



# Living Green

QLWG  
Individual Life Skills  
Unit 28

# QLWG Skills for Life

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# QLWG Skills for Life Series

## THEMATIC UNITS

Competency-based learning meets the needs of all learners. It is important to keep in mind, however, that all learners are different. In order to address the needs and interests of all learners, units have been divided by *Essential Life Skills* and *Individual Life Skills*.

*Essential Life Skills* are important for everyone, while *Individual Life Skills* address the needs and interests of different learners. Once learners have completed the “Essential” units, they may choose a unit that is applicable to their interests and lifestyle.

Essential Life Skills Units	Individual Life Skills Units
1. Orientation Unit 2. Around the Home 3. My Community 4. Being a Canadian Citizen 5. What’s for Dinner? 6. Managing My Money 7. Smart Shopping 8. My Health 9. All About Me 10. Communication Skills 11. Living in Quebec 12. Strategies for Reading 13. Strategies for Writing 14. Strategies for Grammar 15. Strategies for Numbers 1: Understanding Numbers 16. Strategies for Numbers 2: Adding & Subtracting 17. Strategies for Numbers 3: Multiplying, Dividing & Fractions	18. My Hobbies and Leisure Time 19. Employment Skills 20. On the Job 21. My Family 22. Entertainment (music and film) 23. Fitness and the Great Outdoors 24. Getting Around (travel and transportation) 25. Career Exploration 26. Getting My Driver’s Licence 27. Learning in Quebec 28. Living Green 29. Handling Legal Concerns 30. The Retirement Years



# QLWG *Skills for Life Series*

## Living Green

### Unit # 28

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# WELCOME LEARNER!

This workbook is meant to help you develop important life skills. As you work on different activities, try to see the purpose in what you are doing, stay motivated and enjoy!

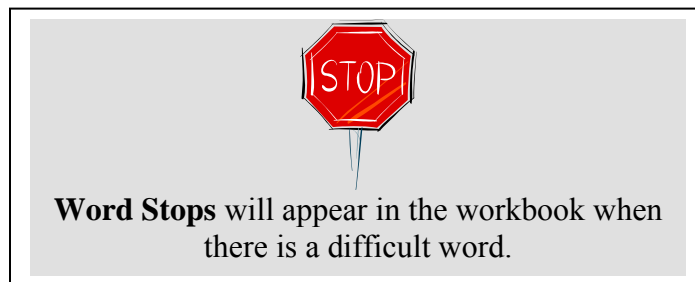
## Things to Look for:

### Checkpoints

You will finish every unit of study with a Checkpoint (in blue). Once you have completed the Checkpoint questionnaire, you will send this document to your distance education tutor. Make sure you fill in the **date, your name, your phone number** and the **distance education tutor's name** on the cover of this document.

### Word Stops

**Word Stops** will explain more difficult words. Look for words in bold print (example: **bold**). A **Word Stop** will follow to tell you what that word means.



## **If you do not understand, follow these steps:**

1. Look at titles and pictures. Do they tell you anything?
2. Try to find the general meaning.
3. Look for Word Stops.
4. Use a dictionary.
5. If you still do not understand, contact your distance education tutor.

## **Before you contact your distance education tutor:**

1. Prepare your questions. What do you want to ask?
2. Give the page number and section title to your tutor so they know where you are.



**“Act the part; walk and talk exactly as if you were already the person you want to be.”**

**~Brian Tracy**



# Living Green

*"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors;  
we borrow it from our children." ~Native American Proverb*



## **Introduction:**

Every living thing on this planet depends on the environment. Yet we continue to waste and pollute, which is killing our planet. All people need to realize that when the environment suffers, we do too. We need to work to protect our earth now.

If you feel that the problem is too big for you to make a difference, think again. In this unit, you will learn how and why you should start living a greener life.

## **In this unit, you will:**

- learn about the state of the environment.
- discover ways to make a difference.
- think of ways to be an environmental citizen.
- write a letter to the editor.
- write a letter to an elected official.



# Environment Words



## **BIODEGRADABLE:**

Something is biodegradable when it can be used as a food (by any living thing) or can easily transform into soil. A leaf, for example, will become part of the soil after a few weeks – it is biodegradable. Most **organic** waste is biodegradable.



## **HAZARDOUS WASTE (or toxic waste):**

This is the waste that is left over from making things like plastic or paint. Burning this type of waste puts poisons into the air and soil, which is bad for all living things.

## **LANDFILL:**

This is a place where waste material is dumped and covered with earth. Some landfills have household and **industrial** chemicals. Such chemicals pollute the earth and water. We are running out of space for landfills because we waste more and more.



## **WORD STOP**

1. **organic** (or-gan-ik): appears naturally.
2. **industrial** (in-dus-tree-ul): used in, or created by industry.

**GREENHOUSE GASES:**

Greenhouse gases are the gases produced when we use coal, gas and oil. These gases go into the air and create a blanket that covers the Earth, making it warmer.

**REDUCE:**

To make or use less of something.

**REUSE:**

To use something again.

**RECYCLE:**

To use the material from a product to make a new product. A newspaper can be recycled, for example, to create a new form of paper.

**CONSERVE:**

To use products wisely or as little as possible.

