The Green Warrior

who fought a war against plastic pollution
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Hello there,

We are smack bang in the middle of another hot summer. We are staying cool by drinking ice cold juices, sucking on ripe, sweet mangoes and avoiding the fiery sun.

Summer is a good time to stay indoors. We keep ourselves busy by reading, playing games with our family and watching movies.

What are your favourite things to do in the summer? Do you have any hobbies you love?

This edition of The Better India Junior is full of activities you can do with your parents and siblings. It has inspiring stories, quizzes and word games. There is an art project that you will enjoy if you like drawing. For all the budding masterchefs, we have added an easy recipe you can make.

We hope you enjoy it.

To tell us if you like the stories and activities and let us know what else you want to see in this magazine, write in to maya@thebetterindia.com. We would love to hear from you!

- The Editors
Aayaan Aggarwal is a 9-year-old boy from Ludhiana. He loves science and is curious about the world around him. When he was 7 years old, he went on a holiday with his family and there he learnt about a big problem. He saw a picture of a whale that had died because it had eaten too much plastic.

Inside the whale’s stomach, scientists found all sorts of plastic such as bottle caps, straws, plastic bags, spoons. When we throw these items in the garbage, they sometimes end up in the sea. Here, marine animals mistake them for food and eat them up, and you know that plastic is not meant to be eaten, right?
The Green Warrior

From that moment on, Aayaan decided that he would stop using plastic as much as possible. He told his mum to stop accepting plastic bags in shops. Once school started, he refused to take plastic lunch boxes and water bottles!

One day, Aayaan met the school Principal and told her about his dream to end plastic pollution forever. The Principal was impressed and she asked him to share his ideas with the whole school during the assembly. Aayaan’s school then started a no-plastic rule and banned all plastic items.

Aayaan did not stop there. Next, he asked all the restaurants in Ludhiana to stop serving soft drinks and juices with plastic straws. Due to his efforts, many restaurants agreed to replace plastic straws with metal ones which can be washed and reused. Aayaan’s next project is to inform people about the dangers of plastic bags. You can follow Aayaan’s journey on his website Anti-Plastic Crew.
Single-use plastics are any kind of plastic item that we can use only once before throwing them away. Such items are also called disposables.

How many of these items are single-use plastic?
As a child Ngangom Bala Devi loved football. She grew up in a village named Irengbam in Manipur. She was famous for winning football matches against all the young boys in the neighbourhood. She began playing when she was 4 years old. But her true love for the game started after she watched Brazilian footballers Ronaldo and Ronaldinho play in the 2002 FIFA World Cup Final.

Her father encouraged her passion for the game and coached her. From playing local and state level matches, Bala Devi went on to become a professional football player. She played for the Indian national level and even captained it. She has won several Player of the Year awards.

Today, Bala Devi is an international football player. She plays with the Scottish Premier League Club named Rangers.
How many Indian sportswomen can you name?

The sport will help you. You can search the Internet or ask your parents for help.

Captain of India’s women’s cricket team. Who is she?

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This athlete won a silver medal in the Jakarta Asian Games. Do you know who she is?

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This badminton player represented India 3 times in the Olympics.

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What is Symmetry?

Take a look in the mirror. Does one side of your face look like the other? There may be slight differences, but your face is symmetrical. But what does this mean?

Symmetry is a concept commonly found in math and geometry, but also in art, architecture and design.

When an object has symmetry, you can draw a line down the middle of it and you will find that both halves of it look exactly the same. This line is called a line of symmetry. When an object has symmetry, we say it is symmetrical. The opposite of symmetrical is asymmetrical.

There are many different kinds of symmetry. But the simplest kind is called ‘reflectional symmetry’. An object that has reflectional symmetry is like a mirror image. If you draw a line down the centre of that object and fold it in half, the two sides would match up.
Many basic shapes such as squares, rectangles and circles are symmetrical. See for yourself!

Take a sheet of paper.

Hold it so that it is vertical (the paper should look longer than it is wide).

Fold the paper perfectly in half. Make sure all of the edges line up. Open your paper up and see if the two sides look exactly the same along the fold.

Do you think the paper could be folded another way to create a second line of symmetry?

