



SPECIAL SECTION: Earth: Portrait of a Planet (pp. 11-18)

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Production, distribution, & consumption

This issue's special pullout section provides a wealth of material related to Earth Day, April 22. As people around the world pause to consider what they can do to improve the environment globally as well as locally, our articles and skill page encourage your students to do the same.

■ Special Section Basics

- **Earth Day** was the brainchild of Gaylord Nelson (1916-2005), a former U.S. Senator from Wisconsin. Nelson was, as his *New York Times* obituary called him, “an early and ardent environmental leader.” His first Senate floor speech (March 1963) made this clear: “Our soil, our water, and our air are becoming more polluted every day. Our most priceless natural resources—trees, lakes, rivers, wildlife habitats, scenic landscapes—are being destroyed.” In 1970, Nelson called for a day of “teach-ins,” protests, and practical activities focused on finding ways to conserve resources and clean up pollution. The first Earth Day was observed by more than 20 million Americans, and the idea quickly caught on worldwide.
- **The Edible Schoolyard project** (see pp. 16-17) started in 1995 in Berkeley, California. Noted restaurateur Alice Waters was one of its sponsors. The idea spread to other schools—and beyond. First Lady Michelle Obama recently began work on an organic garden for the White House lawn. The garden will provide fresh fruits and vegetables for formal dinners as well as the First Family’s meals (see nytimes.com/2009/03/19/dining/19garden-web.html).

■ Content-Area Questions

CULTURE/SOCIAL STUDIES

1. Experts say that teens should eat how many servings of vegetables a day? (three to four)
2. What is the largest category of trash produced by Americans? (paper) What percent of total trash produced is this? (33 percent)

GEOGRAPHY

1. Which part of the world is the giant panda’s natural habitat? (southwestern China)
2. More than half of the world’s plant and animal species live where? (in forests)

LANGUAGE ARTS

1. What is “black gold”? (oil) What does the nick-

name say about it? (Calling it gold implies great worth.)

2. What does the expression “food for thought” mean? (an idea that leads to, or “feeds,” further contemplation) Is it an apt title for the article on edible schoolyards? Explain. (Answers will vary.)

MATH

1. Nearly one in four mammals is at risk of disappearing forever. What percentage of mammals is that? (25 percent)
2. One estimate says that there are 6.7 billion people on Earth. About what percent do not have access to safe drinking water? (16.4 percent, using the figure of 1.1 billion)

SCIENCE

1. The process by which plants make glucose, a major source of energy, is called what? (photosynthesis)
2. Why are children more vulnerable to air pollution than adults? (Their lungs are still developing.)

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World: Paris Goes Green (pp. 6-10)

► **NCSS STANDARD**
Global connections

What does it mean to live with more sensitivity to the environment? People all over the world are trying to figure that out. The residents of Paris have answers to that question that are worth looking into.

■ **Saying It Aloud**

- **Champs Elysées:** SHAUMS ay-LEES-ay
- **Française:** frahn-SEZ
- **plus:** ploo
- **Seine:** sen
- **Vélib:** VAY-leeb

■ **Review and Comment**

- What are the various means of public or alternate transport discussed in the article? (tram,

bicycle, bus, subway, train, ferry boat, and electric rental car)

- What is an incentive? How are incentives used in Paris? What kinds of incentives do your parents or your school use on you? How do they compare with penalties—and which is more effective? Explain.
- “For a long time, cars were associated with freedom of movement and flexibility,” a Paris official says. What does the official mean? How could it be true that a car is no longer a symbol of freedom? Why might the young people of Paris see their public means of transportation as liberating?

■ **Making It Happen**

What kinds of public transportation does your town have? Do you use them? Could any of Paris’s solutions work for your town? Why or why not? What *could* work? What are the arguments against public transportation? Start this conversation where you live by writing letters to your Mayor, Governor, or other public officials.

WEB LINK

- Fit City: youtube.com/watch?v=1sgv1HY_1w0
- Vélib: streetfilms.org/archives/velib



World History Play: The Courageous Heart of Irena Sendler (pp. 19-21)

► **NCSS STANDARD**
Civic ideals & practices

The horrors of the Holocaust are too much for us to grasp. This play is illustrative of the many individual acts of bravery and kindness that took place in that darkest of times.

■ **Backstory**

- Jewish ghettos were a key component of Hitler’s “final solution” for the elimination of Europe’s Jews. In Poland, the Nazis began transporting thousands of Jews from the Warsaw Ghetto to the death camp at Treblinka in July 1942. In 1943, the remaining Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto launched a final armed resistance. It lasted four weeks before being crushed. The Germans blew up the Ghetto.

- Irena Sendler and her allies had a number of ways of getting children out of the ghetto. Some were hustled out through underground tunnels, or sneaked into a Catholic church at the edge of the ghetto and given papers identifying them as Christian. Others were placed in coffins and taken to the Jewish cemetery at the edge of town, or smuggled out in potato sacks. Whenever possible, Polish police were bribed to look the other way.

■ **Review and Discussion**

- How did Sendler manage to get into the ghetto? (Her role as a social worker allowed her access.)
- What were Janina Sendler’s

objections to her daughter’s mission? What did Irena’s answer show about her? How would you have answered?

■ **Bookshelf**

The Diary of Mary Berg: Growing Up in the Warsaw Ghetto (One-world Publications, 2007).

WEB LINKS

- Photos of the Warsaw Ghetto from Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial: www1.yadvashem.org/exhibitions/warsaw_ghetto/home_warsaw.html
- Miss Irena speaks: jewish.org.pl/dzieciholocaustu.org.pl/szab58.php?s=en_sendlerowa.php