

# L.A. youth teacher's guide

*Publishing Schedule*

**L.A. Youth will arrive the week of March 28, 2011**

## Key to using the March-April 2011 issue:

ARTICLE and PAGE NUMBER	KEY TEACHING POINTS
<p><b>Surf's up</b> p. 5 It took months to learn, but now Tyler loves riding the waves.</p>	<p>What new activity have you tried? Was it harder than you expected? Why did you keep at it rather than give up?</p>
<p><b>Will drug searches help?</b> p. 6 Jacky hopes police dogs keep weed out of her school.</p>	<p>What do you think about using dogs to search for drugs at school? Do you think the searches are an invasion of your privacy?</p>
<p><b>Do you have spirit?</b> p. 8 We asked the members of our teen staff how they show their school pride.</p>	<p>Do you have school pride? What can schools do to help students feel proud of their school? What can students do?</p>
<p><b>I love my clunker</b> p. 9 It has dents and breaks down, but Patricia's car gets her where she wants to go.</p>	<p>Have you gotten something you really wanted that didn't turn out to be what you expected? How did you make the best of it?</p>
<p><b>COVER STORY: Getting off the streets</b> pp. 10-12 Two teens tell us about being homeless and how they got help.</p>	<p>What assumptions do you have about homeless teens? What can society do to help teens who are homeless?</p>
<p><b>Gasping for air</b> Special Pullout Section 1 Brian's asthma makes it hard to breathe on smoggy days.</p>	<p>Do you notice when it's smoggy out? How has it affected you?</p>
<p><b>Small steps to clean air</b> Special Pullout Section 2-3 These teens used less energy to help reduce pollution.</p>	<p>See lesson plan on page 2.</p>
<p><b>Alone at a new school</b> pp. 18-19 Making friends was hard for Sophie because she's shy.</p>	<p>How do you handle being in a situation where you don't know anyone? What could you do to help new people feel more comfortable?</p>
<p><b>My race doesn't hold me back</b> pp. 20-21 Edgar no longer thinks that Latinos can't be as successful as others.</p>	<p>How have stereotypes affected you? What helped you realize they weren't true?</p>
<p><b>Classical music never goes out of style</b> p. 23 After learning to play the piano, Victor filled his iPod with Bach and Beethoven.</p>	<p>What's your favorite genre of music? Why do you think classical music isn't popular with teens? Would you ever give classical music a try?</p>

# Understanding air pollution

A lesson plan to go with “Small steps to clean air” from the March–April 2011 issue of L.A. Youth. In this article, teens write about helping to reduce air pollution by using less energy and driving less.

By Amanda Riddle, co-managing editor

Grades: 7-12

Subjects: language arts, life skills, health, environmental science

Suggested Time Allowance: 45 minutes-1 hour

## Resources/Materials:

- copies of the L.A. Youth article “Small steps to clean air” (one per student)
- pens and paper
- white board or blackboard

## Overview:

Students will learn about air pollution, how it affects them and what they can do to help improve the air.

## Warm-up:

Write “smog” on the board and ask your students what they know about air pollution. They may describe it as a brown haze or say that they notice it’s worse in the summer or better after it rains. They may say how it affects them, like causing asthma attacks or making them cough or wheeze when they’re doing physical activity outside.

## Assignment:

Have your students take the following quiz to determine how much they know about the air that we breathe every day. See page 3 of the teacher’s guide for an easy to print version.

1) What is smog?

Air pollution

Ozone, particulates, carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide

The brown, hazy stuff you see in the sky

All of the above

2) What causes half of the Los Angeles area’s air pollution?

Ships at the ports

Cars, trucks and buses

Trains

Wildfires

3) Can you tell how polluted the air is by looking at it?

Yes

No

4) Air quality in the Los Angeles area is worse now than 30 years ago.

True

False

5) How does the air in the Los Angeles area compare to the rest of the U.S.?

