



Dear Colleague,

Every April we try to focus our topics on the Earth or the environment. This year we continued that tradition. There is a real push for governments and corporations to change laws and practices to be more environmentally friendly. Earthday.org chooses the theme for Earth Day every year. This year they chose "Invest in our Planet." Their focus is on how businesses, governments, and people need to work together to make a greener economy. They have a lot of great suggestions for Earth Day activities as well as more information about Earth Day 2023 on their website if you are looking for more resources for your classes.

April is also National Poetry Month. It is a great time to explore language and writing with your classes. Even the lowest level language classes can practice with rhyming words. Have fun experimenting!

*Carol Brigham*

### Building for tomorrow (page 1 and 9)

**Objectives:** Students will be able to list at least three reasons why traditional construction is hurting the environment. Students will be able to describe why a building is green and at least 3 things that green buildings might have. They will be able to describe the process for 3D printing a house.

**Procedures:** Find out from students what kind of house or apartment they live in. Ask questions such as: *Do you have anything in your house that helps the environment?* Some examples might be rain barrels to collect rain water, solar panels for electricity, energy saving appliances, etc. *Did you add these things to your home or where they there when you moved in? If you added them, why did you choose those things?*

Read the article together as a group. Discuss what makes a building a green building. Make sure to have the discussion with your group about the different meanings of green. Society uses the word green for the color green and to mean eco-friendly. Then to even further confuse

people, things that are eco-friendly are often colored green or in green packaging. "Green" buildings are almost never green in color. Some have other attributes that make it very apparent that they are green buildings. Others do not look any different from other buildings.

The 3D printing technology for houses is relatively new here in the U.S. but a little more common in other countries. The companies working to develop the technology and organizations that work with people who have low-incomes or are homeless hope that the 3D printing technology will solve America's housing shortages. Ask questions such as: *Have you ever seen anything that was 3D printed? What was it? How do you think 3D printing would help make houses less expensive? Do you think you would like to live in a 3D-printed house? What might you really like about it? What might the challenges be?* If you have the ability, show your class the photos from Iconbuild.com of the Vulcan robot and the houses they are building now. Due to copyright rules, we were not able to put any of these photos in this paper, but they have some interesting photos and YouTube videos about the projects they are working on including 3D printing structures to be used in space in the future.

### Writing a budget (page 1 and 5)

We have addressed a lot of topics so far in our money series this year. When choosing this month's topic we wanted to include a very practical application money article.

**Objectives:** Students will be able to describe what a budget is. They will be able to identify what their income is. They will be able to identify what expenses should be included in a budget each month.

**Procedures:** Establish how much students already know about budgeting. Ask questions such as: *Do you have a budget? Do you budget every month? What things do you put on your budget?*

Read the article. Have students note things they did not know about budgeting. Ask questions such as: *What did you learn about budgeting that you didn't already know? If you already budget, did you find*

*anything you should start adding to your budget?*

Have students use the budget worksheet from page 10 to complete a sample monthly budget. Provide sample income and sample expenses for them to use so they do not need to discuss their own finances with the group. A copy of this budget worksheet will be included in our Supplemental Materials packet that is posted on our website each month. That way you can make photocopies for your students if they would like to have more than one to work on. Our newspaper is copyrighted. Please do not copy the newspaper pages.

### Events in April (pages 2 and 3)

**Calendar:** Elicit from your students any special days celebrated in their countries in April. Also, ask who has a birthday, anniversary, or other celebration in April. What school events will take place in April? Have students write these directly on a blank calendar.

**National Poetry Month:** Discuss: *What is a poem?* Words that touch the heart? Lines of words that rhyme? The best words in the best order? Find poems suitable for your class and read some more. Build vocabulary, discuss imagery, meter, and rhyme. Bring in Mother Goose rhymes, A.A. Milne's poems, Robert Louis Stevenson, Ogden Nash and your own favorites, as appropriate. Have students each choose a poem to memorize. Read Louisa May Alcott's poetry on page 7.

**April Fools' Day:** Have students tell about any holidays such as our April Fools' Day in their native countries. Tell any harmless April Fool's practical jokes you have experienced or played.

**April Fool's Day Picture:** Teach structures so students can use sentences to tell what's wrong: *There is a \_\_\_ in/on/ under a/the \_\_\_. A \_\_\_ is at the \_\_\_. A \_\_\_ is upside down. A person is sitting/ hanging/carrying \_\_\_.* Have students circle the wrong items, and talk about each one. Then have students write the sentences. They can check their work on page 11.

