



Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills 8th Edition

Australasian Version

Progress Monitoring

Oral Reading Fluency

Grade 6

AU-Year 6 | NZ-Year 7

Student Materials

Coming of Age

Different cultures mark the change from childhood to adulthood in different ways. One such coming of age custom in American culture is the “Sweet Sixteen” party, which is a semi-formal birthday party for girls on their sixteenth birthdays. However, most girls do not have formal Sweet Sixteen parties. Sweet Sixteen parties can be fancy with lots of decorations and lots of make-up.

A Latin American celebration that is somewhat similar to the Sweet Sixteen is the Quinceanera or fifteenth birthday for girls. These parties are usually formal affairs which include a religious service. There is also formal attire, food, and dance. Party traditions vary by country.

In the Jewish faith, when a girl reaches twelve years she has a bat mitzvah. When a boy reaches thirteen years he has a bar mitzvah. These traditions begin with a religious ceremony where the child proves their training and pronounces his or her faith. Following the service there is usually a reception with food and dance.

In some cultures, boys must demonstrate strength or confront pain. This is the route to manhood for boys of a particular tribe in Brazil. When they turn thirteen, boys have to wear gloves that have bullet ants woven into them. Bullet ants have stingers and venom. When stung, you feel like your skin is burning. Boys have to wear the gloves for ten minutes without crying. If they cry, they must do it all over again.

All these coming of age customs share one similarity. When a child makes the change to adulthood, he or she is expected to become a productive member of society.

The Wise and Strong Monkeys

Beyond the shadows of the mountain lived Nikko the eldest of all the monkeys. Nikko was well revered by all other animals in the forest for he was wise and compassionate.

As usual, Nikko was contemplating the ills of the world while drinking his morning tea. He was trying to figure out if there was a way to feed the starving, house the poor, and humble the proud. Unexpectedly, there was a clamorous knock on the door of his shabby hut and Nikko thought his house would collapse from the force. Slowly and surely, he made his way to the door and opened it. Standing in front of him was Vinnie. Nikko had to deal with Vinnie about once a year, but this year Nikko was hoping to teach Vinnie a real lesson. You see, Vinnie had a thirst for absolute power even if that meant keeping the poor hungry and homeless.

Vinnie burst through Nikko's shabby doorway and demanded Nikko's help to become ever so strong. Nikko contemplated the challenge, and wisely offered Vinnie the following advice:

"Vinnie, everyone knows that the only way to great strength is through hard work, hearty meals, and dedication."

"But Nikko, I don't have enough time to work hard. I'll be as old as you by the time I am strong. I need something quick."

With this, Nikko knew his plan would work. He told him strength can also come from the moon, and that he must make a stew with it. So, he instructed him to roll boulders to the top of the mountain, to build a fire, and make a hearty stew on the night of a full moon. Of course, Vinnie was excited to get started, and did. But he didn't realise it would take years of boulder rolling to make a fire pit before he could start a fire. And it would take years more to make his stew. By then he will have mastered hard work, hearty meals, and dedication.

Fiona's Bad Day

In the morning, Fiona hit the snooze button repeatedly and was late getting out of the house. So, she was late for school and had to stop in the office to sign in first. Then, she discovered that in her hurry she'd left her homework at home. Ms. Patterson thought she was just making an excuse and didn't believe she had actually completed it. She had to spend the better part of her lunch time listening to Ms. Patterson's lecture about personal responsibility. She hardly got to spend any time eating her lunch with Mandy, and she had to wolf down her food, which was gross. She had Drama, her favourite lesson, in the afternoon, but they ran out of time just before it was her turn to perform her scene.

As she walked home, she wished she had something to shatter or destroy, just to get her feelings out. She felt like an angry destructive sludge was trapped inside her. She picked leaves off a bush and tore them into tiny fragments. That felt okay, but it didn't relieve her of her bad mood.