**RESOURCES:**

Resources are renewable or non-renewable. Renewable resources, such as crops, trees, plants and fish, can be replaced. Non-renewable resources, such as oil and minerals, cannot be replaced.



# Our Earth: The Scary Truth

1. Making a new can uses the energy equal to half a can of gasoline.
2. About one third of what an average Canadian throws out is packaging.
3. Over 1,000,000,000 (one billion) trees are used to make diapers every year.
4. It takes a minute to destroy 50 acres of rainforest.
5. Canadians use nearly twice the energy as the Japanese, and 50 times more than people in India.
6. Cars and pick-up trucks are responsible for about 20% of the pollution that goes into the air.
7. About 80% of our garbage goes to landfills.



8. There is little **oxygen** underground where we bury our garbage. **Bacteria** need oxygen to eat garbage. This means that little happens to garbage in landfills. Scientists have even found ears of corn that are still in one piece after 20 years!
9. On average, Canadians use 390 litres of water per day. This is almost twice as much as the average European.
10. Over 250 of Canadian **species** are listed as being **extinct** or in danger of becoming extinct.



### WORD STOP

1. **oxygen** (ok-suh-jin): a gas that has no colour or smell. Plants, animals and humans need oxygen to live.
2. **bacteria** (bak-teer-ee-uh): very tiny organisms that help things to decay.
3. **species** (spee-seez): a group of animals or plant life.
4. **extinct** (ek-stinkt): a species has died out or ceased to exist.

**REFLECTION:**

1. What did you learn from the list, “Our Earth: The Scary Truth”?

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2. What surprised you the most? Why?

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3. Do you think you are part of the problem? Explain.

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**ACTIVITY:** Rate your environmental friendliness.

**STEP 1:**

Review the list of questions about your environmental habits in the “Things I Do” column (on the next page).

**STEP 2:**

Check the best answer (*always, often, rarely* or *never*) depending on your environmental habits for each question.

**STEP 3:**

Review your responses. Count how many checks you have in the blue columns.

**STEP 4:**

Rate your environmental friendliness and answer the reflection questions.

**PURPOSE:**

This activity will help you to see how friendly you are to the environment. This will help you to determine if you should change your environmental habits.



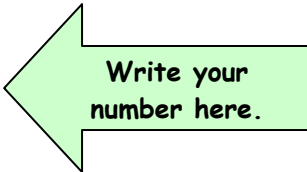
# Rating My Environmental Friendliness

Things I do...	Always	Often	Rarely	Never
1. Do you avoid driving as much as possible?				
2. Do you buy products that will last a long time and/or not be replaced often?				
3. Do you reuse plastic bags and containers?				
4. Do you repair an item even when you can get a new one for the same price?				
5. Do you shop at second-hand stores or garage sales?				
6. Do you use dishcloths or sponges instead of paper products?				
7. Do you use reusable lighters or razors?				
8. Do you use batteries that can be recharged?				
9. If you have a baby, do you use cloth diapers? (Would you if you had a baby?)				
10. Do you bring your own bags to the grocery store?				
11. Do you shut off the lights when you leave a room?				
12. Do you put a sweater on instead of turning up the heat?				
13. Do you shut off the tap when you brush your teeth?				
14. Do you take quick showers to save on water?				

**REFLECTION:** How environmentally friendly are you?

1. How many checks did you have in the blue columns?

\_\_\_\_\_



2. Find your rating for environmental friendliness by finding your number in the table below. Circle your “Environmental Friendliness” category.

How Many Blue Checks?	Your Environmental Friendliness
1-3	You’re not a friend at all! <i>You are hurting the environment.</i>
4-7	You’re a fair-weather friend. <i>You aren’t doing a whole lot to help.</i>
8-11	You do care! <i>Your efforts make a difference, but you can still do more.</i>
12-14	What a caring friend! <i>You are helping to make our environment cleaner and healthier.</i>

3. Is your result accurate? Explain.

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4. Should you be doing more to help the environment? Explain.

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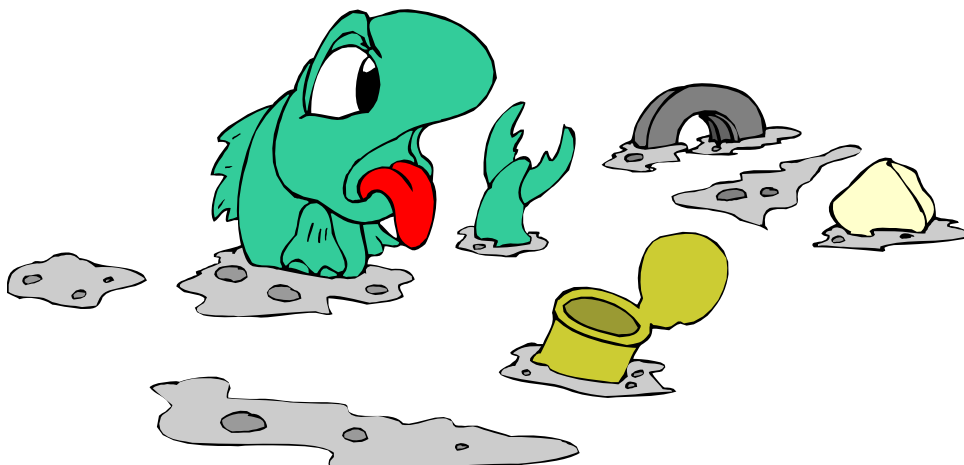
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## Did you know...?

