



## MINIS AT HOME

volume 1, issue 29

**Greetings kids, parents, grandparents, guardians, friends and neighbors!**

**Welcome to issue 29 of Minis at Home newsletter.** Each newsletter features a special theme and offers pertinent information, a craft, and recommended reading. Grownups: please work on projects together with your children. Your pARTicipation is important! We will offer hints and tips for ways to create art as a twosome or a family.

**This week's theme = Earth Day**

Earth Day is on Thursday, April 22nd! This is a day when we celebrate our incredible home—planet Earth. It is a day to think about ways we can help the Earth and our **environment**. The environment is EVERYTHING around us and includes air, soil, water, plants and animals. Just like people—who take care of each other—everything in our environment needs care.

Why is it so important to take care of our environment? Because every living thing on Earth is **interconnected**. This means all living things need each other in order to stay healthy and to survive. Did you know that bees and people need each other for food? Or that trees help give people clean air to breathe? Each living thing on Earth has its own important job to do for the health and survival of all other living things.



People can help the Earth by getting rid of pollution, which is a BIG problem. Pollution includes things like dirty water and air as well as too much trash buried in the ground. Have you ever seen trash at the beach, in the water or on the roads? Or a factory with black smoke coming out of its chimneys? These things create pollution, which can hurt all living creatures by forcing them to eat or breathe unhealthy things. If we throw away too much trash, we create land pollution, or if we drive our cars too much or forget to turn off our lights when we leave a room, we create air pollution. If we clean our homes or spray our yards with chemicals that are not good for the environment, we cause water pollution that hurts fish and water plants. If we waste or buy things made in factories that we don't need, we create air pollution. Even though we don't mean to harm the environment, there are many things we do every day that affect our environment and create pollution. Can you think of ways you and your family might hurt the environment without meaning to? What are ways you and your family help take care of the environment?



One of the best ways to help our Earth and get rid of pollution is to practice our 3 R's every day, all day: **Reduce, Recycle, and Reuse.**

You should **REDUCE** = this means to only use and buy what you really need. Use less! Use less gas by driving less. Use less food by saving leftovers and not throwing good food away. Use both sides of a piece of paper instead of just one when you draw. Use refillable water bottles and don't buy single-use plastic ones. Turn lights off when you are not using them.

Always **RECYCLE** = When you do need to get rid of items you no longer want or need, you may be able to recycle them. Empty cans, bottles, papers, boxes, containers and plastic can all be recycled. Place all of these things in your recycle bin instead of in the trash can. Remember that the things we throw out will most likely be buried in the

ground in a landfill, which can cause a lot of pollution. When we recycle things, they can be made into other things rather than going into a landfill. Did you know that plastic bottles can be made into shoes or bags? Paper, cardboard and cans be made into walls and roofs for houses. Tin cans can be made into bike or car parts.

REUSE when you can = this means that instead of throwing something away, think about how you can use it for something else. You can probably use containers or bags again and again. The less you have to buy or throw away, the better for the environment. There are many ways you can reuse. Instead of buying new clothing or toys, you could buy things from a second-hand store or use hand-me-downs from a brother or sister. You can make a treasure box from a shoe box, or use a large, refillable water bottle instead of smaller plastic water bottles. You can donate things you no longer want to other people rather than throwing them away. Some packaging stores



accept clean used packaging materials for reuse. Use less, buy less, waste less.

### **We can all do our part to care for the Earth!**

Look at the picture above. Can you see that the last jar says “**Rot**?” Did you know that there’s a way that you can help the Earth by letting your food scraps rot? What?? Over time, vegetable scraps put in the ground become dirt. This is called **composting**. If you let your food rot, it won’t take up space in your trashcan. If you don’t add extra stuff to your trashcan, there will be less garbage for trash haulers to take away and less stuff to bury or burn. Composting not only cuts down on trash, it adds nutrients and organic matter back to the soil. You can think of compost as a kind of yumminess for plants that helps them grow and stay healthy.

