



Learner Resources to Connect, Explore, Engage for the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day in Wisconsin

Online resources for learning at home

Simply spending time exploring outdoors to help develop a sense of place and develop wonder and curiosity is a wonderful way to celebrate Earth Day on April 22. Earth Day stemmed from a deep connection with the land that Gaylord Nelson developed in childhood.

For those who would like further resources to support learning during National Environmental Education Week, April 19 - 25, we have compiled this list of resources for learners organized by developmental level.

For learners of all ages:



EEK! Environmental Education for Kids

- [EEK!](http://eekwi.org) (eekwi.org) is the place to learn about Wisconsin's natural resources. Sing and sign along with the "Happy Earth Day" song!
- **Connect, Explore, Engage activity posts** (eekwi.org/blog) support wellbeing and outdoor exploration in the backyard.
- Designed for kids, used by learners of all ages.

As part of our COVID-19 response, we have identified opportunities for [Learning Every Day, Everywhere: Outside](#) to provide families and caregivers ideas to support learning outdoors: <https://bit.ly/DPIlearnoutside>.

Jump to ideas for:

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Learners, Educators, Caregivers, & Families

Learning Every Day, Everywhere

OUTSIDE

Connect

- Create nature journals to record adventures and observations outside. Decorate the cover. Write or draw about what predictions of what will be found before going out; draw pictures or write while exploring, or reflect on the trip when they get back home.
- Take your child on a literacy walk and note the print available. Walk around your neighborhood, note the different signs, and discuss the meaning/importance of them. Take photos along the way to create a story or album.
- Take an old blanket outside to sit on the dirt or grass and use your senses to notice all that is outside - wind, clouds, trees, bird songs, insects, people, flowers. Write haiku about what you see, smell, hear, feel, and think.

Explore

- Explore parks and other public lands.
- Talk about the wildlife that is everywhere! You'll be surprised how much life you can find in our urban parks. Insects living complex lives in grass or landscaping, birds nesting in trees or on buildings, and bats hunting insects after dark are only some of the things you may find.
- Look for birds and talk to your children about what the birds are doing. Notice if the bird is flying, standing, or swimming. Then find a bird with some red on it, some yellow, and some black. No need to identify, just observe!

Engage

- Plant a garden, flowers, or a tree!
- Construct and install a birdhouse.
- Draw ideas for or make a playground using materials from nature.

Learn more: dpi.wi.gov/cal

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Carolyn Stanford Taylor, State Superintendent

Young Children (0-4)

There are so many simple ways to engage young children in hands-on, child-led exploration of the outdoors .

- [Tinkergarten](https://tinkergarten.com/activities) offers educators, parents, guardians, and caregivers of young children a wealth of easy backyard activities to explore the world through outdoor play:
<https://tinkergarten.com/activities>.

Reading books and watching videos together about animals and outdoor exploration and talking about it builds a strong foundation for environmental literacy.

- Scholastic [Learn-At-Home Week 1 activities](#) provide books, videos and activities about animals and spring to engage young learners.
- [Ranger Rick Cub](https://rangerrick.org/freedigital/) (ages 0-4) is offering a free digital subscriptions through June:
<https://rangerrick.org/freedigital/>
- [Water for YOU and ME! Early Childhood Storybook](https://www.projectwet.org/distancelearning#StudentBooklets) free PDF download:
<https://www.projectwet.org/distancelearning#StudentBooklets>

Lower Elementary (Gr. K-2)

Description	Access
Ranger Rick Jr. (ages 4-7) is offering a free digital subscription through June.	https://rangerrick.org/freedigital/
Discover Water from Project WET is a website to explore all things related to water.	https://www.discoverwater.org/
Wild Kratts from PBS Education provides videos, games, and activities about animals.	https://pbskids.org/wildkratts/
Nature Cat from PBS Education provides three online interactives and a number of DIY activities to connect with nature.	https://wisconsin.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/nature_cat_interactives_diy/
Molly of Denali from PBS Education provides videos, games, and activities about Alaskan Native culture and emphasizes use of informational texts .	https://pbskids.org/molly/
Sid the Science Kid from PBS Education interactive vegetable planting activity.	https://pbskids.org/sid/games/vegetable-planting
Super Cleaner Upper Cat in the Hat interactive from PBS Education about recycling and composting	https://pbskids.org/catinthehat/games/super-cleaner-upper
Camp Time Cat in the Hat interactive from PBS Education to set up a tent campsite.	https://pbskids.org/catinthehat/games/camp-time

Upper Elementary (Gr. 3-5)

Description	Access
Earth Day articles to learn about Gaylord Nelson and the history of Earth Day.	https://www.eekwi.org/earth-day
Gaylord Nelson video and e-books from PBS Education Wisconsin to learn about the founder of Earth Day.	https://pbswisconsineducation.org/biographies/nelson.html
Milly Zantow: Recycling Revolutionary video and e-books from PBS Education Wisconsin	https://pbswisconsineducation.org/biographies/zantow.html
Chief Oshkosh: Leader in Troubled Times video and e-books from PBS Education Wisconsin	https://pbswisconsineducation.org/biographies/oshkosh.html
Ranger Rick (ages 7-12) is offering a free digital subscription through June.	https://rangerrick.org/freedigital/
Audubon For Kids provides videos, interactives, and downloads to learn about birds.	https://www.audubon.org/get-outside/activities/audubon-for-kids
Cyber Chase videos, games, and activities about the environment from PBS Education	https://pbskids.org/cyberchase/topics/environment
Climate Kids videos, games and activities from NASA	https://climatekids.nasa.gov/menu/play/
Next.cc offers a number of “journeys,” or self-directed hands-on projects, to explore the intersections of art, design, and ecoliteracy. Could be used through high school.	https://www.next.cc/

This [Earth Day Choice Board](#) was developed by Oconto Falls educator, Kelly Koller, and provides a number of activities for a variety of age levels, depending on the level of adult support available.