1. 40% of pure water is flushed down the toilet. You can save water by filling a plastic bottle with water or stones and putting it in your toilet tank. The bottle will take up the space that is usually filled with water.
2. If a family of four showers each day for only 5 minutes each, they use as much water as it takes for a person to live off of for three years!
3. Releasing a helium balloon in the air can cause the death of sea turtles and whales. They choke on the balloons and die.
4. Non-reusable diapers take 500 years to decay, while cotton diapers can be reused and decay in 1 to 6 months.



"The earth we abuse and the living things we kill will, in the end, take their revenge; for in exploiting their presence we are diminishing our future."

~Marya Mannes

# The Earth is Getting Warmer

Did you know that the 20th century has been the warmest of the past thousand years? Many scientists believe that the coal, gas and oil we use to run our cars and heat our homes are responsible for making the Earth warmer. Gases are produced when we use coal, gas and oil. These gases stay in the air and act as a blanket that covers the Earth. As a result, the air gets trapped and the Earth gets warmer.



## Smog

Trapped air has also increased the amount of smog on the Earth. Smog is a mixture of fog, smoke and pollution that makes the air hotter and dirtier. Smog kills more people in Canada than car accidents, breast cancer and prostate cancer. The air we breathe is very important for our overall health. Seniors, children and sick people have the greatest risks when it comes to smog because their bodies cannot handle the heat and pollution.

## What You Need to Know:

We create more greenhouse gases each time we use electricity in our homes and drive our cars. You can make a difference by:

1. walking to the corner store instead of taking a car.
2. using the bus.
3. cutting back on the electricity you use in your home.

# What About Water?

Water is a precious resource on which we all depend to live. Sadly, we continue to waste and pollute our water. On average, Canadians use 390 litres of water per day, which is twice as much as the average European.

## Ways to Save Water:

1. Think about how much water you use and where you can cut back.
2. Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth or washing your face.
3. Have quick showers.
4. Use low-flow showerheads.



"The magnificence of mountains, the serenity of nature - nothing is safe from the idiot marks of man's passing."

~Loudon Wainwright

# Driving and the Environment

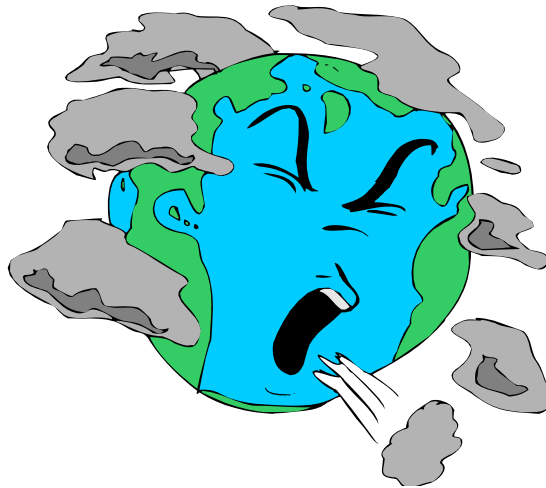
If you drive often, you are producing twice as many greenhouse gases as someone who doesn't. All people who drive should follow the simple rules below to cut down on the amount of pollution they are producing.



1. Turn your vehicle off when parked.
2. Avoid using a remote car starter in the winter. People often start their cars before they're ready to leave, which adds to the amount they waste.
3. Avoid fast starts and hard braking. Driving like this burns a lot more gas.
4. Don't overfill when you get gas. Spilling gas is a major source of pollution.
5. Drive your vehicle less. Walk, cycle, carpool or take public transit more often.
6. Drive the speed limit. The faster you go, the more fuel you waste.
7. Keep your car in good shape. A car that is in bad shape uses up to twice as much fuel as a well-maintained car.
8. Check your tire pressure at least once a month. Soft tires require more fuel.
9. Use block heaters when it's really cold. They lower pollution by cutting back on the time required to warm your engine.

# Twenty Simple Ways to Help the Planet

The following list offers some simple, yet useful things you can do to make a difference. Keep this list with you. Try to follow these suggestions as much as possible in order to make the Earth a cleaner, healthier place.



1. Turn off your lights.
2. Turn off electric things (TVs, stereos and radios) when you are not using them.
3. Use rechargeable batteries.
4. Do things manually instead of electrically (like using a hand-held can opener instead of an electric one).
5. Use vinegar and water as a replacement for glass cleaner which pollutes.
6. Put on a sweater instead of turning up the heat.
7. Use less hot water.
8. Shower every other day (instead of every day).
9. Use a bike, bus, the metro or your feet to get around.
10. Try to buy organic fruits and vegetables (organic food is grown without pesticides so it pollutes less).



11. Don't buy products that may have been made at the expense of the rainforest.
12. Plant trees.
13. Avoid products that are used and then thrown away (like juice packs).
14. Buy products with little or no packaging.
15. Use cloth bags when you shop.
16. Compost.
17. Buy recycled products.
18. Don't buy products that are tested on animals.
19. Cut up six-pack rings before throwing them out.
20. REDUCE, REUSE & RECYCLE!



"Nature provides a free lunch,  
but only if we control our appetites."