It was an overcast day, so there weren't any kids playing in the playground. Soon the council would prepare it for winter by removing the swings and putting them in storage. Fiona didn't feel like going home yet, so she opened the gate and went in.

She dropped her school bag in the sand by one of the supports that held up the swings. Then she sat in one of the swings and buried the toes of her shoes in the sand and twisted from side to side. It had been a long time since she'd been in the playground, but when she was little she used to come here every day after school. This was the playground—and maybe even the swing—where she'd first learned to pump. She began to pump her legs, and then she pumped higher and higher, throwing her body back so her hair swept the sand and her toes reached toward the sun, then, at the top of the arc, bending the other way while gravity pulled her. The sludge inside her seemed to loosen and melt away and she felt free.

Hard Work

It is important for students to work and study hard in order to do well in school. Hard work pays off and leads to good grades. Good grades lead to respect from teachers and peers. Good grades also allow students to participate in extra activities like music and sport.

People who put in good, hard work are said to be diligent. Diligent people are motivated, and get work done at any cost. Diligence is important, but the work done has to be the right work. If you spend all your effort on the wrong work or task, you end up wasting time. So, make sure that you are diligent and appropriately so.

The right work is important, but feedback is just as important to success. People can spend lots of time on the right task, but never improve because they don't know what they are doing well or doing poorly. Practice is important, but feedback is even more important. It is the only way to improve performance.

Just as feedback is important, so is focus. Once you receive appropriate feedback from a tutor, teacher, or coach, you need to act on it. You must show openness, determination, and focus. You must attack the weakness that has been identified; you can't take it easy.

Focus is important, but too much can cause unintended harm. A student who studies too much may lose sleep, and that could cause additional problems in school. An athlete who only focuses on one skill or movement may put himself or herself at risk of injury or overuse.

So, hard work does lead to success. But there are other factors to consider such as diligence, feedback, openness, determination, focus, and balance.

Forest Fires

Summer is forest fire season. The air is hot and dry in the summer, and the moisture level in plants and trees is low. Both factors make fires more likely to start and to burn longer. Forests have been catching fire for as long as there have been trees.

Today, some forest fires are natural, and some are caused by humans. Lightning strike and volcanic activity are some natural causes of forest fires. Some human ones are lit cigarettes, campfires, sparks from power lines or power tools, and arson. A greater number of the fires that burn in forests each year are started by humans. Still, those fires are usually extinguished more quickly than the ones that have natural causes because they occur closer to where people live, making it easier for firefighters to reach them. A natural forest fire may start so far from any road or trail that it is impossible for firefighters to bring their tools to it.

Fires are harmful for human life and property, but they benefit the ecosystems where they occur. Some species even have a life cycle that depends on fire. For example, the giant Sequoias of the Sierra Nevadas are the world's largest trees and some of the oldest living things on earth. Sequoia seeds grow in cones that need a fire's heat to open. In addition, the seedlings can't grow in the shade. Fire clears out dead brush, branches, and leaves. It enriches the soil of the forest floor. It releases the Sequoia seeds from their cones, and the sun can now shine on them, and they can grow. Best of all, the bark of the mature trees resists fire, so when a fire comes through, they survive.

Talking Trees

Annie felt a little silly, but she turned on her computer and typed the phrase “talking trees” into the search box anyway. Her best friend Josh’s grandfather was in town and that morning she’d spent some time on Josh’s porch, drinking orange juice and swinging on the porch swing. After some pleasantries and a lot of silence, the old man had begun to talk about talking trees.

He’d explained that the bush right out beyond the porch was full of talking trees. She couldn’t help but laugh when he’d said it, but he looked serious and said indeed he could hear them murmuring at night.

Annie had said, “What’s the point of a talking tree?”

He’d explained that they had many uses, but, most importantly, if one were questioning something in life, a talking tree would listen and might provide an unusual perspective.

