

MAKE A TERRARIUM

Reading Tip

- Please follow the instructions in Parts 1 to 3 before you listen to and read the passage.
- This passage is a **numbered list** describing how to make a terrarium.
- A useful strategy for determining a purpose for reading is to **preview a text** before actually reading it.

Skill Overview

Meaningful reading requires a purpose. When you understand your purpose for reading a particular text, you can select an appropriate strategy to help meet that goal.



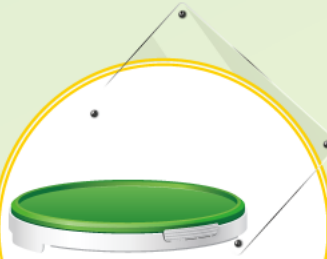
You can create a **miniature ecosystem** by making a terrarium. Within the **terrarium**, all conditions are **controlled** and kept constant. These include **humidity**, temperature, and soil nutrients. The glass or plastic **container** becomes the ecosystem for the plants inside it. Choose plants that have the same **requirements**. This way, they can grow well together inside your terrarium.

Materials Needed

a glass container
(such as a fishbowl
or a large jar)



a cover for the container
(such as plastic wrap or
glass)



coarse gravel



a small plastic screen
or charcoal chips

soil made of
humus, leaf mold,
and potting soil



plants

water mister
or spray
bottle



Vocabulary

miniature
very small

★**ecosystem**
the community of things in nature or in an environment

★**terrarium**
a glass container in which plants are grown

control
to order, limit, or rule something

humidity
a measurement of how much water there is in the air

container
a hollow object that can be used for holding something, especially for carrying or storing it

requirement
something you must do, or something you need

thrive
to be healthy and strong

Directions:

1. Spread a layer of coarse gravel at the bottom of the container. This will keep water from settling in the soil.
2. Place a plastic screen or the charcoal chips on top of the gravel. This will separate the gravel from the soil. Charcoal chips will also help to keep the soil clean.
3. Add a thick layer of soil on top of the plastic screen or charcoal chips. Decide where you want to put the plants. Place them, along with a small clump of dirt from the original pot, in the soil. Do not put them too close together. Plants need space to grow.
4. Spray or mist water on the plants' leaves. The soil should be moist, but not soggy.
5. Place the cover on the terrarium and watch the moisture level for a few days. If the terrarium seems too dry, add some mist. If water drops form on the container, the humidity is too high. Wipe off the glass and leave the cover off for a while to let the terrarium dry out.
6. Place your terrarium where it will get the right amount of light, but don't let it get too hot.

Soon, your terrarium will be able to **thrive** on its own, and you can enjoy your miniature ecosystem.



Steps 1-2



Steps 3-4



Steps 5-6

Reading Skill Comprehension Practice



It is important to consider how certain texts satisfy specific purposes for reading. For example, people generally have a different purpose for reading a newspaper article than for reading a menu.

A **newspaper article** might be **read slowly to learn** and understand specific information. Readers might even read the article **more than once** to understand it.

A **menu** might be **quickly scanned** since the purpose of reading it is simply to find something to eat.

Readers might focus only on the part of the menu that is most appealing.

Part

1

Identify a type of text that matches each purpose below.

Purpose	Type of Text
1. for understanding	
2. to interpret	
3. to enjoy	
4. to solve problems	
5. to answer a specific question	
6. to help form an opinion	
7. to skim for facts	

Part

2

Describe a purpose someone may have for reading this passage about terrariums.

Part

3

Preview the passage and then answer the questions below.

1. What information did you learn from previewing this passage?

2. What is your purpose for reading this passage?

My purpose for reading this passage is

Comprehension Review

Fill in the best answer for each question.

1 You would most likely read this text if you wanted to _____

- A read about different ecosystems in the world.
- B create your own ecosystem.
- C find out what you can do to help the environment.
- D learn about different kinds of farming.