~William Ruckelshaus

**REFLECTION:**

1. Which ideas on the list (“Twenty Simple Ways to Help the Planet”) do you think would make the biggest difference and why?

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2. Which ideas on the list do you already do?

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3. Which ideas would you be able to follow?

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4. What would you not be able to do and why?

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5. Do you think it's important that all people know how to help the planet?  
Why or why not?

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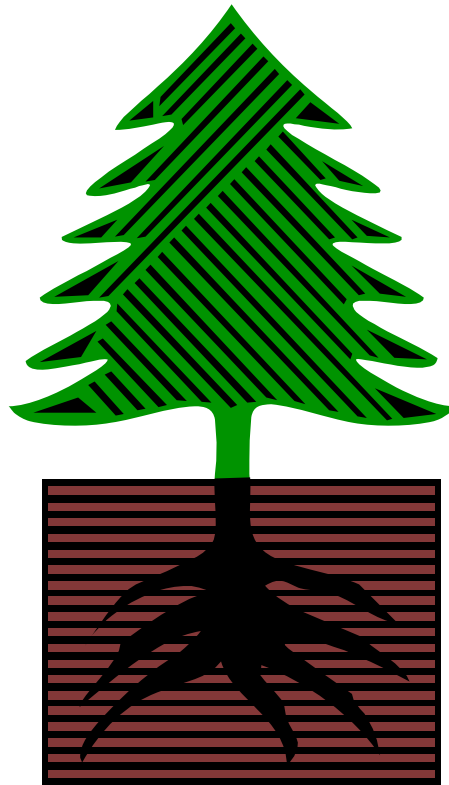
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"I am the earth. You are the earth.  
The Earth is dying.  
You and I are murderers."  
~Ymber Delecto

# How are you doing?



**Complete the questionnaire to keep track of your learning.**

1. Have you completed all reading and activities to this point? (*Circle your answer.*)

**Yes**

**No**

2. If you answered “No”, explain what you did not complete and why.

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3. What was easy and why?

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4. What was difficult and why?

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5. General comments. (*Do you have any comments on the work that you have done?*)

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# Recycling, Reducing and Reusing

## Reduce:

To reduce means to make less garbage. Instead of buying small juice boxes, for example, buy a large container of juice.

## Reuse:

To reuse means to use an item more than once. When you get a plastic bag from the grocery store, for example, keep it and use it again the next time you go shopping.

## Recycle:

To recycle means to turn an item into another useful item. Scrap paper can be turned into newspaper if it goes to a recycling plant. Most paper and plastic is recyclable.



“When we heal the earth,  
we heal ourselves.”

~David Orr

## Tips for Reducing:

Before you buy something, ask yourself:

1. Do I really need this?
2. Will I be able to use this for a long time? Is it durable?
3. Will I have to throw this away?
4. What will happen to this when I throw it away?
5. Is this packaged with a lot of plastic, paper or cardboard?

## Tip for Reusing:

Before you throw an item away, ask yourself if the item can be used in another way.

## Tip for Recycling:

Recycle *everything* you can! This includes glass, paper, plastic, and aluminium cans. Buy items that come in recycled packages.

Making paper from paper, cans from cans and plastic from plastic is much more Earth friendly: it saves resources and cuts down on the energy used to make products.



## Remember:

1. Recycling paper means using MUCH less energy and water.
2. Recycling reduces greenhouse gases.
3. Recycling lowers our need for landfills.

# Things to Recycle

## ACTIVITY:

Add to the list of things that can be recycled.

### STEP 1:

Look at the list of the things that can be recycled.

### STEP 2:

Look around your home, your workplace, and/or your community to find other items that can be recycled.

### STEP 3:

Add at least five items to the list below.

1. Aluminum cans
2. Newspapers
3. Plastic soda bottles
4. Milk jugs
5. Steel containers
6. Organic material/cuttings
7. Glass
8. Telephone books

9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

11. \_\_\_\_\_

12. \_\_\_\_\_

13. \_\_\_\_\_

14. \_\_\_\_\_

15. \_\_\_\_\_



# What NOT to Do

1. Do not dump any chemical product (paint, household cleaners) oil or grease down a drain.
2. Do not throw away items such as clothes, furniture or appliances. Look for a place to donate them instead.
3. Do not use paper cups, plates and napkins. Use washable cups and plates and cloth napkins.
4. When you are in nature, do not feed wild animals. It makes them dependent upon human food and they may starve when humans are not around.



*"We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."*

**~Aldo Leopold**



# Earth Day

Earth Day is April 22<sup>nd</sup> every year. It is celebrated all around the world. Earth Day reminds us to that we must take care of our environment or it won't take care of us.

**ACTIVITY:** Read the article about Earth Day (on the next page).

## STEP 1:

Prepare yourself for reading. Look at the title, subtitle and picture of this article. Consider what you already know about the environment. Explain what you think this article is about (below).

## STEP 2:

Use your reading strategies to help you read the article. Circle all new or difficult words. Keep track of these words in your *Quick-Word Handbook*.

## PURPOSE:

This article will help you to know how to celebrate our Earth.

## PREPARING FOR READING:

Look at the title and picture of this article. What do you already know about this topic?



