

Talk About It

Why should people care about the environment?



Find out more about the environment at www.macmillanmh.com

Protecting the ENVIRONMENT

Vocabulary

humanity
inevitable
unheeded
enlightened
prevailing

A factory releases pollutants into the air.

ENVIRONMENTAL DANGERS

The following threats to the health of Earth's environment could affect all of **humanity**. They could also harm plant and animal life.

Damage to the Ozone Layer: A thin layer of invisible ozone gas surrounds Earth. It protects us from the sun's harmful rays. In recent years, the amount of ozone has decreased. Scientists believe pollution is the cause. Less ozone means the sun's rays can reach us more directly and cause more harm.

Global Warming: Some scientists think pollution is raising Earth's surface temperature. If global warming continues, some problems seem **inevitable**. Melting of ice at the North and South Poles would be one unavoidable problem. Then ocean levels would rise. Coastlines would be flooded. The weather would change. There could be more storms, more heat waves, and more droughts.

Acid Rain: Acid rain occurs when rainwater mixes with certain pollutants. Burning fossil fuels—mainly coal—is the cause. Acid rain can harm trees and wildlife. It can even damage buildings.

AN EARTH DAY OF THEIR OWN



Trash tossing at Environmental Awareness Day

What's the biggest problem for the environment? "Ignorance!" say Lisa Wollett's fifth-graders in Parma, Michigan. These kids knew that many urgent warnings about

the environment have gone **unheeded**. They wanted people in their town to start paying attention. So they created Environmental Awareness Day.

The students got information from environmental organizations. They made sure the local newspapers covered the event. They even started their own paper to get the word out. Some kids worked on plays, games, and skits. Everyone worked to become more **enlightened**. They did research on natural resources, conservation, pollution, and recycling. They learned that Americans throw away 40 million tons of paper a year and 65 million aluminum cans.

Hundreds of people from all over their county showed up for the event. The **prevailing** mood was upbeat. Everyone was excited and surprised. "We weren't expecting so many people," said Benjamin Scott, 11. "My aunt from California even came."



Recycle These Facts!



Recycling one ton of paper saves 17 trees and 7,000 gallons of water.



Recycling one aluminum can saves enough electricity to run a TV for three hours.



Recycling one glass bottle or jar saves enough electricity to light a 100-watt bulb for four hours.



More than 30 million trees are cut down to produce a year's supply of newspapers.



Recycling one ton of plastic saves the equivalent of 1,000 to 2,000 gallons of gasoline.



Find out more about recycling at www.macmillanmh.com