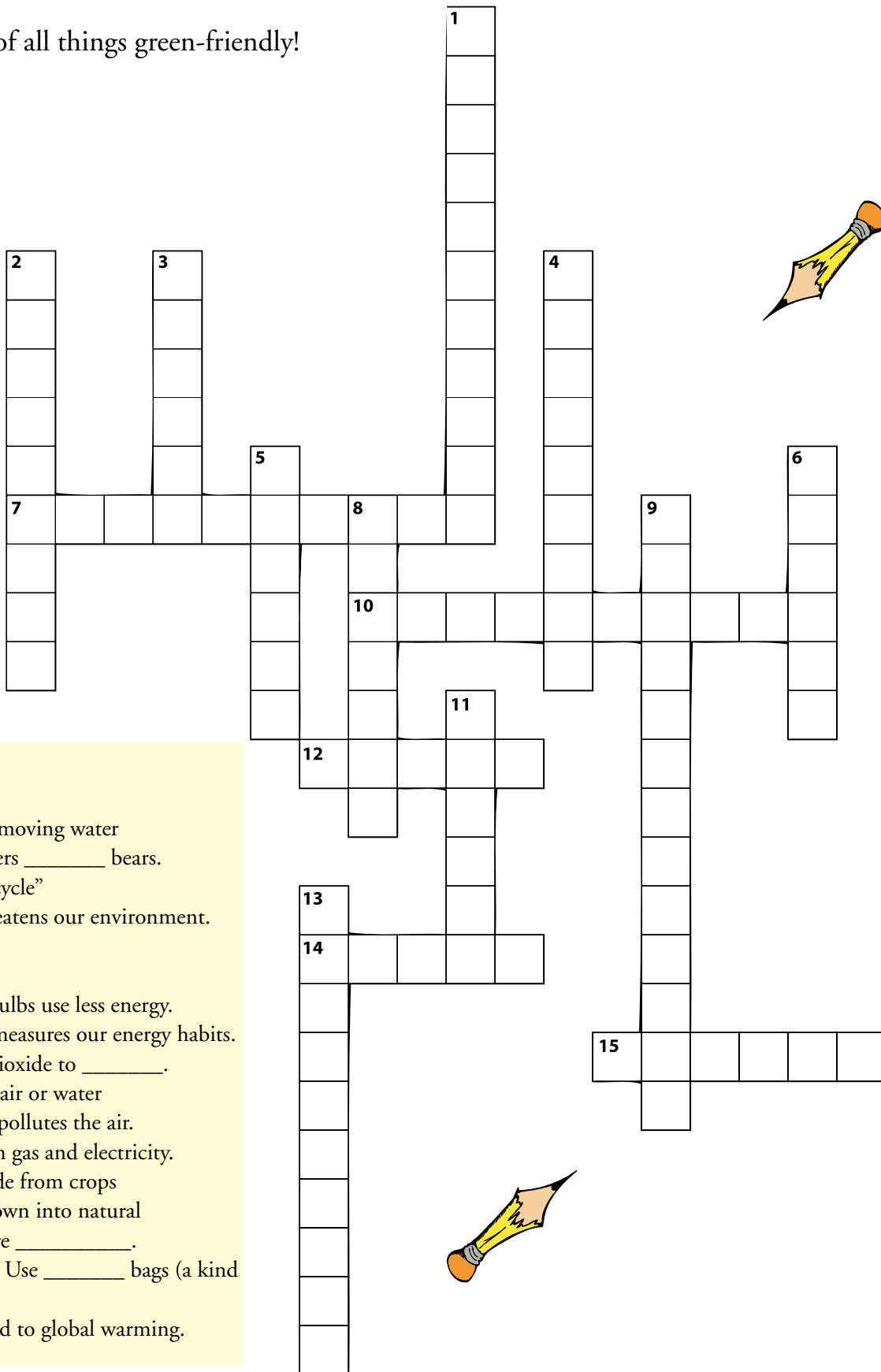
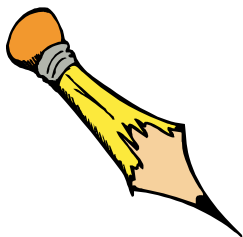
GET YOUR GREEN ON RESOURCES