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# Earth Times

## How to Celebrate Earth Day

by Victoria Wolfe



First held as an environmental event in 1970, Earth Day is celebrated as the birth of the environmental movement. Each year over 6 million Canadians join 500 million worldwide to stage events and highlight local environmental issues.

Jean Goodfellow, an Earth Day volunteer from Montreal, has been participating in the event held on April 22<sup>nd</sup> since it began over 30 years ago.

“I like to keep in mind that old proverb that says, we do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children,” says Goodfellow. “We are simply stewards of this planet we call Earth and we should all do our part to keep it green so that the children of the world can enjoy it, long after we’re gone.”

“Earth Day should be like Christmas,” says Goodfellow. “Not just one day a year but rather a spirit that should be kept all year round.”

So what can we do to do our part on Earth Day (and every day)? The options are almost limitless. Goodfellow makes the following suggestions:

1. Pitch in on a project near you whether it is a beach cleanup or “urban rally” to clear out debris and cart it off to recycling plants. Check your local newspapers for listings of events.
2. Plant some native trees, shrubs or flowering plants in your yard. If you don’t know what plants are native to your area, you can contact your local Nature Conservatory.
3. Buy canvas bags and remember to bring them with you when you go grocery shopping. Next time when they ask you, “paper or plastic?” you can say neither. It’s much healthier for the environment.
4. Don’t use your car. Walk, bike or take public transportation any chance you get. Not only is it better for the environment, but along the way you can take the time to appreciate the birds, bees and flowers around you.
5. Go antique shopping. Not only do antiques add charm and elegance to your living space but you’ll also be practicing recycling in its highest form. What could be better?

**REFLECTING ON READING:**

1. What is Earth Day?

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2. How does Jean Goodfellow celebrate Earth Day?

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3. Why does Goodfellow say Earth Day should be like Christmas?

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4. Why do you think Earth Day is important?

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5. How will you celebrate our next Earth Day? Why will you celebrate it this way?

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6. List three new or difficult words in this article.

1.
2.
3.

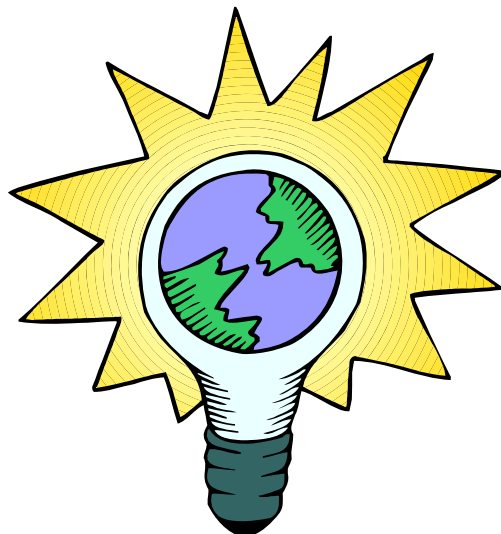
7. How did you find the meaning of these words?

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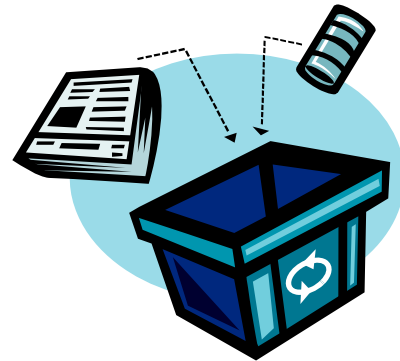
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**ACTIVITY:** Create a plan to become a more environmental citizen.

**STEP 1:**

Review what you have learned. Consider the state of our environment and how much we waste and pollute as Canadians.



**STEP 2:**

Think about what you can do to help the environment.

**STEP 3:**

Make a list (below) of ten things you will do to be a more environmental citizen.

**PURPOSE:**

Every human being owes it to the planet and themselves to become environmentally friendly citizens. This list will get you on the track to helping our planet.

## Ten Ways I'll Be a More Environmental Citizen:

1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____
4.	_____
5.	_____
6.	_____
7.	_____
8.	_____
9.	_____
10.	_____

**ACTIVITY:**

Keep an Environmental Action Log for one week.

**STEP 1:**

Review your list of ways you'll be a more environmental citizen (previous page). Think about what you are going to do and how you are going to do.

**STEP 2:**

Examine the sample environmental log (on the next page) to get an idea of what information you need to keep track of.

**STEP 3:**

Make an effort to be an environmental citizen.

**STEP 4:**

Write down everything you did and could have done to be an environmental citizen each day for a week. Fill in a chart for each day.

**PURPOSE:**

Keeping track of your environmental practices will help you to know how and what you are doing (and need to do) to help the Earth.