As it turned out, Annie was questioning something in her life, so she’d gone home and turned on the computer hoping to learn more about talking trees and what they could do for her. Surprisingly, she learned a lot. Apparently, some trees did have a form of communication. They gave off biochemical messages into the air that could warn other trees to defend themselves against predators. She was amazed, and the next time they sat on the porch, she asked the old man if that’s what he’d meant about talking.

But he seemed surprised and said no. He told Annie to just go sit in the bush some time and ask a question in a respectful tone. So later that day she did.

She lay down in the bush and shut her eyes. First, she asked her question silently in her head, but nothing happened. So, in a low, respectful voice, she repeated the question out loud. Suddenly from all around, she heard a murmured “yesssss, yessss, yessss.”

Animal Behaviour During an Eclipse

Solar eclipses are rare events. But they occur more often than most people tend to believe.

On average, a total solar eclipse is visible from some place on Earth once every eighteen months. But the viewing area from the ground is only about ninety kilometres wide. So, depending on where you live, you might not have much of a view.

Still, it's not every day that the moon overshadows the sun. It's an extraordinary event when suddenly the sky turns dark and the temperature drops several degrees. So, it's no surprise that in the past eclipses have inspired fear and awe in humans.

For thousands of years, eclipses were considered to be bad omens by nearly every civilisation. Now that scientists can explain what an eclipse is, and predict when these events will occur, most people understand what's going on. But what about animals? How do animals behave when the sun disappears completely in the middle of the day?

There's not a lot of research on animal behaviour during an eclipse, but some studies indicate that primates, birds, and some insects may react.

Certain spiders start dismantling their webs. There is also evidence that birds stop singing, and chimps stare curiously at the sky. One young chimp even stood and pointed at the eclipse. The more vocal animals seem to get anxious and start making noise. Night owls hoot. Bats take to the sky. Crickets chirp. Frogs sing. It's even been reported that bees have stopped humming, squirrels got agitated, and chickens huddled together.

At some zoos and sanctuaries, many animals prepared for bed, while others woke up and became active. Some animals, it seems, didn't seem to care at all.

Thomas Young and Light Waves

Thomas Young has been described as “the Last Man Who Knew Everything.” He was one of the smartest men of his time. By the time he turned fourteen years old, Young had learned Greek and Latin. He could also read French, Spanish, and Italian.

Young called himself a “natural philosopher.” But his profession was medical doctor. He published his first articles anonymously. In college, Young wrote a paper on the physical and mathematical properties of sound. This paper proved that sound is made out of waves, and that sound waves move through the air just as waves and ripples move through water.

Later, Young presented another paper claiming that light also moves in waves, just like sound. Many people did not believe him. This new idea contradicted the popular theory that light is really made out of tiny particles.

Still, Young went on to develop his ideas and to argue that light is made of waves. He pointed out that the way that light interferes with itself is similar to the way two guitar strings create a different sound when they vibrate together.

To prove his theory that light is made of waves, Young designed an experiment using a box and a sheet of paper in which two holes have been punched. He shone sunlight into the box through the two slits in the sheet of paper. A pattern of light appeared on the back wall of the box like the sort of pattern created by two waves meeting in a pool of water.

Young also showed that the white sunlight shining into the box through two different holes creates a rainbow effect, with bars of colour blending into each other.

Young’s readers were impressed by the simple beauty and power of this experiment, which is now known as “The Double Slit Experiment.”

Still A Mystery To Me

We were living in New England, in a factory town with a polluted river that ran right through the centre of downtown. One year we got slammed by a terrible storm which was basically a winter hurricane. It snowed nonstop for three days.

The snow fell faster than the ploughs could move it. Every time a truck cleared our street, the storm would dump more snow and the street disappeared again. After a while there was nowhere left to push the snow and gigantic piles were everywhere. All the parked cars were buried inside a long, thick wall of snow. People had to dig from their houses to the street, which was tiring work, and then they had to figure out where their car was buried and dig it out.

