



Give Your Holiday Tree Another Life

The holidays bring visions of hot chocolate, warm wishes, music, and family and friends gathered all around. We decorate our homes and schools with special decorations. How exciting it is to put up the holiday tree! We take such care in placing our favorite ornaments, lights, garlands, and other special touches in just the right spots to make a beautiful display. As we ring in the New Year, we clear away the tree and start dreaming of spring. Whatever type of tree your family enjoys this year, it can have new life after the holidays.

If your family uses a real, cut tree, please recycle it. No matter where you live in Thurston County, you can recycle your tree for free! Trees aren't recycled in the same way as bottles, papers, and cans. Instead, trees can be recycled by being ground into useful mulch or compost. Remove all decorations, lights, and garlands, as well as the stand.

In some areas, trees will be picked up at the curb. Trees being picked up must be cut into 3-foot sections. Other residents will be able to drop off trees. Please visit ThurstonSolidWaste.org to find out where to recycle trees in your area.

Tree limbs, boughs, or other greenery will be accepted ONLY at the Yard Debris Site at the Waste and Recovery Center at 2420 Hogum Bay NE in Lacey.

If you have a living holiday tree attached to a ball of dirt and roots, it can be planted in the ground. Be sure to give your tree the best chance to thrive by digging a good-sized hole before the ground freezes.

If you have an artificial tree, carefully pack it up for next year. If you'll be replacing it next year, donate the old one to a charitable organization, like Goodwill. Or, keep the tree to make an extra room merry next year. You could decorate the extra tree in a fun theme or with special hand-crafted ornaments made from reused items around the house.

When the celebrating season is over, keep our earth happy by giving your tree new life.



Get the RRR Patch!

Thurston County Solid Waste's Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle Patch Program is designed to teach youth the meaning of "reduce, reuse, and recycle" by encouraging them to take better care of their environment and neighborhood. After completing activities and action projects, each individual or group fills out a Patch Requirement Sheet. Thurston County Solid Waste will then send free patches to the group for practicing the 3Rs. For details, visit our website, ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Youth, or contact us at 360-867-2491 or SolidWasteYouth@co.thurston.wa.us.



Give Gifts in Creative, Earth-Friendly Wrappings

We all enjoy birthdays and other special days year-round. During the winter months, we also celebrate certain holidays. With so many merry celebrations during this fun time of year, families do lots of gift buying and giving.

If you choose to wrap gifts, consider fun, reusable materials instead of traditional, expensive wrapping paper. Think it can't be done? Think again! Make the wrap-

ping part of the gift. For instance, wrap items in a dishtowel, reusable bag, scarf, tablecloth, T-shirt, or pillowcase with reusable ribbon or yarn. You can also place gifts inside containers like cookie tins, flower pots, and baskets.



Get really creative and wrap gifts in your own artwork or the Sunday comics. Ribbons and bows can also be replaced with dried flowers or hand-cut snowflakes made from reused paper (of course!). Save money and help the environment at the same time!

Boxes, Boxes Everywhere!

Buying items online and having them delivered to your home is popular year-round. Everyone loves to receive boxes and to imagine the surprises they hold. But especially during the holidays, your family might start to see those brown cardboard shipping boxes piling up.

Please don't throw these boxes into the trash! Instead, reuse them or recycle them. Most shipping boxes are made from corrugated cardboard, which is made of three or more layers. Often, there are one or more squiggly or zigzag layers of cardboard sandwiched between two flat layers of cardboard. Corrugated cardboard is great for protecting items during shipping or moving. Because of its strength, it is sturdy and reusable.



If you need ideas for making cool toys out of recycled boxes, check out this website, momjunction.com/articles/cardboard-box-crafts-for-kids_00382343, or search online. Shipping boxes can also be reused by people who are moving. Have an adult family member offer the boxes for free on an online marketplace like Letgo, Freecycle, or Nextdoor.

Corrugated boxes are also very recyclable! Just flatten the boxes and place them into your cart or take them to one of our recycling drop-off facilities. Please visit ThurstonSolidWaste.org to find out where to recycle in your area. While you are collecting things to recycle, don't forget that cereal boxes, pasta boxes, gift boxes, and other types of paperboard should be flattened and placed into the recycling carts too!

WHAT'S WRONG

Hunter was in a hurry when he filled in the blanks and he didn't check his work. Six of the terms don't match the definitions!

Instructions: Look at each definition. If the term is not correct, cross it out and write the correct term. (Hint: You will use each term only once.)