# My Environmental Log

## SAMPLE:

Date: May 14<sup>th</sup>

<p>What I did to be an environmental citizen:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I took the bus to work instead of driving.</li> <li>2. I shut off the lights whenever I left a room.</li> <li>3. I made sure all of my recyclables went into to the recycling bin.</li> <li>4. I Created a Vinegar, lemon and water spray to Clean my counter instead of using a Chemical product.</li> </ol>
<p>What I could have done (but didn't do) to be an environmental citizen:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I forgot to bring a cloth bag to the grocery store.</li> <li>2. I brought juice boxes which are wasteful for my lunch.</li> </ol>
<p>General observations about waste and pollution around me:</p>	<p>People throw out a lot of plastic when they could be recycling.</p>



**Day 1:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What I did to be an environmental citizen:	
What I could have done (but didn't do) to be an environmental citizen:	
General observations about waste and pollution around me:	

**Day 2:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What I did to be an environmental citizen:	
What I could have done (but didn't do) to be an environmental citizen:	
General observations about waste and pollution around me:	



**Day 3:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What I did to be an environmental citizen:	
What I could have done (but didn't do) to be an environmental citizen:	
General observations about waste and pollution around me:	

**Day 4:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What I did to be an environmental citizen:	
What I could have done (but didn't do) to be an environmental citizen:	
General observations about waste and pollution around me:	

**Day 5:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What I did to be an environmental citizen:	
What I could have done (but didn't do) to be an environmental citizen:	
General observations about waste and pollution around me:	

**Day 6:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What I did to be an environmental citizen:	
What I could have done (but didn't do) to be an environmental citizen:	
General observations about waste and pollution around me:	

## Day 7:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<p>What I did to be an environmental citizen:</p>	
<p>What I could have done (but didn't do) to be an environmental citizen:</p>	
<p>General observations about waste and pollution around me:</p>	



"Your grandchildren will likely find it incredible  
 - or even sinful -  
 that you burned up a gallon of gasoline  
 to fetch a pack of cigarettes!"

~Dr. Paul MacCready, Jr.

**REFLECTION:**

*Review your Environmental Log and answer the following reflection questions.*

1. Did you do a lot to be an environmental citizen?

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2. Was it difficult to be an environmental citizen? Explain.

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3. What are you most pleased with? Why?

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4. What more can you do? Why?

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"We never know the worth of water  
till the well is dry."

~Thomas Fuller

**ACTIVITY:**

Re-rate Your Environmental Friendliness.

**STEP 1:**

Review the list of questions about your environmental habits in the “Things I do” column (on the next page).

**STEP 2:**

Check either the best answer (*always, often, rarely* or *never*) depending on your environmental habits.

**STEP 3:**

Review your responses. Count how many checks you have in the blue and yellow columns.

**STEP 4:**

Reflect on how environmentally friendly you are.

**STEP 5:**

Compare your new responses with your first Environmental Friendliness Rating (on page 10).

**PURPOSE:**

In order to make changes, you need to know what needs to be changed. This activity will help you to see how friendly you are to the environment.



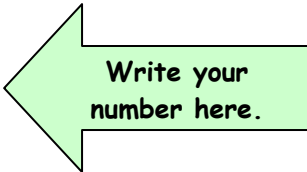
# Rating My Environmental Friendliness

Things I do...	Always	Often	Rarely	Never
1. Do you avoid driving as much as possible?				
2. Do you buy products that will last a long time and/or not be replaced often?				
3. Do you reuse plastic bags and containers?				
4. Do you repair an item even when you could get a new one for the same price?				
5. Do you shop at second-hand stores or garage sales?				
6. Do you use dishcloths or sponges instead of paper products?				
7. Do you use reusable lighters or razors?				
8. Do you use batteries that you can recharge?				
9. If you have a baby, do you use cloth diapers? (Would you, if you had a baby?)				
10. Do you bring your own bags to the grocery store?				
11. Do you shut off the lights when you leave a room?				
12. Do you put on a sweater on instead of turning up the heat?				
13. Do you shut off the tap when you brush your teeth?				
14. Do you take quick showers to save on water?				

**REFLECTION:** How environmentally friendly are you now?

1. How many checks did you have in the blue columns?

\_\_\_\_\_



2. Check how you are rated by using the above number. Circle your “Environmental Friendliness” category.

How Many Blue Checks?	Your Environmental Friendliness
1-3	You're not a friend at all! <i>You are hurting the environment.</i>
4-7	You're a fair-weather friend. <i>You aren't doing a whole lot to help.</i>
8-11	You do care! <i>Your efforts make a difference, but you can still do more.</i>
12-14	What a caring friend! <i>You are helping to make our environment cleaner and healthier.</i>

3. Compare your new result to your first results (on page 10). Did your result change from your first rating? How so?

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“There's so much pollution in the air now that if it weren't for our lungs there'd be no place to put it all.”

~Robert Orben

# Be Heard!

One of the most effective ways to be an environmental citizen is to let your voice be heard by writing a letter about an environmental concern to an elected official.



## ACTIVITY:

Write a letter to a government official (at any level of government) that voices a concern or makes a request for the environment.

## Examples of Things to Write About:

1. You can write to any level of government about general environmental concerns. You can ask the government to make more of an effort to protect the environment.
2. You can write to your mayor or city councillors about the need to have more recycling bins or local cleanup projects.
3. You can write to the provincial Minister of the Environment about your province's role in protecting the environment.
4. You can write to any level of government about bad environmental practices that you have observed around you.

### STEP 1:

Decide on an environmental concern.

### STEP 2:

Decide which level of government you need to address.



**STEP 3:**

Decide which department/person/political office should be contacted. Find their name and address by:

- looking in the phone book and calling.
- checking online.
- asking someone.



If you have trouble finding the right government official, ask for help. Your tutor, a librarian, or any government employee should be able to help you.

**STEP 4:**

Read the sample letter. Look at the format.

**STEP 5:**

Get started by writing down your ideas.