According to the National Resources Defense Council ([https://www.nrdc.org/stories/composting-way-easier-you-think?gclid=CjwKCAjwjuqDBhAGEiwAdX2cjwuOo10NIGfd6Gp66bznvaTPykkUBS7RhmNG\\_SQ4sxTtFWmseYLk8RoCfhsQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.nrdc.org/stories/composting-way-easier-you-think?gclid=CjwKCAjwjuqDBhAGEiwAdX2cjwuOo10NIGfd6Gp66bznvaTPykkUBS7RhmNG_SQ4sxTtFWmseYLk8RoCfhsQAvD_BwE)) “Food is going to rot, no matter what. All you have to do is help.” How do you let food rot without making your house or yard smelly? The NRDC says that you need to help the food break down in a way that fits in with your lifestyle. If you have some space in your yard, you can fence off a small area and start a

scrap pile directly on the ground. If you prefer, you can use a compost bin for your food scraps that lets them tumble around. This adds air, which converts them to compost even faster.



What exactly should you put in your compost? Fruit and vegetable scraps are a great start. If your grownup likes to drink coffee or tea, they can add coffee grounds or used tea leaves. You can also use grass clippings and “brown” ingredients such as shredded paper, cardboard, dry leaves, small twigs and old potting soil from house plants to keep the compost heap from being too wet.



Don't include scraps of meat or fish or anything oily, though. These don't break down well and they might attract wild animals.

Next time your grownup is preparing a meal, make sure they save fruit and vegetable peels, stems and seeds. You can even add fruits and veggies that are starting to spoil. You might not want to eat them, but the soil will say thank you and get to work right away turning them to dirt!

### **Activity: Craft**

#### **Tin Can Bee House**

Bees are very important insects for our environment. We created a whole newsletter about bees a short time ago. If you didn't get a chance to see it, look at our website, [academyartmuseum.org](http://academyartmuseum.org), under Mini Masters. All of our newsletters can be found there.

Here is a craft that not only helps the environment by REUSING a tin can and paper scraps, it also helps bees.



#### **Procedure:**



#### **Materials:**

**A metal / tin can (soup-can sized)**

**Scrap paper**

**2 toilet paper rolls**

**Acrylic paint (water resistant)**

**Scissors**

**Tape**

**String or yarn**

Take a tin can (one side cut open) and paint and decorate the outside with your favorite colors. It is best to use acrylic paint to prevent rain damage.

For a special "bee" fingerprint keepsake, you can dip thumb or forefinger into yellow paint, and dot your fingerprints onto the can. When dry, use a sharpie marker to draw black stripes, eyes, and antennae on each fingerprint.

While the can is drying, take strips of construction paper and roll them into tubes about the diameter of a pencil or a thin marker. (An easy way to do this is to take a paper strip, roll it around a pencil or thin marker, tape the edges together, and slide the paper tube off the pencil).

Cut your tubes so that they are flush with the open rim of the can. You'll need about 16 tubes.

Trim the toilet paper rolls so that they are also flush with the rim of the can. Place them in the can. You may need to squeeze them into an oval shape, so they fit together snugly in the can. These tubes will be supports and containers for all the paper tubes. Fill the can with the paper tubes so all the tubes fit snugly together.

Tie a piece of string around the middle of the can and tie to a tree branch or a bush.

The hollow tubes of paper will make a happy home for bees!

Remember, if you go outside to look at your bee house, please go with an adult, don't touch the can, and stay a good distance from the can. You wouldn't want a bee sting!