- *50 Simple Things Kids Can Do to Save the Earth* by The Earthworks Group. Andrews McMeel Publishing, 1990. ISBN 0836223012. 3–6.
- *The Caped 6th Grader: Totally Toxic* by Zoe Quinn. Yearling, 2006. ISBN 0440420806. 4–6.
- *Cool Careers for Girls as Environmentalists* by Ceel Pasternak. Impact Publications, 2001. ISBN 1570231729. 4–6.
- *The Down-to-Earth Guide to Global Warming* by Laurie David. Scholastic, 2007. ISBN 0439024943. 4–6.
- *Earth Day Hooray* by Stuart J. Murphy. HarperTrophy, 2004. ISBN 0060001291. 1–4.
- *Earthdance* by Joanne Ryder. Henry Holt & Company, 1999. ISBN 0805062319. K–3.
- *Eco-Fun: Great Projects, Experiments, and Games for a Greener Earth* by David T. Suzuki. Tandem Library, 2001. ISBN 0613858964. 4–6.
- *EcoArt! Earth-Friendly Arts & Craft Experiences for 3- to 9-Year-Olds* by Laurie Carlson. Ideals Publications, 1992. ISBN 0763620874. PK–4.
- *Ecocrafts: Gorgeous Gifts* by Rebecca Craig. Houghton Mifflin, 2007. ISBN 0753459671. 3–6.
- *Evergreen, Everblue* by Raffi. Rounder Records, 1996 (Music CD). ASIN: B0000003HT. K–3.
- *Green Power: Eco-Energy without Pollution* by David Jefferis. Crabtree Publishing Company, 2006. ISBN 0778728714. 4–6.
- *How to Turn Your Parents Green* by James Russell. Naked Guides, Ltd., 2007. ISBN 0955352096. 3–5.
- *John Muir: America's First Environmentalist* by Kathryn Lasky. Candlewick Press, 2007. ISBN 0763638846. 4–6.
- *Judy Moody Saves the World!* by Megan McDonald. Candlewick Press, 2004. ISBN 0763620874. 3–5.
- *Julia Butterfly Hill: Saving the Ancient Redwoods* by Rachel Lynette. Gale Group, 2007. ISBN 0737736283. 4–6.
- *Loony Little* by Diana Hutts Aston. Candlewick Press, 2007. ISBN 0763635626. PK–2.
- *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss. Random House Books for Young Readers, 1971. ISBN 0394823370. K–6.
- *On Meadowview Street* by Henry Cole. Greenwillow Books, 2007. ISBN 0060564814. K–3.
- *Paul Bunyan's Sweetheart* by Marybeth Lorbiecki. Sleeping Bear Press, 2007. ISBN 1585362891. K–3.
- *Recycling* by Charlotte Wilcox. Lerner Publications, 2007. ISBN 0736863230. 4–6.
- *Taking Care of the Earth: Kids in Action* by Laurence Pringle. Boyds Mills Press, 1997. ISBN 156397634X. 3–6.
- *Uno's Garden* by Graeme Base. Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2006. ISBN 0810954737. 2–5.
- *What Planet Are You From, Clarice, Bean?* by Lauren Child. Candlewick Press, 2002. ISBN 0060001291. K–4. Also available in Spanish.
- *Why are the Ice Caps Melting? The Dangers of Global Warming* by Anne Rockwell. Collins, 2006. ISBN 0060546719. 1–4.
- *Wild Ride: A Graphic Guide Adventure* by Liam O'Donnell. Orca Books, 2007. ISBN 1551437562. 3–6.



Get Your Green On Crossword

Test your knowledge of all things green-friendly!