**STEP 6:**

Review your ideas and write the first draft of your letter.

**STEP 7:**

Check your letter for mistakes, have someone read it and then write a second draft.

**STEP 8:**

Type a final copy of your letter and print two copies. One copy will go to government official, the other you must send to your distance education tutor.

**PURPOSE:**

Writing a letter to a government official is a great way to make a difference. This activity will allow you to help the environment through letting your voice be heard as an environmental citizen.

# Sample Letter

June 19, 2012

Dear Mayor Ramsha,

I am a resident of Wannabegreen County. I am writing to express my concerns about the lack of recycling bins in our local schoolyards and parks. I hope that bringing this matter to your attention will help to make our community more environmentally friendly.

When I brought my daughter to school yesterday, I noticed that there were many cans and plastic containers in the garbage bins in the school yard. Later that day, when I visited the local park, I noticed the same problem. I believe that we can cut down on a lot of waste by putting recycling bins in all our schoolyards and parks.

I believe that our children should be learning to recycle plastic, aluminum, and paper. It would be nice if the government showed our youngsters that the environment is a priority by providing recycling services in our public places.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing your response.

Sincerely,

Sheryl Biddiscombe

1. Introduce yourself and explain why

2. Give details.

3. Share your ideas.

4. Let them know you want to hear from them.

# Getting Started

1. My environmental request or concern:

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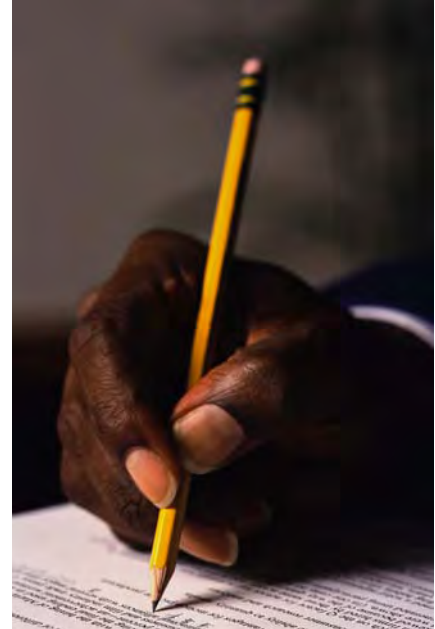
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2. The level of government that would deal with my request/concern:

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3. The department/person/political office I need to contact:

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4. My ideas (*why my concern/request needs to be addressed*):

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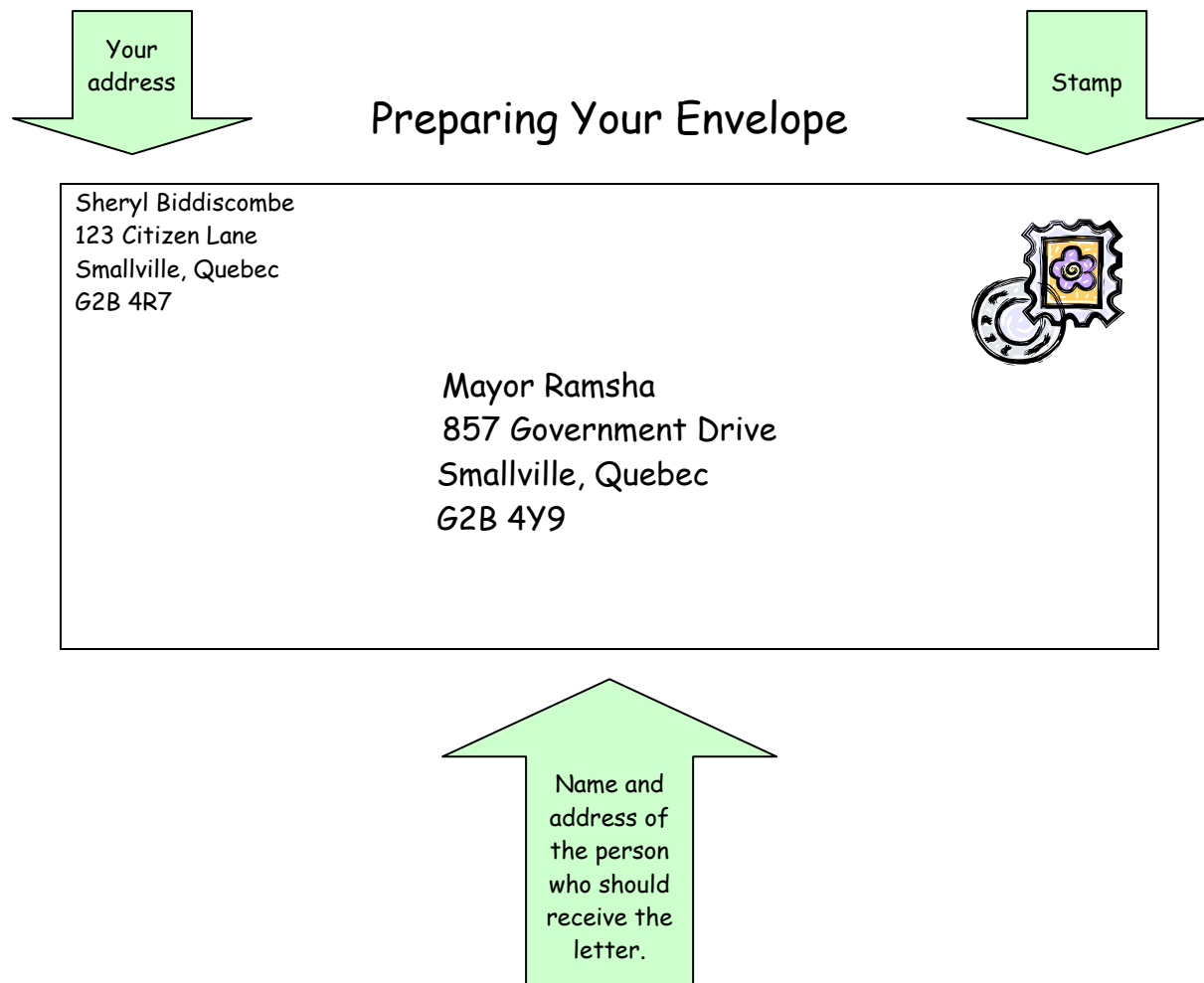
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**FINAL STEP:**