Our air is cleaner

Our air is about the same

Our air is dirtier

6) Smog is known to make asthma worse and damage lungs. But it also can increase the risk of what disease?

Diabetes

Cancer

Gum Disease

Arthritis

Alzheimer’s

7) Which of these activities does NOT help reduce pollution?

Driving less

Opening windows when it’s hot outside

Barbecuing with charcoal

Replacing regular light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs)

Taking shorter showers

8) How can you save the most energy when you’re done using your computer?

Turn it off

Turn it off and unplug it

Put it in sleep mode

## Answers:

1. **All of the above.** The ozone that causes pollution is ground-level ozone. It’s different from the ozone layer in our upper atmosphere, which occurs naturally and shields the earth from the sun’s harmful ultraviolet rays.

2. **Cars, trucks and buses.** While all the choices cause smog, motor vehicles are responsible for more than half of all smog-

forming emissions.

3. **No.** Small particles in the air are what make the sky look brown. However, other air pollutants, such as ozone, are invisible.

4. **False.** In California, pollution today is about half of what it was in 1980, thanks partly to cleaner running cars. But it’s still important to try to reduce smog. In 2010, our air quality was unhealthy on more than 100 days.

5. **Our air is dirtier.** The greater L.A. area is home to the worst smog in the country. Fifteen million people live here and we’re surrounded by mountains so the smog doesn’t have anywhere to go. The sunny, warm weather without a lot of wind traps the smog too.

6. **Cancer.** The soot from diesel engines, like those at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and trucks that transport items from the port, has the potential to cause cancer if someone is exposed to it over a long time.

7. **Barbecuing with charcoal.** Burned wood and charcoal emit carbon monoxide, a pollutant. It’s better to barbecue with natural gas.

8. **Turn it off and unplug it.** Electronics that are plugged in still draw power even when they’re shut off.

Sources: *South Coast Air Quality Management District (aqmd.gov)*, *California Air Resources Board (arb.ca.gov)* and *U.S. Department of Energy (energysavers.gov)*

## Discussion:

Have your students read “Small steps to clean air” on in the special pullout section. After taking the quiz and reading about what other teens did to reduce air pollution, ask your students what they could do. Do they think it would be easy or hard? Do they think they’d get support from their family? What could they do even without that support?

## Extension activity:

Challenge your students to take our Clean Air Challenge and try to reduce their energy use and drive less for one week. Have them write about the experience like our teens did, then try to encourage other students at their school to do it too.

# Quiz: What do you know about air pollution?

- 1) **What is smog?**
  - Air pollution
  - Ozone, particulates, carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide
  - The brown, hazy stuff you see in the sky
  - All of the above
- 2) **What causes half of the Los Angeles area's air pollution?**
  - Ships at the ports
  - Cars, trucks and buses
  - Trains
  - Wildfires
- 3) **Can you tell how polluted the air is by looking at it?**
  - Yes
  - No
- 4) **Air quality in the Los Angeles area is worse now than 30 years ago.**
  - True
  - False
- 5) **How does the air in the Los Angeles area compare to the rest of the U.S.?**
  - Our air is cleaner
  - Our air is about the same
  - Our air is dirtier
- 6) **Smog is known to make asthma worse and damage lungs. But it also can increase the risk of what disease?**
  - Diabetes
  - Cancer
  - Gum Disease
  - Arthritis
  - Alzheimer's
- 7) **Which of these activities does NOT help reduce pollution?**
  - Driving less
  - Opening windows when it's hot outside
  - Barbecuing with charcoal
  - Replacing regular light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs)
  - Taking shorter showers
- 8) **How can you save the most energy when you're done using your computer?**
  - Turn it off
  - Turn it off and unplug it
  - Put it in sleep mode

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**Next Newcomer's Orientation: Saturday, April 16, 11 a.m.-noon** at  
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Call Amanda or Mike at (323) 938-9194.