My father couldn't remember where he parked the car. He kept guessing at mounds, saying, "I bet it's that one." He used a shovel while I used my hands, and together we started clearing away the snow. After we uncovered enough of the car to see that the colour or shape was wrong we moved to another spot.

I wasn't much help because I wasn't even old enough to attend school yet, but I think we ended up clearing snow from about thirty cars. We never found my father's car and I don't remember if he ever called the police and reported it missing.

It's still a mystery. Or maybe that wasn't the time the big storm hit. Maybe that was the winter my father lost his factory job and then something went wrong with the car and he couldn't afford to fix it, so a tow truck came and dragged the car away. Or maybe I'm remembering another time, a time when I was much older. That winter I couldn't wait for the snow to melt, so I could go up and down the street searching for a hole big enough to hide an entire car.

Animal Minds

Just last week, Dr. Madman invented the machine that most people wanted and most people feared. He invented a machine that would allow people the ability to read the minds of animals!

Now, you might reason that such a machine would be awesome. You could read your pet's mind! You could finally know whether your dog really wanted to go outside or stay inside. You could recognise how much your cat really hates the turkey-flavoured kibble that you feed her. You could finally determine whether your guinea pig prefers to exercise in the exercise wheel or ball. You could finally understand what they are really thinking! What if they know a remedy for diabetes but just can't communicate it? Dr. Madman's invention could be worth millions if not billions of dollars, and it could even save millions of lives!

However, enabling animals' thoughts to be understood could be upsetting, depressing, or even just horrible. What if you put the machine on your dog's head and it turns out that he prefers being outside and inside at the same time. It wouldn't make any sense, but it's what he really wants! What if we are just too simple minded to comprehend their thoughts? Or worse, what if you find out that your cat really likes the turkey-flavoured cat food but really doesn't care for you? She prefers the company of your sister who is allergic to cats. Or even worse yet, what if your pets don't have thoughts at all? Maybe your guinea pig doesn't have a preference for the exercise wheel or ball because he doesn't know the difference. Maybe your guinea pig is a mindless fluff ball. Horrifying! If that's the case, nobody would want to purchase Dr. Madman's new invention.

Finally, what would happen if the machine fell into deceitful hands? Someone malicious could use the invention for their own fraudulent purposes. Dr. Madman should destroy his invention immediately before anything terrible happens.

Soap

Your parents always tell you to scrub your hands with soap and water. But why do we need to use soap to clean our hands? How does soap work?

To understand why we use soap, we need to identify what soap is. We also need to recognise the special properties of grime and water. Grime is made up of various things like dirt, dust, and other bad stuff. These substances often have some oil or grease mixed in them at a microscopic level. All that sticky material sticks to your skin. Interestingly, water and oil don't mix together. So, washing your hands with water alone doesn't help remove the oil and grease.

Soap is a mixture made with oils and a substance called lye. Because of its chemical makeup, soap can uniquely mix with both oils and water. When you wash your hands with soap, it helps lift the oily bits up while the water can rinse it away. Soap is good at helping remove dirt from skin. But it also works well at removing dirt from hair which is why we use shampoo. It is also good at removing dirt from clothes which is why we also utilise laundry detergent. And of course, soap is good at removing grease from dishes which is why we purchase dishwashing detergent.

Some soaps are also important for sanitising. To sanitise something means to clean off bacteria and viruses that can be dangerous to people. Nowadays, we save sanitising soaps for special occasions like surgery because people were using them too much.

Soap is also good for fragrance. Although many people buy and use fragrance-free soap, many prefer soap with special scents. Many people associate the idea of clean with specific scents like citrus, lavender, or even eucalyptus. Many companies manufacture their own special fragrances for their products that have a unique soap smell. What is your favourite fragrance of soap, shampoo, and laundry detergent?

