

Earth Day 2024: Planet vs. Plastics



What Is Earth Day?

Earth Day is held every year on 22nd April. It is a day when people take part in activities to help the planet. The theme for Earth Day 2024 is 'Planet vs. Plastics'. It asks everyone to work together to limit our use of plastics to help look after the Earth. On Earth Day, people take action to make our world a better place. This includes litter picking, planting trees and raising money for environmental charities.

Plastic Pollution

Plastic is a hard-wearing material and some plastics can take hundreds of years to break down. Many items end up in oceans and this is very harmful to animals. **Microplastics** have been found in lots of different places!



Plastic in the Environment

Plastic can break down into tiny particles that enter the Earth's soil and water.

There are many ways that plastic can enter the environment, such as:

- litter
- washed-down drains
- spilled by ships
- blown out of bins
- abandoned by humans

So much plastic enters the environment each year that it can be found in fresh water, soil, air and oceans around the world.



How Can We Reduce Our Use of Plastic?

There are many steps that you can take to reduce your use of plastics and help save our planet.

Reusable Items

Many people have been working hard to use less plastic. Instead of using single-use plastic items, such as straws and plastic bags, they buy reusable items, such as reusable flasks and canvas bags. You could save 156 plastic bottles every year by choosing a reusable bottle!

Some coffee shops even charge people less if they buy their hot drinks with a reusable cup.



Did You Know...?

By 2050, there will be more plastic in the oceans than there are fish!



Did You Know...?

160,000 plastic bags are used around the world every second!



Recycle Your Plastic

If you use single-use plastics, make sure you recycle them so that they can be turned into new things instead of being thrown away.

Plan Your Parties

Plastic party plates, glitter and balloons can be extremely dangerous to wildlife and the environment.



Glossary

microplastics: Small pieces of plastic less than 5mm in length.

1. Which month does Earth Day take place in? Tick one.

- February
- April
- June
- August

2. Draw **four** lines to complete the sentences.

Plastic can be found...	to use less plastic.
The theme for Earth Day 2024 is...	in fresh water, soil, air and oceans.
Many people have been working hard...	'Planet vs. Plastics'.
Plastic is a...	hard-wearing material.

3. Number the sentences from 1-4 to show the order in which they appear in the text.

- Some coffee shops charge people less if they buy their hot drinks with a reusable cup.
- Balloons can be extremely dangerous to wildlife and the environment.
- Microplastics have been found in lots of different places!
- On Earth Day, people take action to make our world a better place.

4. Why is it bad for plastic to end up in the oceans? Tick one.

- It's colourful.
- It's noisy.
- It's harmful to animals.
- It's smelly.

5. Name one way that plastic can enter the environment.

6. Fill in the missing word.

Plastic party plates, glitter and _____ can be extremely dangerous to wildlife and the environment.

7. Why do you think the author has written this text?