Young Teens (Gr. 6-8)

Description	Access
Restoration in the Barrens book discussion and a talk with the author and Wisconsin educator, Joe Riederer, on May 1.	Download free e-book: https://www.eekwi.org/activities/stories/restoration-barrens
MGE Earth Day Fun Book activities and articles to learn about energy.	https://www.mge.com/our-environment/earth-day/earth-day-fun-book
Manoomin (wild rice), Spearfishing , Hunting Deer , and Lake Superior Whitefish videos from The Ways series by PBS Wisconsin Education highlight environmental connection in Wisconsin Native culture.	https://theways.org/#manoomin https://theways.org/#spearfishing https://theways.org/#hunting-deer https://theways.org/#lake-superior-whitefish
Snapshot Wisconsin wildlife monitoring partnership uploads photos from a statewide network of trail cameras to a crowd-sourcing website where people can go and identify Wisconsin's wildlife present in the photos.	www.snapshotwisconsin.org
Seeing Watersheds is a digital lesson with hands-on components for learners. May need adult guidance.	https://lessons.projectwet.org/seeing-watersheds/
A More Sustainable Planet video from Into the Outdoors to explore biodiversity.	https://vimeo.com/248390714
Energy Classroom from Xcel Energy has website has articles, interactives, and videos to learn about energy.	https://energyclassroom.com/
E-Smart Kids from Wisconsin Public Service has articles, and interactives to learn about energy.	https://wisconsinpublicservice.e-smartkids.com/66400_get_smart/66410_elc_safety-smart/index.html
Alliant Energy Kids website has information to learn about energy. It requires navigation from the left-hand menu to move through articles.	https://www.alliantenergykids.com/AllAboutEnergy/SourcesandTypesofEnergy
Energy Kids website with activities from U.S. Energy Information Administration.	https://www.eia.gov/kids/index.php
Meet the Greens website to learn about energy.	http://www.meetthegreens.org/

Teens and up (Gr. 9-12)

Description	Access
Climate Wisconsin from PBS Wisconsin Education provides short video stories exploring how people depend on Wisconsin's natural resources.	https://climatewisconsin.org/
Earth Day at 50 , Wisconsin Natural Resources Magazine provides a look at the history and current state of Earth Day.	https://www.eekwi.org/sites/default/files/wnr_magazine_earth_day_low-res.pdf
Photographs, speeches and other primary sources about Earth Day and Gaylord Nelson have been compiled by the Wisconsin Historical Society.	https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS3745
Four online art galleries at Overture Center for the Arts feature different perspectives and relationships with the environment.	https://www.overture.org/galleries/overture-galleries
Earth Day: Wisconsin episode of Around the Farm Table from PBS Wisconsin.	https://www.pbs.org/video/earth-day-wisconsin-dylkrx/
When the Earth Moves video from the Outrider Foundation about Earth Day roots and looking to the future to address climate change.	https://outrider.org/features/earth-day-film/
FoodPrint calculators help learners consider the impact of what they eat.	https://www.earthday.org/campaign/foodprints-for-future/
Ma'iingan: Brother Wolf video from PBS Wisconsin captures enduring spiritual connections with Brother Wolf, the lasting bonds and responsibilities shared between native people and the wolf species, and the opportunities and challenges presented by the reintroduction and protection of the animals across reservation lands.	https://www.pbs.org/video/maiingan-brother-wolf-9apsy7/

Virtual Events

Description	Access
April 19: Simply Folk Earth Day Radio Show from Wisconsin Public Radio's can be heard on Ideas and NPR News and Classical networks from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.	https://www.wpr.org/programs/simply-folk
April 20: Virtual 2020 Earth Day Conference Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies , UW Madison	https://earthday.nelson.wisc.edu/
April 21: Earth Day: The Next 50 Years is a virtual conversation from 11:30AM to 1:00PM hosted by WisPolitics. Speakers include Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, chair of the Governor's Task Force on Climate Change, state Rep. Mike Kuglitsch, R-New Berlin, chair of the Assembly Committee on Energy and Utilities, and Mark E. Stoering, Xcel Energy president for Wisconsin and Michigan.	Details will be posted at: https://www.madisonclub.org/events/virtual-wispolitics-event/
April 21: Alliance for Climate Education is hosting a live stream event at noon.	Sign-up required: https://secure.everyaction.com/LJ0mGJNpwkOotJgbAxeOPA2?fbclid=IwAR0h9-gxOvpDBeG_IJ1V4M_yY_Ns8j9mJpU7eErYQ1tsy0VqTd_1cYoLFxQ
April 22 - 24: Earth Optimism Summit from Smithsonian Conservation Commons	https://earthoptimism.si.edu/calendar/2020-dc-summit/
Earth Day.org has a calendar of global events.	https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2020/

Share Your Story

If you share want to share how you connect, explore, and engage this month on social media, consider joining in the conversation:

#50EarthDayStories
#CoronaOutdoorsWI
#EarthDay2020

Educators are encouraged to share what you are doing with students on our [50 Years of Earth Day, 50 Stories of Earth Day Celebrations](#)