Ella Fitzgerald

Ella Fitzgerald was a well-known jazz singer in the U.S. and is called The First Lady of Song. She was born about one hundred years ago in Virginia. She worked with many great jazz musicians like Duke Ellington, Frank Sinatra, Dizzie Gillespie, and Louis Armstrong. She sang all over the world.

Ella went to the Apollo Theatre in Harlem, New York, where they held talent shows. She was going to dance but after seeing a dance group perform right before she went on stage, she didn't think she could beat them. She decided to sing and the crowd loved her and requested an encore. One of the band members there admired her singing and decided to introduce her to people who could help her with her singing career.

After this, Ella decided to enter as many talent shows as she possibly could. Before long, a band paid her to perform with them. She later went on to record many songs and albums and eventually became the leader of that very band. When she was seventy years old, Ella had heart surgery and people said she would never be able to sing again. But Ella did sing, even when she was not feeling well. She sang for the very last time in New York City and died five years later.

At the very first Grammy Awards, she won two Grammys. She was the first African-American woman to win this award. She was also given the National Medal of Arts award. Ella had recorded over two hundred albums. She won thirteen Grammy awards and sold forty million albums during her career.

Lego

Did you know that there are more than six hundred billion Lego bricks in the world? The Lego company was founded in Denmark by Ole Kirk Kristiansen. It began as a factory that made all sorts of things out of wood: doors, windows, cabinets, cupboards, coffins, and carts. With scraps of wood left over from his larger projects, Kristiansen made toys.

After a few years, when the stock market in New York crashed, the factory suffered. The farmers who had been Kristiansen's customers could no longer afford to pay for large carpentry projects. To adapt, he decided to focus on making useful household items like ladders and ironing boards. He also made toys. Before long, he was invited to bring his toys to a trade fair. That year, he decided to concentrate entirely on toy-making. He changed the name of his company to "Lego," from a Danish phrase which means "play well." For the next ten years, the company did very well selling wooden toys.

One day, Kristiansen watched a demonstration of an injection-moulding machine. He bought one, and it arrived from England the following summer. An injection-moulding machine is used to make things out of plastic. Soon after, Lego introduced Automatic Binding Bricks, an early version of today's Lego bricks. They were based on a building brick made by a British company called Kiddicraft that had modelled their brick on a rubber one made by a different British toy company, Minibrix.

Within two years, half of the toys the Lego company sold were made of plastic. They discontinued the name Automatic Binding Brick. Their Lego bricks were gaining in popularity, but they still faced some problems. They did not lock as well as they should, and they weren't versatile enough. The company continued to work on them. A few years later, they patented the design of the brick we know today.

The Umbrella

The umbrella was invented in ancient China, no one knows exactly when. Some scholars believe that the earliest umbrellas were large leaves tied to a kind of frame. Others believe umbrella design is based on tent designs. Still others believe that the earliest umbrellas were versions of the banners and flags that were carried around to announce important and noble people.

From China, the umbrella travelled to Korea. From Korea, it went to Japan. In Japan, as in China, the traditional umbrella is still in use. It is used in temples and in ceremonies like weddings and funerals. It is made of bamboo, string, and paper brushed with oil. It is often elaborately painted. Though it is made of paper, it is waterproof and can last for many years.

The umbrella also travelled west, via the Silk Road. It was used in Persia and ancient Egypt. Servants carried umbrellas to shade the heads of kings. In ancient Greece and ancient Rome, they were only used by stylish ladies. In Europe, they did not come into common use until the seventeenth century.

These days, most of the world's umbrellas are made in China again. There is one city in eastern China that has more than a thousand umbrella factories. While the parts are made by machines, the finished product must be assembled by hand. The umbrella pole is usually made of wood, metal, or fibreglass. The ribs are made of metal. The canopy is made of nylon, cotton, or polyester, and is usually coated with Teflon to make it waterproof.

Control Control

My twin brother and I are only allowed to watch television after we finish doing our homework and chores. Unfortunately, we don't like the same shows. I like to watch sports shows, but he likes to watch game shows. We always fight for control of the remote control. Usually, our parents and sister just ignore our squabbles and do other things.