Nature is full of objects with reflectional symmetry. Everywhere you look, you can find examples of it. Perhaps the easiest example of symmetry in nature is butterfly wings. When a butterfly folds its wings, you can see that they are the same shape.

Now that you know what symmetry means, go on and see if you can find symmetrical objects around your home. You will be surprised how many you find.
Using what you know about symmetry, complete this drawing of an owl. Once you’re done, colour it. E-mail your artwork to jredition@thebetterindia.com. The best drawing will be featured in next week’s edition.
**Why do we have leap years?**

March has 31 days and September has 30 days. Why does February alone have 29 days every 4 years? And why do we need leap years? Let’s find out.

**Why do leap years occur?**
The Earth takes 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds to complete a revolution around the sun. This is called a solar year. But, to make things easy for ourselves, we say that a year has 365 days. But what happens to that extra time?

**Why do leap years occur?**
It will add up and we will lose a full day every 4 years. The seasons won’t match the months, we won’t be able to celebrate festivals on time, and everyone will be very confused. To make up for the lost time, we add an extra day to the calendar every 4 years.

**Why do leap years occur?**
This practice was started by the Roman emperor Julius Caesar. These extra days are called leap days and the years in which they occur are called leap years. Leap years always fall on years that can be divided by 4.
How much did you learn?

Did you know that 2020 is a leap year? Look at a calendar and see for yourself! Now let’s see how much you’ve learnt about leap years.

How many days does a leap year have?
- 366
- 365
- 364

How often do leap years occur?
- Every 2 years
- Every 4 years
- Every 8 years

Who were the people who first came up with the idea of using leap years?
- The Egyptians
- The Romans
- The Greeks

Which of these is not a leap year?
- 2004
- 2011
- 2016

We need leap years because
- The Sun is getting smaller
- The Earth’s rotation is slowing down
- It takes the Earth more than a year to orbit the Sun
Every week, we will help you discover some interesting stuff to read, hear or watch. Here are some of our favourite books on the environment written for kids.

**SO YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT – Bijal Vachharajani**

Ever wondered what it is like to live on a planet that's a few degrees warmer? This interactive book looks at climate change, food, waste, water and wildlife; explains scientific concepts and asks important questions.

Best for – Ages 9+

**ONE WORLD – Michael Foreman**

This is a beautifully illustrated book about pollution and the links between us and the natural world.

Best for – Ages 6+

**GRETA AND THE GIANTS – Zoe Tucker & Zoe Persico**

This book retells the story of Greta Thunberg’s fight to save the environment and how you can help her.

Best for – Ages 6+
1. Use a bowl or cup to draw a circle on a sheet of cardboard. The circle should be about 5 centimetres in diameter.
2. Cut out the circle.
3. Ask your parents for help with this next step. Cut a tiny slit in the centre of the circle. It should be small enough for a one rupee coin to slide in to. If the slit is too big, the coin will not stay in place.
4. Colour your spinner. Then slip a coin in the centre.
5. Your coin spinner is ready!
Make these colourful fruit kababs for an easy and tasty snack. Share the idea with your friends so they can enjoy them too!

**You’ll need:**
8 cubes of watermelon, seeds removed
8 pieces of papaya or orange
8 cubes of mango
8 cubes of pineapple or banana
8 slices of kiwi or green grapes
8 purple grapes
8 wooden or metal skewers
Make your fruit kababs

On each skewer, put 1 piece each of watermelon, papaya/orange, mango, pineapple, kiwi/green grape and purple grape. Arrange the skewers in a rainbow shape and enjoy! You can also get creative with your kababs by cutting the fruit in different shapes or topping your kababs with chocolate sauce. Yum!

If you try this recipe, don’t forget to take a picture and send it to us! We would love to see your colourful creations.
In the puzzle below are the names of 10 Indian states, Can you find them all?

*Clue: look forwards, backwards, upwards, downwards and diagonally.*

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Did you solve last week’s Word Jumble? How many of the world’s capital cities did you get right? Use the answers below to check.

1. **Canberra**
2. **Dhaka**
3. **Athens**
4. **Cape Town**
5. **Kuala Lumpur**
Thank you for reading.

What did you think of this edition? Loved a story? Got more ideas to share? Tell us all this and more.

You or your parents can email us on jredition@thebetterindia.com

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