

(4) A Gift to the Earth

Today is April 22nd, an important date on the calendar. Do you know why? It is Earth Day! At Sunny Elementary School, a girl named Mia and her best friend Leo were talking near the school garden. They enjoyed looking at the bright flowers, but they also noticed something that made them feel worried. They wanted to do something meaningful for the entire planet.

"Leo, look at all this trash hidden near the bushes," Mia said with a sigh. She looked quite sad as she pointed to the colorful plastic wrappers. "Earth Day is like a big birthday for our world. We should give Mother Earth a gift to show our love." Leo looked at the empty plastic bottles scattered on the green grass. "You are right, Mia! But what kind of gift can we give to the Earth? We cannot go to a store and buy a new toy for the whole world."

Mia smiled because she had a clever plan. "We do not need money to give a gift, Leo. We can give the Earth a clean and healthy home! Let's organize a cleaning team right now."

"That is an excellent idea!" Leo shouted with excitement. He ran to the storage room to get some large blue bags. "I will be responsible for picking up the plastic and metal items. You can pick up the loose paper and cardboard."

As they worked hard under the warm sun, their teacher, Ms. White, walked over to see their progress. "What are you two busy doing today?" she asked with a kind smile.

"We are cleaning the school grounds for Earth Day, Ms. White!" Mia explained. "We want to protect the small animals and the garden plants from pollution."

Ms. White nodded her head. "That is very thoughtful of you. Did you know that when we recycle, we save tall trees and keep our water sources clean? Every

small action helps our environment stay strong."

Suddenly, Leo spotted a tiny bird. It was hopping around, searching for food near some old plastic bags. "Oh no!" Leo whispered. "The bird might think the plastic is food. That would be very dangerous for his little stomach." He quickly gathered the bags and tossed them into the trash can. "There you go, little friend. Now you are safe to play."

"Thank you for saving him, Leo," Mia said. "Now, I have one more great idea. Let's plant some new flowers! Bees and butterflies need flowers to survive."

They went to the flower bed and dug small holes in the soft, dark soil. They carefully placed tiny seeds into the ground and provided them with cool water. "Grow well, little seeds," Mia whispered to the soil.

"Ms. White," Leo asked, "can we celebrate Earth Day every single day?" Ms. White laughed softly. "Yes, Leo. We should. We can turn off the lights when we leave a room. We can use less water when we wash our hands. If everyone does a little bit, the Earth will stay happy. Being a friend to nature is the best job in the world."

By the late afternoon, the school garden looked beautiful and spotless. The sun was shining on the new seeds. Mia and Leo felt very proud. They promised to keep the Earth clean all year long.