Last night was especially tense in our battle for control of the control. Like every Saturday, we didn't have much homework because it was the weekend. However, our parents make sure we stay busy with extra chores on weekends. On Saturdays, we have to do our own washing, clean our rooms, help with grocery shopping, and put away the groceries. This Saturday was also our turn to make dinner. We get to make whatever we want, but we have to prepare it and clean up. Like always, we decided to make a veggie and pepperoni pizza. We both wanted something easy to make and clean up, so we could watch our favourite shows.

Last night was the big championship match between South Australia and Queensland. I was excited to finish the dishes and turn on the game. But all my brother could talk about was watching the season finale of "Mad Dash," the show where two families compete against each other by racing through obstacle courses, mud pits, and mazes. Because it was the season finale, the best two families of the season were competing for the grand prize of one million dollars! I'll admit that much money is exciting, but the winner of the South Australia-Queensland game would make it into the finals!

So, we finished the dishes as quickly as we could. Then, it was a mad dash to the family room to grab the remote control. Just then, our older sister swooped in, grabbed the control, and turned on a comedy show. Ugh! Sisters!

Tower Beach

Like most beaches, Tower Beach had sand and waves, but unlike most beaches, it also had a tall, grey and mysterious tower that you could climb, though we never had. Instead, we'd just debate what it was for.

My big brother thought it had once been a lookout for enemy vessels, but his best friend countered that it was for whale watching, while I kept my thoughts to myself.

One bright morning, I ran down to the water. We had just arrived for our last day at the beach and I looked back to see dad setting up our picnic. As I walked back I watched him pulling out potato chips and peanut butter sandwiches from a bag, while my brother and his friend were already arguing about the tower.

I returned just as dad was suggesting they go investigate, explaining that they'd never know unless they did some research. So, even though the tower looked ominous, we took our sandwiches and trudged out to it.

Inside there was a wooden staircase adorned with bird nests and spider webs, and light cascaded down through air that was frigid despite the warm sun outside.

At the top, my brother and his friend stayed quiet, but a small wooden lever under the window caught my attention. Etched on the wall to either side of it were arrows pointing in opposite directions.

I whispered, "It's a time machine."

They laughed and said it was time to go swim.

After their laughter finished echoing, I stayed for a while. I admit I was a little scared, but I turned the handle to the left. Nothing happened so I sighed and went back down.

I walked toward our blanket and looked up to see dad pulling potato chips and sandwiches out of a bag. As I got closer I heard him say, "Why not go investigate? You'll never know unless you go do some research."

Code Braille

Braille is a system of raised dots that allows people who are blind, or partially blind, to read with their fingers. It is not a language, but a code. Anyone who is not visually impaired, and who knows the code, can read it with their eyes. Many languages can be written with this code and people all over the world read braille in their own language. They write with it, too.

The way it works is each symbol is formed with a pattern of raised dots within a space that can hold up to six dots. The six dot positions are arranged in two rows of three dots each.

The position and combination of the dots represent a single letter, a number, or a punctuation mark. In one form of braille, a symbol can represent a whole word and is generally used for books.

The code is named after the man who invented it who was born in France. He lost his vision when he was four years old. At the age of fifteen, while attending the National Institute for Blind Youth in Paris, he wanted to read books. So, he experimented with ways to create an alphabet that was easy to read with the fingertips.

The system he created was based on another code that was invented years earlier by a captain in the French army. This earlier code was used to send secret messages that could be read at night without light. Though braille was much easier to use, it wasn't popular until after his death.

Apple-Picking Time

Every autumn, my family goes to the same farm to pick apples. When we were little, my sister and I would take bites out of the apples lying in the grass under the trees. Then we'd drop them. Our parents did all the picking and filled up our bags.