2 People who enjoyed this text probably like to _____

- A fish.
- B hunt.
- C cook.
- D garden.

3 Why is this text a good choice for learning how to make your own terrarium?

- A It has step-by-step directions.
- B It is not about terrariums.
- C The author tells you where to buy a terrarium.
- D If water drops form on the container, the air is too moist.

4 You should spray water on the plant leaves with a mister *before* you _____

- A decide where you want the plants.
- B spread a layer of coarse gravel at the bottom of the container.
- C put on the cover and watch the moisture level for a few days.
- D place a plastic screen or charcoal chips on top of the gravel.

5 Why is it important to choose plants that have the same requirements?

- A They are less expensive.
- B They will grow well together.
- C They are larger.
- D They look more attractive.

6 Why did the author likely write this passage?

- A to share an opinion about plants
- B to persuade you to recycle
- C to give directions
- D to tell a personal story

Word Power

Choose the English word from the Vocabulary list that correctly matches the definition.



1 a glass container in which plants are grown



2 to be healthy and strong



3 the community of things in nature or in an environment



4 very small

Reading Tip

Look quickly at the passage, and see what you can determine from its format. Please follow the instructions in Parts 1 and 2 before you listen to and read the passage.

One effective way to preview material is by **skimming** it. Skimming may include **reading a few words, a sentence, the title, or the headings** to get a sense of what is included in the passage.

The Price to Play

Skill Overview

Previewing text includes **looking at features** such as the title, headings, photos, graphic, and layout. Readers who preview text can also **activate their prior knowledge** and apply what they already know to what they want to learn from the text.



Kevin Donnelly plays soccer. Boy, does he play soccer! Not long ago, the New Jersey boy spent all weekend on the soccer field—three games on Saturday and three on Sunday.

Sound familiar? Forty million kids play **organized** sports. But it's not just the number of kids playing that's amazing. Parents are spending more and more



money and time on their kids' sports careers. Kevin's parents will pay about \$3,000 this year for him to play soccer. That includes club **dues**, private clinics, summer camps, and travel.

Many parents pay top dollar so their kids can have the best private lessons and **equipment**. Others spend hours driving their kids to games. Has the love of competition gone too far? Or are the **benefits** of team sports worth the huge costs and intense pressure to win?

Some experts say that kids benefit from playing team sports as long as they are having fun. "We know from a lot of research that kids who participate in sports tend to do better academically," says Mark Goldstein. He is a child psychologist at Roosevelt University in Chicago, Illinois. "It forces them to be more organized with their time and to prioritize a lot better."

But pushy parents and harsh coaches can take all the fun out of playing. Many say that is why 73 percent of kids quit sports by age 13. "They stop playing because it **ceases** to be fun, and the pressure put on them by coaches and parents doesn't make it worthwhile," says Fred Engh. Engh is a coach and author of the book *Why Johnny Hates Sports*.

Even worse, **injuries** from intense competition seem to be on the rise. The Consumer Product Safety Commission **reports** that four million kids end up in hospital emergency rooms for sports-related injuries each year. Eight million more are treated for medical problems caused by sports.

Some parents hope their kids' athletic skills will win them college scholarship money. This does not seem realistic. Fewer than 1 percent of kids playing sports today will earn a college scholarship.

The critics sound like a bunch of sore losers to families who live for sports. They say the joy of sports can't be **measured** in dollars and cents—or runs and goals. "It's my life," says Aidan Wolfe, 10, who plays soccer in Portland, Oregon. "I love soccer. If my parents told me I couldn't play anymore, I'd be devastated."



Vocabulary

organized

neatly arranged or carefully planned

dues

the official payments that you make to an organization you belong to

equipment

a set of necessary tools, clothing, etc., for a particular purpose

benefit

a positive effect of doing something

cease

to stop

injury

physical harm or damage to someone's body caused by an accident or an attack

report

to give a description of something or information about it

measure

to discover the exact size or amount of something

