



for kids
by kids

Arbor Day started with a president who cared



In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt gave a proclamation, as presidents do; this one, however, was different than most speeches. This one was written for and given to students. The thought of a President writing a speech for people my age seems kind of strange. That is until you read it. The general idea of the speech is that the younger generation needs to care about trees, but we'll get to that in a second. But, why was the President talking to school children about trees?

Arbor Day is a holiday that is dedicated to the planting of trees. The first American Arbor day was in Nebraska City, Nebraska in 1872. The holiday gained popularity and, in 1906, even the President saw the importance of it. He gave several speeches on the importance of conserving the forest to the lumber industry; but Major Israel McCreight had a different idea. He urged Roosevelt to give a speech to the youth.

Throughout history humans have had a nasty habit of using, and wasting, resources and not caring about replacing them until they're almost gone. In Roosevelt's speech, he said, "Any nation which in its youth lives only for the day, reaps without sowing." That means any

nation that takes without replacing, is going to fail in the future.

"A people without children would face a hopeless future; a country without trees is almost as hopeless; forests which are so used that they cannot renew themselves will soon vanish, and with them all their benefits," he said. This is why we replace trees on Arbor Day. Ideally, for every tree that got cut down, another would be replaced. It wasn't until we were in danger of losing our forests that we started taking steps to reverse the damage.

In the same address Roosevelt said, "In your full manhood and womanhood, you will want what nature once so bountifully supplied, and man so thoughtlessly destroyed; and because of that want you will reproach us, not for what we have used, but for what we have wasted." Using natural resources is not a bad thing so long as they are used responsibly and replaced so that others can use them, too.

"The road to success is the right use of what we have and the improvement of present opportunity," Roosevelt said. Just because something is good does not mean that we should stop improving. At one point in time there were cellphones as big as a brick, before that there were pay phones, and before that you could only call someone from your house.

Arbor Day is important because it forces us to look forward to the future, to what's next. It's a time to give a gift to the next generation. When a tree is planted as a little tree it doesn't have much use; but as years go by it grows into something that can be beneficial in many ways.

As time went on, Arbor Day, though it is still practiced in some places, was changed to Earth Day. With less of a focus on planting trees and more of a focus on preserving the Earth in general.

- All content by Lauren Murphy of No Adults Allowed

The truth about climate change and how you can help

Look outside on any Oregon day and the sun will be beaming down. Look out the same window a couple hours later and it's highly likely that it will be pouring down rain. While most Oregonians will say, "That's Oregon weather for you," unpredictable weather is a sign of a bigger issue all around the globe.

Over the last century, the temperature of the Earth has risen 1°C. While that may not seem like a big deal it could have some pretty wild consequences; unpredictable weather is one of them. Earth's rising temperature was once known as global warming, now we call it climate change.

Climate change is caused by the Greenhouse Effect when heat from the sun gets trapped in the Earth's atmosphere and cooks it like a rotisserie chicken. This is caused by the burning of fossil fuels like gas for a car.

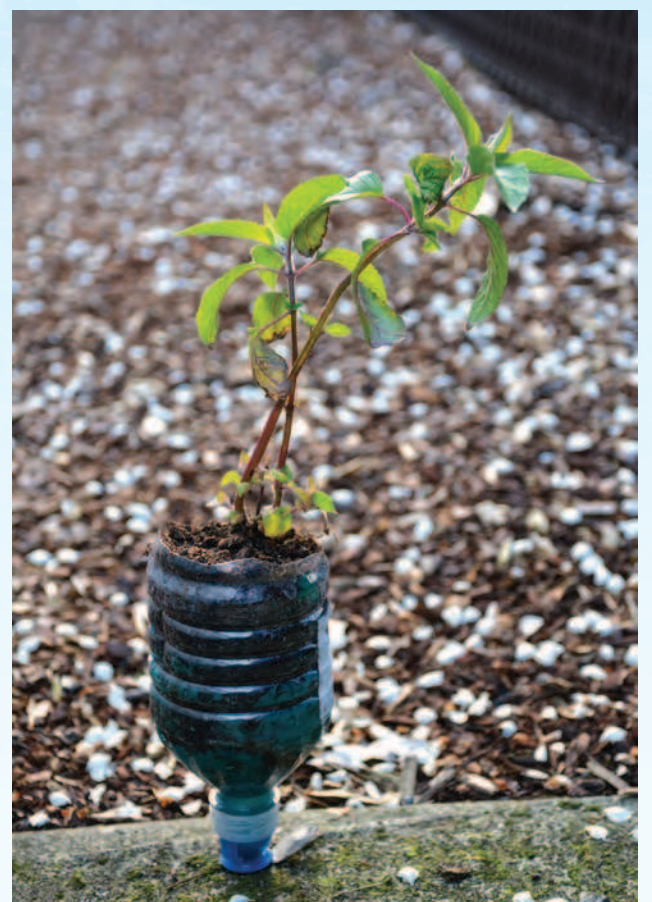
One big contributor to this effect is commercial farming and even silly things like cow farts. While one little cow toot doesn't seem like it would be a big deal at all, there are 1.5 billion little cows releasing gas into the atmosphere, which adds up pretty quickly.

Carbon dioxide is one of the greenhouse gases that contributes to climate change. It's the stuff humans breathe out, but it is also produced in massive amounts by the cars we drive, the factories that produce the things we buy and, in many places, the power that keeps the lights on in homes. Trees play a big role in turning carbon dioxide into the oxygen we breathe, but we are losing trees in massive numbers every year to make more room for humans.

So if the Earth is getting warmer does that mean everywhere will start to feel like Hawaii? No. The planet will be affected more negatively than that. Some areas will get hotter and drier, others might get more rain, huge ice caps are melting, higher sea levels and the possibility of more devastating storms like hurricanes and tornadoes are very real. Rain might not seem like a huge deal to Oregonians, but it's a big deal if it goes away in other places. If it continues, farmers may resort to using harsh chemicals to save money on their crops, chemicals that can ruin the soil for years to come.

Climate change also affects more than just humans and plants, it affects the critters, too. Animals who live in the poles (polar bears, penguins, seals etc.) are losing their homes. According to National Geographic for Kids, experts believe that the Arctic sea ice is melting at a shocking rate – 9 percent per decade! Animals that live in the rainforests are losing their homes due to the cutting and burning of forests. In areas where the sea levels are on the rise, sea turtles eggs on beaches are threatened.

All of this is why you need to do your part every day. Find ways to reduce the amount of trash you create, plant a tree and pick up litter when you see it on the ground. We only have one Earth and we need to keep it safe and healthy for everyone.



make it CORNER

One big contributor to climate change is human waste. So what can we do with all of our plastic bottles? While there are many ideas online,

this alternative use for a water bottle caught my eye.

Cut the bottle in half

Paint the bottle, mine is painted blue and green in honor of the earth and conservation. Let it dry, this takes a long time.

You have a couple of options next: you can plant an already-sprouted plant or you can plant seeds. If you're choosing to plant an already grown plant, be sure to pick something that lives well in pots. You might want to do this outside so that you don't make a mess. Move the plant from the pot it came in the store to the painted water bottle.

If you're planting seeds follow the instructions on the bag. Be sure to follow the care instructions for the plant.



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