

Be a Green Kid

What does it mean to be green? "Green" is more than just a color. It also means taking special steps to protect the environment - the water, the land, and the air we breathe. Why green? Plants are green, and without them the Earth wouldn't be such a lovely home for us. Every day, people make choices that affect the amount of trash and pollution that gets produced in our world. What can you do? Here's a four-step guide to being green: reduce, reuse, recycle and enjoy the Earth.

When you use less of something, you do a good thing for the Earth. For instance, a shorter shower means you use less water and less fuel since your house uses fuel to run the water heater that warmed up the water. To reduce fuel usage, turn off lights you're not using, walk or ride your bike instead of driving in a car, unplug the chargers for your phone and MP3 player when you're not using them, and so on.

Sometimes, people call our society a "throwaway society." That means that we're too willing to throw away old stuff and buy new stuff. Usually, even if you no longer need something, someone else just might. For example, if your baby brother outgrows his plastic basketball hoop, why not give it to another family who has a little kid? You can also reuse items by taking your own reusable bags when you go shopping, drinking tap water instead of buying bottled water, choosing reusable cups instead of disposable cups, and et cetera.

Recycling has never been easier. People can organize recyclable items in bins, remember to put them on the curb on recycling day, and help remind others which items can be rinsed and recycled. By separating plastic bottles, cans, paper, and more, you're reducing the amount of trash that goes to the landfill, where all the trash trucks go to dump their loads.

It's true that trash and pollution are problems, but the Earth remains a huge and glorious place that's ready for you to explore. Before you travel the globe, take a look at your own backyard where you could plant a tree or a little fruit or vegetable garden. If so, go outside and get your hands dirty! Then you can watch with pride as your tree takes root and your garden seedlings grow to big plants full of ripe, red tomatoes or tiny, juicy blueberries. Who knew being green could taste so good?

(改編自 <https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/go-green.html>)

The Cave of Fear

There was once a town where the thing everyone feared the most was getting lost at night in the "Cave of Fear". No one had ever returned from there, and whenever anyone got lost and ended up there, the only thing they heard was a great cry of terror, followed by enormous laughter. People in the town were afraid that the monster would leave the cave one day. So they regularly left gifts and food at the mouth of the cave to please the monster.

One day, a young man came to town, and he wanted to enter the cave to confront the monster. The young man asked for some help, but everyone was so afraid that nobody wanted to go with him. He went inside the cave alone, finding his way with a torch, and called out to the monster, wanting to talk and discuss the situation. At first, the monster had a good long laugh, so the young man followed the sound of the monster's voice. Suddenly, the monster went quiet, and the young man didn't know which direction to go.

Finally, the young man arrived at a huge cavern. As he approached it, something hit him hard on his back, which pushed him forward towards a hole in the rock and made him fall. Believing that he was about to die, the young man heard laughter. "Oh no, I think the monster swallowed me," he thought. However, as he fell, the laughter became clearer, and he also heard music and voices. When he made a soft landing at the bottom, he heard a group of people shout "surprise!"

Hardly believing it, the young man found himself right in the middle of a big party. The partygoers were all the people who had never returned to the town. They explained to him that this place was the idea of the town's old mayor. That mayor had tried to accomplish great things, but was always stopped by the fears of the people around him. So, the mayor invented the story of the monster to demonstrate how such an attitude was so limiting. At the end, the young man stayed inside the cave, enjoying the party and the company of all those who had the courage to approach the cave.

And what about the town? In the town, people are still deathly afraid to enter the Cave of Fear to this day.

(擷取自：<https://freestoriesforkids.com/children/stories-and-tales/cave-fear>)

The Ugly Fairy

There was once a fairy who was learning how to be a fairy godmother. Most magical and wonderful, she was the kindest and cleverest of all fairies. However, she was also a very ugly fairy. And no matter how much she showed her wonderful qualities, it seemed that everyone was determined to believe that the most important thing about a fairy was her beauty. In fairy school, they ignored her, and every time she flew off on a mission to help a child or anyone else in trouble, they were already yelling at her before she could say a word. "Ugly! Get out of here, weirdo!"

Despite her being little, the ugly fairy was very powerful, and more than once, she had considered using it to make herself beautiful. But then she remembered what her mother had always told her, "My dear, you are what you are, and never doubt that you are this way for a very special reason..."

One day, the witches of the neighboring land invaded and destroyed the country, putting all the fairies and wizards in prison. Just before being attacked, the ugly fairy put a spell on her own clothes and, helped by her ugly face, she managed to pass for a witch. So, she was able to follow the witches back to their den.

Once there, she used her magic to prepare a big party for everyone, decorating the cave with bats, toads, and spiders. The music was provided by a pack of howling wolves. While the party was in full swing, the ugly fairy hurried off and set free all the fairies and wizards who were imprisoned. When all of them were free, they worked together on one big spell, which trapped the witches inside the mountain for the next hundred years. And for the next hundred years or so, everyone remembered the great bravery and intelligence of the ugly fairy.

From that day on, no one in that land ever saw ugliness as a disgrace again. Whenever someone ugly was born, people were filled with joy, knowing that the child has a great future ahead.

(擷取自：<https://freestoriesforkids.com/children/stories-and-tales/ugly-fairy>)