## Activity: Move and Sing

**The 3 R's** (from [pre-kpages.com](http://pre-kpages.com))  
(Sung to "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow")

**Reduce, reuse, recycle**  
**Reduce, reuse, recycle**  
**Reduce, reuse, recycle**  
**Let's all do our part!**  
**Bottles, cans, and bags**  
**Bottles, cans, and bags**  
**Reduce, reuse, recycle**  
**Reduce, reuse, recycle**  
**Reduce, reuse, recycle**  
**Let's all do our part!**





## Reduce, Reuse and Recycle Song

(by songs4teachers)

(Sung to the Itsy, Bitsy Spider)

**Reduce, reuse, recycle are words that  
we all know  
We have to save our planet so we can  
live and grow  
We might only be children, but we will  
try you'll see  
And we can save the planet, it starts  
with you and me!**

## Recycle! (by songs4teachers)

(sung to Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star)

**We recycle what we use  
Separate things and you should too  
Glass and paper, plastic, tin  
Go in your recycle bin  
We must start now, we can't wait  
Quick or it will be too late!**



## Literacy: Poem to Share

### Compost Fun by Constance Del Nero

**Take an apple core and a few seeds, too:  
start a homemade compost brew**

**Mix in dried leaves and a twig or two:  
add to your special compost brew**

**Spoon in some dirt and fruit peels few  
for an even better compost brew**

**Find a spot on the ground and mix it well  
so you won't have an icky smell**

**Visit your spot often and mix it well  
so earthworms will want to come to dwell**

**If you add stuff often and mix it well  
You'll have compost that's truly swell!**



Literacy: **RECOMMENDED BOOKS**

Snuggle up in a big comfy chair and read together

*The Earth Book* by Todd Parr

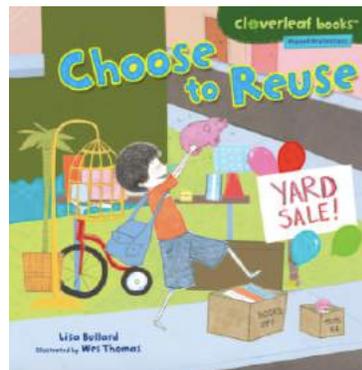
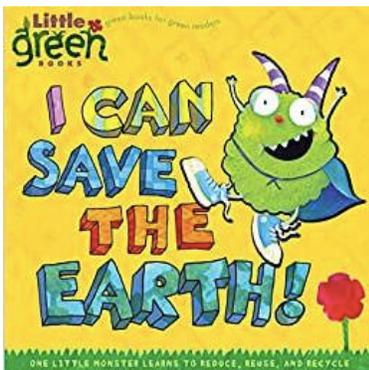
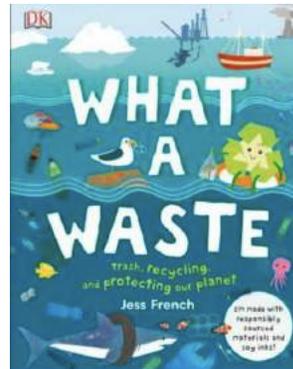
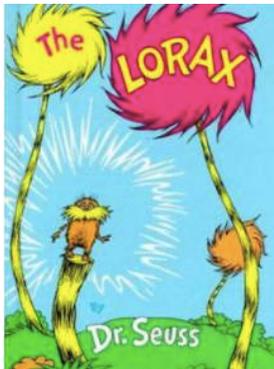
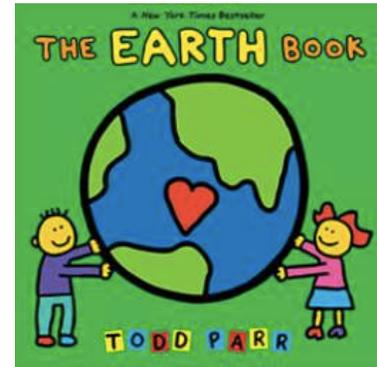
*The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss

*My Friend Earth* by Patricia MacLachlan

*What a Waste* by Jess French

*I Can Save the Earth* by Alison Inches

*Choose to Reuse* by Lisa Bullard



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See you next week with issue 30 of **Minis at Home!**

Share your work on <https://www.instagram.com/minimastersaam/>

or email pictures to Ann Hansen  
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