Now we like to make it a competition, and see who can pick the most, the fastest. My sister is a big show-off and is always going up the ladders to get up high in the trees. But I like to sneak in under the branches to get the secret apples that have been hiding. Our parents mostly wander behind us, chomping on crisp, just-off-the-tree apples, taking pictures and declaring autumn their favourite season.

After we fill up our bags, we lug them back toward the farm store. That's when our parents make themselves useful - those bags are heavy! We stop by the goat yard to watch the goats trotting over their little bridges and jumping off the roof of their shed. My sister still likes to buy a handful of pellets and let the goats nibble them out of her palm. I don't feed the goats because I don't like getting goat spit on my hand.

In the farm store, our mum usually asks our dad if we should get some tomatoes, and our dad says we already have tomatoes. Our mum says she wants to get some squash, at least, and our dad says he wants to get some of that good honey that he likes so much on toast. My sister always wants to get some sweet corn, and I always get a painted gourd with googly eyes on it. We take all our things to the counter, and get our apples weighed, and pay. Then we buy donuts and cider and take them to a picnic table outside and eat them.

Drying Clothing

Everybody has to do washing, even if they don't like it. Doing washing requires sorting clothing into different piles for hot and cold loads. The routine requires unloading heavy, wet clothing from the washing machine and placing them in the dryer. Then, when you're done drying the washing, you have to fold them. The routine takes lots of time, and can cost quite a bit of money. However, choosing how to dry your clothing adds additional complications.

There are three main methods to dry your washing. One method is a drying machine or dryer. Another method is using a drying clothesline outside. The third method uses a rack or clothesline inside your home. Each method has its own problems and solutions.

If you have a dryer in your home or apartment, you can save time. Otherwise, you might have to go to a laundromat. Dryers are a good option if you need to dry clothing quickly. They are also a good option if you have allergies to pollen outside. Dryers are good at preventing wrinkles in clothing. No wrinkles mean no ironing. Dryers have downsides, too. They are expensive and take up too much room. Machines also need maintenance. Finally, not all washing can be put in a dryer or it could damage the fabric.

Hanging clothing outside is a good option if you have space, a clothesline, and time. Outdoor clotheslines are one of the most environmentally friendly methods. However, outdoor drying has limitations. You have to be mindful of inclement weather. If it is freezing, your washing could freeze. If there is precipitation, your washing will never dry. Finally, if you have allergies, wind could blow pollen into your laundry.

Hanging clothing inside on a clothesline above the bath or on a rack is also an Earth friendly method. However, you need to have the space, rack or clothesline, and time to dry. Indoor racks are good for people with allergies.

Nora's Town

The town had a school, a library, a small supermarket, a toy shop, and a post office. It had a huge indoor play space for wintertime, an ice skating rink, a playground, and a pool. It had three different cafes where you could play with animals - one for cats, one for rabbits, and one for mice and guinea pigs - and an amazing pet store where all the animals were rescues. It had a dog park and also a horse park, where the horses belonged to everyone. Anyone could ride them whenever they wanted, and they were all very gentle and loved people.

Of course, there were many houses. Everyone lived next door to their best friends, and could easily go back and forth between the houses with slides, bridges, tightropes, and secret doors cut into the fences. The houses were self-cleaning, so no one ever had to clean their rooms.

Interestingly enough, there was no hospital. The water that ran through the pipes had magical, health-giving properties, so no one ever got sick.

There were a few non-polluting, flying cars in town, but people mostly travelled by scooter, skates, bike, horse, and hot air balloon. For long trips, everyone rode on extremely comfortable self-driving beds.

School was only three days a week, and the teachers were all very nice. In fact, if teachers were ever mean to kids, they would be fired. The other four days a week, kids could do whatever they wanted, and homework did not exist.

Noraville was a great town, with only two problems. One, everyone in the world wanted to move there. And two, sometimes Nora's mum complained that it took up too much space on Nora's bedroom floor, and she had to at least leave a path to get in and out.