

FCPS Earth Week 2022 Driving Questions, Jokes, Fun Facts, and Reflections



Monday, April 18 – Watershed Day

Driving Question: How can we, as members of the community, impact what happens downstream in our watershed, in an effort to decrease the negative impacts to water quality, quantity and wildlife habitat?

What is a [watershed](#)? What purpose does a watershed serve? What factors influence the health of our watershed? How are wildlife impacted by watershed health?

Jokes

Q: Why do seagulls fly over the sea?

A: Because if they flew over the bay they would be Bagels!

Q: Why are fish never good tennis players?

A: They don't like getting close to the net

Q: What did the ocean say to the beach?

A: Nothing, it just waved.

Fun Facts

- Fairfax County is in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which is home to over 18 million people and 3,600 species of plants and animals from Virginia to New York. [\[source\]](#)
- Only 1% of the Earth's water supply is fresh water available for human needs. Saltwater sources make up 97% of the Earth's water supply and another 2% is locked in ice caps and glaciers. [\[source\]](#)
- Nine in ten watershed residents never toss food wrappers, cups or cigarette butts on the ground. Almost eight in ten watershed residents pick up litter when they see it. [\[source\]](#)
- The average American uses 80-100 gallons of water per day. [\[source\]](#)

Reflections

- What do you do every day that affects your watershed?
- How can you use water more efficiently at your school? How can you use water more efficiently at home?
- Compare how humans, wildlife, and plants use resources in your watershed.
- How can you keep your watershed clean and healthy?



Tuesday, April 19 – Zero Waste Day

Driving Question: How can we, as materials scientists, design and use products to reduce consumption and waste at school and at home?

How does nature cycle materials? What can we do to better mimic the way nature cycles materials?

Jokes

Q: Why did the chicken carry the plastic bottle across the road?

A: To get to the recycling bin.

Q: Why are recycling bins optimistic?

A: Because they're full of cans.

Fun Facts

- Recycling a stack of newspaper 3 feet high saves one tree. [\[source\]](#)
- More than 8 million tonnes of plastic end up in the oceans each year. That is the equivalent of emptying a garbage truck of plastic every minute. [\[source\]](#)
- Most of Fairfax County's trash goes to the Covanta Energy-from-Waste Facility where it is burned to create electricity to power 80,000 homes. [\[source\]](#)

Reflections

- How important is it to minimize the amount of waste you create?
- How can you reduce waste at home and at school?
- What is something that is commonly thrown away? How could you reuse or repurpose this?
- Why do you think people litter? How could you persuade someone not to litter?



Wednesday, April 20 – Climate Change Day

Driving Question: How can we, as landscape architects, design and construct an outdoor green space with a net zero carbon impact (reduce greenhouse gas emissions), which will provide opportunities for students to learn and study?

**How do our behaviors and actions in our school and homes contribute to carbon dioxide emissions?
What is the effect of those behaviors and actions on the health of our ecosystem?**

Jokes

Q: What's the difference between weather and climate?

A: You can't weather a tree, but you can climate.

Q: What should you eat for breakfast on Earth Day?

A: Pangeacakes

Q: Why didn't the dendrochronologist get married?

A: He only ever dated trees

Q: What do you call a bee that's having a really bad hair day?

A: A frisbee

Fun Facts

- Averaged across land and ocean, the 2020 surface temperature was 1.76° F (0.98° Celsius) warmer than the twentieth-century average of 57.0°F (13.9°C) and 2.14°F (1.19°C) warmer than the pre-industrial period (1880-1900). [\[source\]](#)
- The ozone layer is in the Earth's stratosphere and protects the planet from incoming solar radiation. In the 1970s and 1980s, scientists in Antarctica discovered and researched a "hole" or thinning in the ozone layer caused by chemicals called chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which were commonly used in air conditioners, aerosols, and industrial cleaning products starting in the 1960s. Seventy governments from around the world signed the Montreal Protocol in 1986 to address ozone destruction and ban CFCs. In 2017, the ozone hole was the smallest it has been since 1988. [\[source\]](#)

Reflections

- How is climate change affecting people?
- How is climate change affecting farming and our food?
- What actions can you take to lessen the impact of climate change?



Thursday, April 21 – Energy Day

Driving Question: How can we, as members of the community, conserve energy and educate others about energy conservation and its environmental and economic benefits?

Where does energy come from? How does energy flow through nature? How do our behavior and attitudes around energy usage impact our economic and environmental health?

Jokes

Q: Why did the sun go to school?

A: To get brighter.

Q: Why is wind power popular?

A: Because it has a lot of fans!

Q: What would you call a power failure?

A: A current event.

Fun Facts

- FCPS spends over \$33 million on energy each year.
- K-12 school districts in the United States spend \$6 billion on energy annually. [\[source\]](#)
- In some parts of the world, cow dung is used to create energy. [\[source\]](#)
- In 2018, natural gas fueled 53% of Virginia's electricity net generation, nuclear power provided almost 31%, coal fueled about 10% and renewable resources, primarily biomass, supplied nearly 7%. [\[source\]](#)

Reflections

- How do you use energy in your everyday life?
- What have you done at home to save energy and what can you do better?
- The last time your power went out, what were some things you needed and couldn't use? What were some things you wanted and couldn't use? What did you enjoy about not having power?



Friday, April 22 – Earth Day

Driving Question: How can we, as wildlife biologists and forest ecologists, enhance forest habitat on our school grounds and in our local communities?

How have forests changed over the last 300 years? Why do we need forests? Why are forest ecosystems important to wildlife? What kind of forest is growing in your schoolyard or community? What are current threats to our forests?

Jokes

Q: What did the big flower say to the little flower?

A: Hey, bud!

Q: How do trees get on the internet?

A: They log in.

Q: What did Obi Wan Kenobi say to the tree?

A: May the Forest be with you.

Q: How do you send a message in the forest?

A: By moss code

Fun Facts

- Forests and trees help filter and protect the drinking water of 75 percent of the Chesapeake Bay watershed residents. Forests cover 55% of the watershed. [\[source\]](#)
- People who spend time in nature have better focus, lower stress, increased energy levels, and improved mood. [\[source\]](#)
- There are more than 75 native tree species in Virginia. Trees help clean our air, provide us with oxygen, clean our drinking water, provide us with shade, help us save energy, and support wildlife. [\[source 1\]](#) [\[source 2\]](#)

Reflections

- How do you feel when you spend time in nature?
- What is your favorite memory of being in the great outdoors? What makes that memory stand out to you?
- How could you make outdoor spaces friendlier to wildlife?
- What actions can you take to become an ethical and global citizen while celebrating Earth Day today and every day?