- | | |
|------------|---|
| food chain | 1. group of living things in which the first is eaten by the second, the second by the third, and so on |
| decomposer | 2. breaks down dead organisms |
| ecology | 3. all living and nonliving things in an area |
| predator | 4. animal that is hunted by another animal |
| consumer | 5. lives off another living thing and is harmful to it |
| producer | 6. makes its own food using sunlight |
| ecosystem | 7. study of interactions between living things and their environment |
| parasite | 8. animal that captures other animals for food |
| prey | 9. gets its food from plants and/or animals |
| food web | 10. complex series of food chains |

Bonus:

1. When a hawk captures a chipmunk, is the hawk predator or prey? _____
2. What is the chipmunk? _____
3. Is a sunflower a producer or a consumer? _____
4. In a compost pile, is a worm a consumer or a decomposer? _____
5. Could the hawk, chipmunk, sunflower, and worm be part of a food chain? _____

Where in the world?

Nickel is the dominant material used to make the kind of rechargeable batteries you might use in your game controllers or toys. Using the clues below, figure out which country produced the most nickel in 2017 at about 400,000 metric tons and then circle it on the map.

Clues:

1. I sit along the equator, surrounded by the Indian and Pacific oceans.
2. I am made up of over 10,000 islands!
3. Malaysia and the Philippines are my neighbors.
4. I am just north of Australia.

Answer: _____



Something's Missing

Instructions: Fill in the missing vowels to read the message.

Wh n t s t m f r h l d y s h p p n g,
my f m l y h a d s t a s c n d h n d
s t r . v r y y e r, w f n d l t s
f g r a t g f t s.

DARE TO COMPARE

Instructions: Use the clues to find the correct answers. Show your work.

The letter S stands for the number of old sweaters Olivia donated last week.

Clues:

- A. $S + S + S \leq 24$
- B. $S > 5$
- C. S is an even number.
- D. 3 is a factor of S.

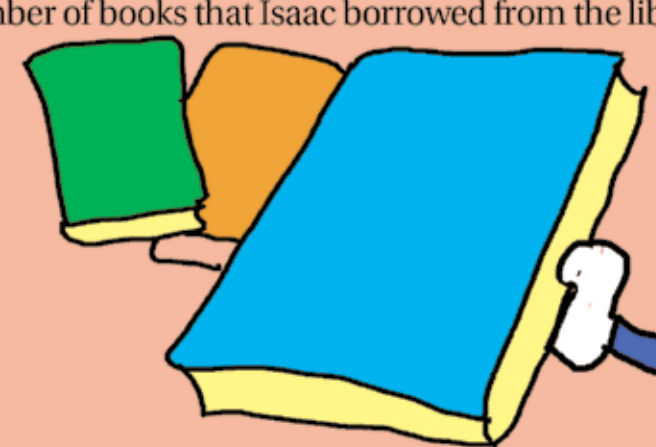
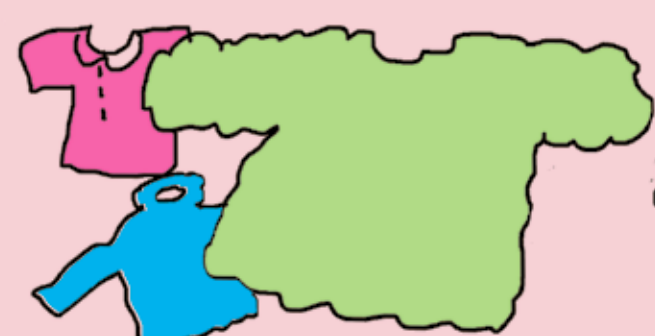
1. Based on the first two clues, make a list of all possible answers. _____
2. Using the third clue, list the possible answers. _____
3. What is S? _____
4. Did you need to use all four clues? _____

The letter B stands for the number of books that Isaac borrowed from the library.

Clues:

- A. $B > 12 + 13$
- B. B is not an even number.
- C. $B \leq 30$
- D. 9 is not a factor of B.
- E. B is a prime number.

1. To find B, which clue would you use first? _____
2. Which clue would you use second? _____
3. What is B? _____
4. Did you need to use all clues to find the answer? _____



LITERALLY

An idiom is a phrase whose meaning doesn't match the literal meaning of the words that make it up. Idioms have a cultural meaning (a meaning shared and accepted by a group of speakers), but not a literal one. We also call idioms "figures of speech."

Instructions: In each paragraph, circle the idiom and then explain what it means.

1. Diego's mom said, "I refuse to pay an arm and a leg for bottled water when we can refill our own bottles with perfectly fine tap water each day."

2. At school, Amy has her finger in every pie. She leads the Green Team and the Recycling Club, sings in the choir, serves as class president, and plays soccer.

3. When Sofia was planning the swap meet for toys and games at school, she had to cut through a lot of red tape.

Bonus: Write a sentence that includes "pay an arm and a leg" and "repair."

Supplying the Demand

Instructions:
Circle the correct answer:

If more sweaters are donated to a thrift shop than it normally sells, what will happen to the price of sweaters at the thrift shop?