**Easter:** Have any Christians in your class tell how their family celebrates this

holiday. Talk about symbols of spring and new life: eggs, chicks, rabbits, flowers. Christians celebrate Easter on “the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox,” which puts it on a different date each year. Explain that Easter and Passover are tied together in an important way. Jesus was Jewish; he died on the day of preparation for the Jewish Passover.

**Passover:** Jewish people determine Passover as beginning on the 15th day of the Jewish month of *Nissan* (after the vernal equinox.)

If there are any Jewish students in your class, have them tell how their families celebrate Passover. Bring in matzohs and macaroons in containers with labels that say *Kosher*. If appropriate for your students, tell the story that Jewish people tell of the 10 plagues God sent to Egypt to make the Pharaoh let the Jewish people go: blood, frogs, gnats, flies, death of the cattle, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, and death of the first-born son. Find out if they know the Ten Commandments. *Believe in only one God. Do not make any images of any gods. Do not say God’s name for a silly reason. Keep the Sabbath holy. Honor your mother and father. Don’t kill, Don’t commit adultery. Don’t steal. Don’t tell lies about your neighbors. Don’t desire things that belong to your neighbors.*

Ask students of other religions or backgrounds if they have a set of laws and have them tell about those laws.

**Earth Day/Earth Month:** Find out what activities are going on in your school and community; encourage the students to attend. Brainstorm an activity that the class can create. It can focus on lowering carbon dioxide emissions or any other Earth Day concern. For example, taking garbage bags to a park and picking up litter. (Stress the importance of using work gloves, so they are not handling the litter with their hands.) Ask if the day or month is celebrated in their home countries. How?

**Tax Time:** The new, smaller 1040 forms are simpler for people with W-2 earnings and no dependents. However, taxpayers with more complex conditions require additional pages for other types of income, for deductions if they have more than \$12,950, or \$25,900 for a married couple filing jointly. Warn students about tax scams, which are rampant in low-income neighborhoods. Lying on a tax return to get a larger refund is a crime that can keep an

immigrant from becoming a citizen and give them jail time, too. Advise them to wait a couple of weeks for their refund instead of falling for “instant refunds” which usually come with a cost they pay to the person preparing the return.

**Eid al-Fitr:** This is a very joyful celebration at the end of Ramadan. Invite a Muslim student to explain the meaning and their family’s customs on this holiday.

**Administrative Professional’s Day:** Have students make a list of school personnel who are administrative assistants, secretaries, etc. Have students each choose a school secretary, custodian, (there is no Custodian’s Day, so let’s thank them at this time), para-professional, library assistant, crossing guard, etc., to whom to write a letter of thanks.

Brainstorm what would go into such a letter. Provide envelopes and deliver the lot to the school office to be distributed. Who in the class has worked or wants to work as an administrative assistant? (Definition: [plural] people in an organization who handle the paper work, answer the telephones, make appointments, pay the bills, etc., and make it possible for the others in the organization to do their work!)

### This is your page (page 4)

Read each story, and discuss: *What happened? Has this ever happened to you? Have you ever been to...? How is this different from the way things are in your home country? Have you ever had trouble understanding someone? What happened? Have you confused two words? What happened? Have you interviewed for a job? How did it go? Where do you like to travel?* Use the stories as a springboard into students’ own experiences on similar topics.

### Ask a Speech Coach (page 5)

**Objectives:** Students will become aware of stressed and unstressed parts of sentences; they will practice speaking more like Americans and improve in understanding rapid speech. **Procedures:** Read the article, define stress and weak words, practice the sentences.

### America the Beautiful (page 6)

**Objectives:** Students will be able to tell where the Great Smoky Mountains are located. They will be able to tell how they got their name. They will be able to list activities that visitors can do when they go to the park.

**Procedures:** Have students look at the pictures and describe what they see. Read the article together. Ask questions such as: *Where are the Great Smoky Mountains? How old are these mountains? How did the mountains get their name? What do people do in Great Smoky Mountains National Park? What makes Great Smoky Mountains National Park special?* Have students plan a trip to the Great Smoky Mountains. Have them decide what they would like to do and see there. They can use the information from this article and from the Reader’s Story on page 4 about visiting the Great Smoky Mountains.

### Celebrating poetry month (page 7)

**Procedures:** Read the poems out loud to the students. Have them repeat lines after you with the rhythm of the stressed syllables. Explain *rhyme*, have students find words that rhyme. Explain the shorthand way of marking a rhyme scheme. In the poem *Here’s a Nut*, the second and fourth lines rhyme, then the sixth and eighth lines rhyme. This can be shown as *abcbdefe*. In the second poem, *Hello! Hello!*, each pair of lines rhyme. The rhyme scheme would be *aa bb cc dd ee ff*.