Across

7. "Lungs of the planet"
10. Power generated from moving water
12. Arctic melting endangers _____ bears.
14. "Reduce, _____, recycle"
15. _____ warming threatens our environment.

Down

1. _____ light bulbs use less energy.
2. A "carbon _____" measures our energy habits.
3. Trees convert carbon dioxide to _____.
4. Contamination of our air or water
5. Burning _____ fuels pollutes the air.
6. _____ cars run on gas and electricity.
8. An alternative fuel made from crops
9. Materials that break down into natural substances over time are _____.
11. "Plastic or paper?" No! Use _____ bags (a kind of cloth).
13. _____ gases add to global warming.



Get Your Green on Tile Puzzle

Move the tiles around and line them up until you form words, and ultimately a sentence.

A C PLA KEE LEA N G NET REE

P O HIN N L UR IVI E! NG MAC

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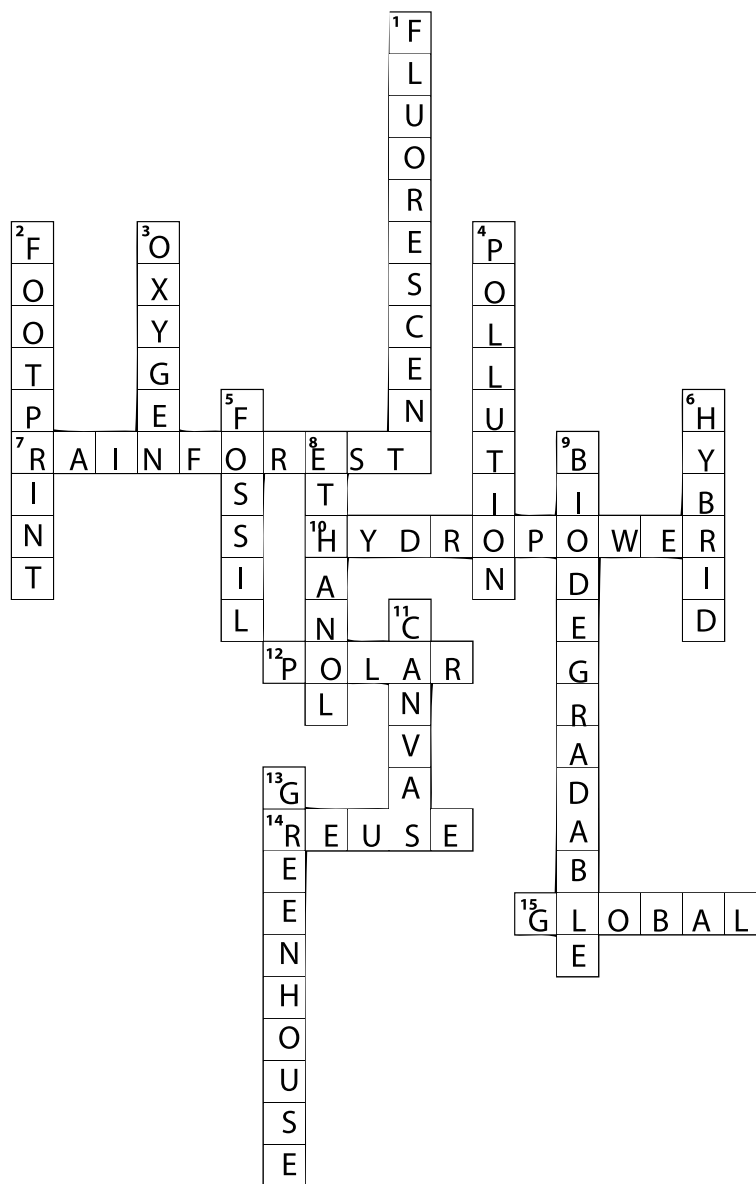
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Get Your Green On Puzzle Answer Keys

Crossword Answer Key



Tile Puzzle Answer Key

KEEP OUR PLANET

A CLEAN GREEN LIVING

MACHINE!

Recycling Symbol