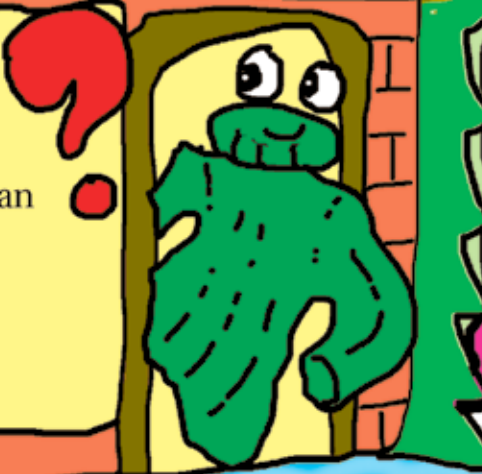
Stay the same Increase Decrease

SWAP

\$



G



Recycle Only These Plastics, Please!

If you see a chasing-arrows recycle symbol on something plastic, you recycle it, right? Not quite. The recycle symbol and number inside only tell you the kind of plastic that was used to make that item. The symbol and number do NOT tell you whether or not we currently accept it for recycling. Only some types of plastics can be easily recycled and made into something new.

Here are the plastic items you can currently recycle in Thurston County:

- Clean plastic bottles and jars
- Clean plastic tubs that held dairy items such as yogurt, butter, or sour cream
- Clean plastic buckets, like kitty litter buckets
- NO lids, caps, or handles



Where Do I Take My...?

Have an old pair of glasses or athletic shoes that you've outgrown? Want to know where to take them for reuse or recycling? We have the answer for you at WhereDoITakeMy.org. At this website, you will find a listing of all reuse and recycling locations in our area. From packing peanuts to broken cell phones, we've got you covered!



Relax, Recharge, and Recycle

You finish your homework and pick up your game controller, but no matter how hard you press the buttons, it won't work. It's time for new batteries. When you find the new batteries you need, what should you do with the old ones?

Some batteries are called single-use and some are rechargeable. Single-use batteries are often "alkaline." These are like little pre-charged packages of energy. When you put an alkaline battery into a device, the metals inside the battery begin to create energy immediately. When the battery is out of energy, it can no longer be used, which is why we call them "dead batteries." In Thurston County, residents may take alkaline batteries to be recycled at Interstate Batteries on Martin Way East or you can place alkaline batteries into the trash. Please make sure the batteries say "alkaline" before placing into the trash.

Rechargeable batteries are made so that when the energy is drained, they can be recharged in a special charging unit or be plugged in with a charging cable. They can be used again and again, and many can be charged up to 1,000 times before they need to be replaced. Rechargeable batteries contain dangerous materials that shouldn't go into landfills.



Rechargeable batteries can be recycled for free at Thurston County's HazoHouse. To find other locations, visit WhereDoITakeMy.org.

The next time you need new batteries for that game controller or other electronic devices, wouldn't it be nice to have exactly what you need all charged up and ready to go? With rechargeable batteries, you don't need to make as many trips to the store for new batteries. Keep two sets so you always have a set in use and another set charged and ready. You will feel great knowing that you are keeping our planet green by reducing waste and energy use.

Recycling and Waste Reduction Presentations Offered

Thurston County Solid Waste staff are here to make environmental education easy. We use visual aids of various media, hands-on activities, and take-home materials to help students enjoy and retain what they've learned. Lessons are designed by grade level and cover consumerism, wasted food, recycling, and more. Presentations are approximately 60 minutes. To schedule a free presentation, visit ThurstonSolidWaste.org/Youth.



10 Creative Ways to Reuse Coffee Pods

Coffee makers that use coffee pods (often called "K-Cups®") can be convenient, fast, and easy. But, the downside is that there are LOTS of these plastic pods being sent to landfills. In fact, there were an estimated 9.8 BILLION sent to landfills last year! Since they are not able to be recycled, here are some ways that your family can reuse coffee pods and keep them out of the landfill.

1. Start seedlings for your garden.
2. Organize craft supplies.
3. Use as a scoop in your flour or sugar containers.
4. Organize small school or office supplies like paper clips and thumbtacks.
5. Young children can use them to do a money sorting activity.
6. Cover the small hole at the bottom with glue and use them as small paint pots.
7. Make a mobile.
8. Use them in a dollhouse for garbage pails, buckets, or laundry hampers.
9. Make a bowling game by using them as pins and a marble as a bowling ball.
10. Keep some for toddlers to play with at bathtime.



Credit: grafikazurum / iStock | Getty Images Plus

Reusing coffee pods is better than throwing them away, but reducing the number used is even better! Instead of the disposable pods, use the refillable kind. This may be the perfect holiday gift for the coffee drinker in your family.