Explain *syllables*, give examples, and have students count the syllables in each line. Explain *stress*, read each line, and have students recognize which words are stressed. *Why are poetic tools important to these poems? What differences do you see in these poems? How are these three poems similar? What do you think was the poet’s purpose for writing these poems? How do these poems make you feel?* See if your students can memorize and recite any of these poems. Encourage students to write poems about something in nature.

### ANSWERS

- |                     |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. a                | 16. F (deadline)          |
| 2. b                | 17. F (writer)            |
| 3. d                | 18. F (rhyme)             |
| 4. a                | 19. T                     |
| 5. b                | 20. T                     |
| 6. b                | 21. J (poem)              |
| 7. c                | 22. I (fog)               |
| 8. b                | 23. H (penalty)           |
| 9. a                | 24. A (extension)         |
| 10. c               | 25. C (improve)           |
| 11. T               | 26. B (variable)          |
| 12. F (Passover)    | 27. D<br>(pronunciation)  |
| 13. T               | 28. F (pollinators)       |
| 14. T               | 29. G (special occasions) |
| 15. F (Palm Sunday) | 30. E (tomb)              |

**April 2023 Quiz I**

Choose the best answer. Write its letter on the line in front of the number.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How many green buildings were there in the U.S. as of 2021?
- a) 110,000
  - b) 500
  - c) 15,000
  - d) 2,000
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. What is usually **not** true about green buildings?
- a) They may have solar panels on their roofs.
  - b) They are green in color.
  - c) They may have a water recycling system in them.
  - d) They may have special windows and lighting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Which of these materials is a natural material construction companies might use?
- a) glass
  - b) cement
  - c) bricks
  - d) cork
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Which of these materials does the Vulcan robot use to print 3D houses?
- a) Lavacrete
  - b) wood
  - c) recycled steel
  - d) sheep's wool
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Where is Icon 3D printing houses?
- a) New York City, New York
  - b) Austin, Texas
  - c) Washington, D.C.
  - d) San Francisco, California
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Which of these is a fixed expense each month?
- a) water bill
  - b) rent payment
  - c) electric bill
  - d) grocery bill
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. How old are the Great Smoky Mountains?
- a) 500,000 years old
  - b) between 1 and 10 million years old
  - c) between 200 and 300 million years old
  - d) 100,000 years old
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. How many species of plants, animals, and fungi are in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park?
- a) 2,500
  - b) 19,000
  - c) 1,900
  - d) 25,000
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Who wrote the poems Here's A Nut and Hello! Hello!?
- a) Louisa May Alcott
  - b) President Joe Biden
  - c) Gene Zerna
  - d) the beekeeper
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Which of these pairs of words rhyme?
- a) door and deck
  - b) bee and butterfly
  - c) sing and ring
  - d) acorn and squirrel

**Quiz II. Events in March**

**True or False?** Write “T” for true, and “F” for false. If the sentence is *false*, write a word to replace the underlined word to make the sentence *true*.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. April Fools’ Day is April 1.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Good Friday celebrates the story of the Jewish people’s escape from slavery in Egypt.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. A Seder is a special Jewish dinner where people tell the story of the first Passover. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Eggs, flowers, rabbits, and chicks are all signs of new life in spring.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Christians remember the story of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey on Easter Sunday.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. April 18, 2023 is the first day for paying income taxes for 2022.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Louisa May Alcott was a famous American administrative professional.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Rhythm is when two words sound the same. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Sing a song is an example of alliteration. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. A green building may have solar panels on the roof to collect electricity.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Quiz III. Building Vocabulary**

Write the letter of the best word for each sentence.

**Word List**

- |                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| A. extension     | F. pollinators       |
| B. variable      | G. special occasions |
| C. improve       | H. penalty           |
| D. pronunciation | I. fog               |
| E. tomb          | J. poem              |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. The boy wrote a \_\_\_\_\_ at school for his mother.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. There is \_\_\_\_\_ on the mountains early in the morning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. When you do something wrong, you may have to pay a \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. If you can’t file your income tax by April 18, you can ask for an \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. Bill went to classes to \_\_\_\_\_ his English.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. \_\_\_\_\_ expenses change every month.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. Jean practiced her \_\_\_\_\_ to make sure she said words correctly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. Bees are \_\_\_\_\_ for the flowers of most fruits and vegetables.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. Birthdays and anniversaries are \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. A place to bury a dead body is a \_\_\_\_\_.