



Positive Action

Part 1

A. Read the list of environmental problems. Check (✓) the ones that are in your community or country. Add problems in your community or country to the list.



☐ changes in weather



☐ air pollution



☐ water pollution



☐ noise pollution



☐ too many people



☐ fires



☐ floods



☐ trash



☐ a problem in my community _____



Part 2

A. Two kids wrote to the United Nations about environmental problems in their communities. Read the letters. Then answer the questions.

Dear United Nations,

I'm a middle school student in Anchorage, Alaska, in the US. Here in Alaska, we can really see the effects of a hotter climate on the Arctic. The Arctic ice is melting into the ocean. That is creating big environmental problems. When the ice melts, there is more carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the air. The ground is becoming warmer and softer, so the buildings and roads are moving and breaking. Finally, wild animals, like polar bears, need cold weather to live. Please help with the problem of climate change.

Sincerely,
Lucy Nez

Dear UN,

I live in Manaus City, Brazil, and I'm very worried about the Amazon forest. Do you know how many plants and animals are in the Amazon forest? There are more than 40,000 species of plants and 5,000 species of animals. First, the plants in the Amazon help make rain in North and South America. We need the rain for farms and water to drink. Second, we use a lot of plants in the Amazon to make medicines. Third, the trees in the Amazon forest take carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the air and put oxygen (O₂) in the air. All people and plants need oxygen to live. What will happen if people or forest fires destroy the Amazon? Please help us save our Amazon forest.

Best regards,
Roberto Silva

1. Lucy lives in ...
a) North America b) South America c) Australia
2. Lucy is worried about
a) the roads and buildings b) the wild animals c) a and b
3. The plants in the Amazon help make rain ...
a) in Brazil b) in North America c) in North and South America
4. A lot of plants in the Amazon are important for ...
a) food b) houses c) medicines
5. The trees in the Amazon forest take ... from the air.
a) carbon dioxide b) oxygen c) water

B. Choose an environmental problem in your community. Write a letter to the United Nations about the problem.

Dear United Nations,

I live in _____

I'm very worried about _____

This problem happens because _____

When this problem happens, I see the bad effects: _____

Please help us _____

Sincerely,



Part 3

A. Read the text. What size carbon footprint do you think the Smith family has? Check (✓) your answer.

☐ small

☐ medium

☐ large

What Size Is Your Carbon Footprint

Your carbon footprint is the amount of carbon dioxide you produce every day. For example, if you go to school by car, your carbon footprint is large. If you go to school by bicycle, your carbon footprint is small.

The Smith family has a carbon footprint. Is it large or small?

- The Smiths live in a house with five bedrooms and two bathrooms.
- Mrs. Smith drives her six kids to school. She has a big car.
- Mr. Smith drives to his job. He has a big car.
- They drive their cars to the **mall** to go shopping. They always buy new clothes.
- Every **two weeks**, they drive 100 km to see their grandparents.
- They usually take one big **vacation** per year. They fly three hours to a different part of the country.
- Mrs. Smith travels by plane for work about four times a year.
- The Smiths usually buy food at a large supermarket.
- They don't recycle their paper, cans, or bottles.



mall
two weeks
vacation



shopping centre
fortnight
holiday

B. Circle the letters to complete the sentences. Then look at the key to find your family's carbon footprint.

1. My family house is ...
a) large b) medium c) small
2. For vacations, my family usually ...
a) flies b) drives far away c) stays home or close to home
3. My family usually goes to work or school by...
a) car b) bus or subway c) foot or bicycle
4. My family usually shops at ...
a) a big supermarket b) a small local store c) a farmers' market
5. My family usually eats ...
a) a lot of meat b) some meat c) little or no meat
6. My family ... recycles paper, cans, and bottles.
a) almost never b) sometimes c) almost always

Key:

Mostly a answers: Your family has a large carbon footprint.

Mostly b answers (or a mix of a, b, and c answers): Your family has a medium carbon footprint.

Mostly c answers: Your family has a small carbon footprint.

C. How can you have a small carbon footprint? Discuss ideas in groups.



Extension

A. Work in groups. Think about how the students and teachers in your school cause environmental problems. Write three more examples.

- using too much paper
- using too much electricity
- _____
- _____
- _____

B. Choose one environmental problem that the people at your school can help with. Complete the chart as a group. Then present your ideas to the class.

Environmental problem:	
Reason(s) for problem:	
Solution(s) to problem:	
Plan for finding volunteers or changing what people do:	