Prepare a final copy of your letter. Put it in an envelope and send it to the government official.



## For Your Information:

# Great Websites on Living Green

There are many great websites out there that will help you to learn more and stay up to date on living a green lifestyle.

## Check Them Out:

1. The *David Suzuki Foundation* is a Canadian environmental group that works to protect the balance of nature and our quality of life.

Go to: <http://www.davidsuzuki.org>

2. *Environment Canada* was the winner of the "Best Canadian Government Website".

Go to: [www.ec.gc.ca](http://www.ec.gc.ca)

3. *Live Science* is rated as the third best environment website in the world.

Go to: <http://www.livescience.com/environment>

4. *Meet the Greens* is a fun, interactive website that is great for the whole family.

Go to: [www.meetthegreens.org](http://www.meetthegreens.org)

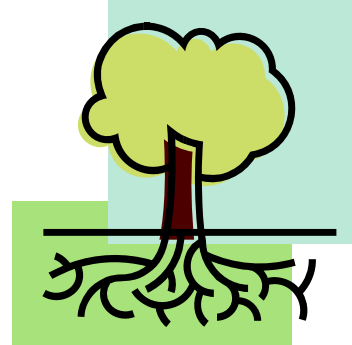


# Me and Living Green

Now that you have taken steps become an environmental citizen, you are ready to make daily observations to see how the environment affects your life and the lives of those around you.

## ACTIVITY:

Observe the world around you to see how the environment affects your life and the lives of those around you.



## STEP 1:

Reflect on what you know about the environment.

## STEP 2:

Observe the world around you to see how people treat the environment. Also consider how the environment affects your everyday life.

## STEP 3:

Answer the questions on the following pages. Provide solid examples of what you observe and feel.

## PURPOSE:

Learning is most valuable when you can apply it to your own life.

## Where to find real-life examples:

1. Look at the people around you. How do they treat the environment?
2. Look at your family and consider how the environment affects them.
3. Pay attention to current events concerning the environment.
4. Take note of things that you do to help (or hurt) the environment.
5. Watch for waste and pollution. How does it affect you?





How do you feel about what you observed? Why do you feel this way?

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"Don't blow it - good planets are hard to find."  
~Quoted in *Time*



# Living Green

## Learning Checklist

Check off each item on this list that you can do as “ACHIEVED”. If you feel that you have to improve on something, check “IN PROGRESS”. Review your Learning Checklist with your tutor.

<b>COMPETENCIES</b> <b>What I can do.</b>	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>
1. I can learn new words about the environment.		
2. I can use different environment words like “landfill” and “greenhouse gases”.		
3. I can describe ways we pollute the planet.		
4. I can rate my environmental friendliness.		
5. I can analyze my environmental friendliness rating.		
6. I can say why the Earth’s getting warmer.		
7. I can say why smog is bad.		
8. I can say how to save water.		
9. I can say how to be more environmentally friendly when I drive.		
10. I can do little things to help the environment.		
11. I can say what reducing is.		

<b>COMPETENCIES</b> <b>What I can do.</b>	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>
12. I can say what recycling is.		
13. I can say what reusing is.		
14. I can reduce.		
15. I can recycle.		
16. I can reuse.		
17. I can make a list of things to recycle.		
18. I can say what Earth Day is.		
19. I can say how to celebrate Earth Day.		
20. I can prepare for reading by reflecting on what I already know.		
21. I can find the meaning of new words.		
22. I can create a plan to be an environmental citizen.		
23. I can keep an environmental log for one week.		
24. I can reflect on my environmental log.		
25. I can re-rate my environmental friendliness.		
26. I can write a letter to a government official.		
27. I can prepare for writing.		
28. I can find the name and address of a government official.		
29. I can look at a sample letter to help my writing.		

<b>COMPETENCIES</b> <b>What I can do.</b>	<b>IN</b> <b>PROGRESS</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>
30. I can correct a first draft of a letter.		
31. I can prepare a good copy of a letter.		
32. I can write a letter about the environment.		
33. I can send a letter to a government official.		
34. I can observe my world for a few days.		
35. I can write about what I observe.		
36. I can reflect on what I learned.		
37. I can use what I learned in the future.		
38. I can be an environmental citizen.		

The

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