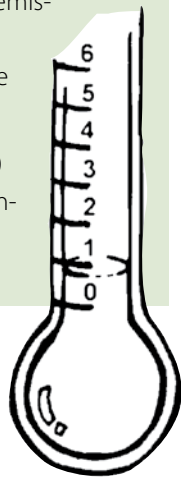


Why is Earth getting warmer?

The planet's atmosphere is made up of gases, such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), that trap the sun's energy, in a process known as the *greenhouse effect*. This is necessary to support life on Earth. When the amount of gases in the atmosphere increases, too much heat is trapped, causing global temperatures to increase.

Did you know?

- The primary cause of increased CO₂ in Earth's atmosphere is produced by the burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and gas for energy.
- Since 1990, the yearly emissions of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases have increased 20 percent.
- Cars produce nearly 20 percent of global greenhouse gases.

**Safety Tip**

Visits to community conservation sites and interviews should be made with the permission and supervision of a guardian.

What is *Conservation in My Community*?


1 Planning

Community groups, local businesses, and state and local agencies can help reduce global warming by taking steps to lower energy consumption and reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. In this project you will interview a person to report on a local conservation effort. By helping to get the word out, you can inspire people to join an ongoing effort or start one of their own.

Check Off Your Progress!

Identify a conservation effort in your community that interests you

- What are people doing in your community in response to global warming? What do you want to learn more about?
- Read your local newspaper to look for upcoming conservation-related news, events, or initiatives.
- Speak with your school principal, librarian, community officials, and business owners to see if they are sponsoring a conservation project, or know of any conservation projects in your area.
- Visit a local recycling center to ask about other community initiatives.

Identify an individual involved in the conservation effort

- Identify a knowledgeable person to interview. Ideally, this person can tell you about the history of the effort, recent activities, and future goals. This person might be the founder of the initiative, a manager, or an active volunteer.

Set up an interview

- Contact the individual and explain that you are writing a report on conservation in your community. Explain that you would like to learn more about their project and that you would like to interview them as part of your research.
- Set a place, date, and time. Be sure the person you are interviewing knows how long the interview will last and that you plan to record the session.
- Offer to supply the person with a list of your interview questions beforehand.

Energy Alternatives

In July 2007, Swiss teacher Louis Palmer left Lucerne, Switzerland on a quest to be the first to drive a solar-powered car around the world. Palmer wants people to be aware of global warming—and potential solutions.



Check Off Your Progress!

Do research

- Gather photographs, newspaper clippings, press releases, and other support material to learn everything you can about the conservation effort.
- Use this research to prepare interview questions.

Prepare questions

- Develop a list of questions you would like to ask. The best questions will reveal basic facts (Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How) or will help uncover interesting stories, and the person's feelings about their experience.
- Use your research to develop questions that encourage the interviewee to share stories in detail.

Sample questions:

1. Tell me about yourself and your background in conservation and community activities.
2. What is your role in the conservation project?
3. How did you first become interested in community conservation efforts?
4. Where and when did the conservation project take place?
5. Why do you think it's important for communities to protect the environment?

Prepare materials

- List of prepared questions
- Audio recorder (digital, cassette, etc.)
- Microphone (if necessary)
- Audio cassettes (if necessary)
- New batteries (if necessary)
- Notebook
- Pens or pencils



Community Action

Two local organizations, Sustainable Energy Resource Group and Efficiency Vermont, offer free workshops to show people how to winterize their homes, using less energy while staying warm during the cold, winter months.

Keep in Mind A good interview sounds like a conversation. If you ask a series of questions without listening to the answers, you might ask a question which has already been answered or you might miss an opportunity to ask a more in-depth question.

Try This For your final question, ask "Is there anything I should have asked that I didn't?"



In School

Students in southern California are trading in their regular light bulbs for compact fluorescent bulbs (CFL). The students have already swapped more than 8,000 light bulbs. The bulbs will save three million kilowatt hours – that translates to \$400,000 worth of energy savings!

2 Interviewing

Practice your interviewing style before you start. Here are some tips:

Check Off Your Progress!

- Try a practice interview. This can help you fix confusing questions and organize your question order. Test your recording equipment.
- Practice taking notes. You'll want to take notes as a back-up in case there is a problem with the recording equipment.
- Be natural. Talk WITH the person. Remember, the best interviews are really just engaging conversations.
- It's OK to skip some of the questions you prepared. If the question doesn't seem important during the interview you don't need to ask it.
- Arrive early, if possible. Test your recording equipment to make sure it is working.
- Turn the recorder on before the interview, then just forget about it.
- Look at the person's eyes. Try not to look at your notes or the audio recorder.
- Listen carefully to what the person says. They may inspire you to ask a new or clarifying question.
- Thank the person for taking the time to give you an interview. Keep the recorder running as you say goodbye.
- Take your time during the interview. Wait until the person has finished speaking before you ask a question or make a comment. A good interview can take an hour.

A nationwide effort, the *Call2Recycle*TM program collects and recycles rechargeable batteries and used cell phones. So far they have recycled more than 31 million pounds of rechargeable batteries, helping to preserve the environment and reduce solid waste.

3 Reporting

Check Off Your Progress!



In School

Clearview Elementary School in Hanover, Pennsylvania, was built with energy efficiency in mind. The school uses 30% less water and saves \$18,000 a year on energy costs.

Transcribe the interview

- Write out both questions and answers. A transcript should accurately reflect everything that was said. Try to be as accurate as possible.
- Outline the important points.
- Edit the transcript for clarity, flow, and length.

Write the story

- Write an expository essay that describes a conservation effort in your community using information from your interview.
- Include details and important quotes from the interview.
- Never change what the interviewee said or how they said it. Sometimes, the best stories are told in the way they are shared.
- Write a "lede" (or "lead"—the first sentence or the first paragraph of an article). It can summarize the article, set the scene, or establish the mood of the story.
- Introduce your subject.
- Add details from your notes—appearance and personality of your subject, sounds, smells, visuals.
- The end—wrap up the package with an insightful sentence or two, or a good quote.
- Check the facts.

Self-Evaluation

- What I did well _____

- What I can improve on _____

- The most challenging part of my project was _____

- The most enjoyable part of my project was _____

Don't forget! Write a thank you note to the person you interviewed. Include a copy of your report with your thank you.