



LITTER EDUCATION: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

UNCAPPED OFFICIAL RULES & GUIDELINES 2025-2026

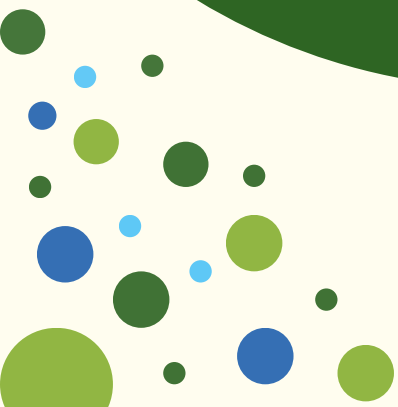
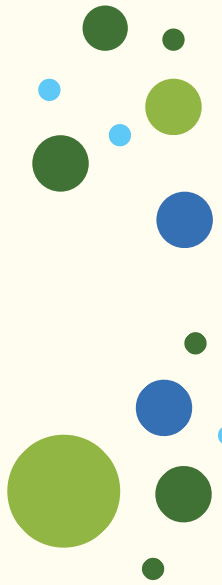
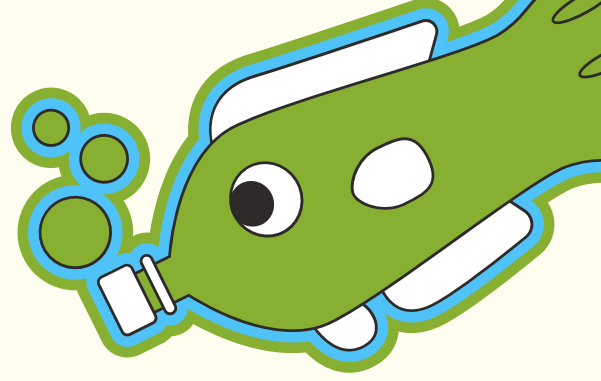




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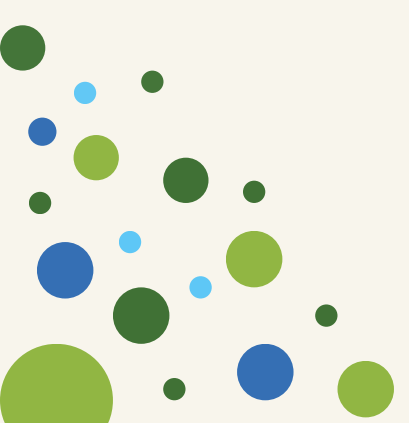
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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

We are challenging students to tackle the issue of littering by creating a work of art from plastic bottle caps. Photos of submitted art pieces will be posted on a contest website for a public vote to determine contest finalists. The winner will be chosen from the top three finalists by the contents of the required accompanying essay.

Educators and group leaders are encouraged to implement this art project into their curriculum or programming, teaching students why recycling is important and how they may creatively reuse items.

In addition to artwork, students are required to submit a 200–300-word collaborative essay describing what they learned during the project, the importance of recycling, the harmful effects of littering, and how they can inspire their school, family members, and the rest of the community to recycle.

CONTEST TIMELINE

Registration

August 18-September 19*

Submission

September 22-October 31*

Public Online Vote

Late October

Finalists Announced

Mid-November

Winner Announced and Honored

March 2026 at the
Student Environmental Champions Awards

*Registration and submission forms will open at 10:00AM and close at 3:00PM

ELIGIBILITY & HOW TO ENTER

Elementary school students in public, private, and parochial institutions, as well as those who are home-schooled, are eligible to participate.

- **Individual Entries:** Only students who are home-schooled may submit entries as individuals.
- **Group Entries:** All other entries must be submitted by a group of 6 to 30 students. If your group exceeds 30 students, please divide into two or more groups. Each group must register, complete the project, and submit their entry separately, but may be represented by the same teacher or adult supervisor.

To participate in the contest, entrants must register during the designated registration period listed in the contest timeline on these guidelines or on www.keepok.org. **Please note that registration and the submission of the essay and photo of the completed art piece are separate steps.** After registering, the primary contact listed will receive an email with detailed instructions for submitting the project. Entrants retain ownership of their physical artwork. Finalist pieces may be displayed at the Student Environmental Champions Awards, where the winner will be announced.

By entering, participants agree that submissions may be used by Keep Oklahoma Beautiful (KOB) and its sponsors on websites and social media for public viewing. Entrants grant KOB a perpetual, exclusive license to publish, display, or otherwise use submitted photos and essays without further notice or compensation. KOB may choose not to post all submissions. By submitting, entrants agree to indemnify and hold harmless KOB and its sponsors from any claims, damages, or legal expenses related to the use of submitted materials.

PROJECT GUIDELINES

BOTTLE CAP ART

- Art pieces must be made of plastic caps from recyclable plastic bottles and containers. No other materials are allowed (including metal caps from glass).
- All art and essays must be entirely original work and show how recycling can help keep Oklahoma and Route 66 healthy and beautiful. **Your art could look like local landmarks, native animals, or anything that communicates the message about protecting nature and reducing litter!**
- Entries must be created solely for the purpose of this contest and cannot have been submitted previously in a promotion or contest of any kind, or exhibited or previously displayed publicly through Instagram, Facebook, X or any other means.
- Entries must not include or reference any brand names, company logos, products, or services. This includes third-party trademarks, logos, or other brand identifiers. However, the name and/or mascot of the entrant's school may be included with permission from school administration.
- Photo must be in one of the following formats: JPEG or PDF.

***ALL File names should include the name of the entrant or school (e.g., SchoolName.jpeg). If submitting multiple group entries, please distinguish each file with a group name or number (e.g., SchoolName-3rdHour.pdf)**

ESSAY

- Essay must be between 200–300 words.
- Essays must be entirely original work.
- **Essay should answer the following prompt:**

Explain the message behind your artwork. How does your piece celebrate Oklahoma and Route 66 and encourage others to recycle or reduce waste? What did you include, and why?

- Essay must be submitted in either **.pdf** or **.docx** format.

SUBMISSION & JUDGING

SUBMISSION

Submission of a physical art piece is *not required* for contest judging. To complete an entry, participants must upload a photo(s) of the art piece and a PDF of the essay to www.keepok.org during the submission period outlined in the contest timeline. For online voting, the use of any “boosting” websites, programs, or other technology is strictly prohibited and will be grounds for **immediate disqualification**.

JUDGING PROCESS

All eligible entries will be posted on the KOB website in October for a one-week public voting period. The three entries with the most votes will be named finalists. From those finalists, a winner will be selected by KOB-appointed judges and program sponsors based on both the artwork and essay. Finalists will be notified by email and publicly announced in November 2025 on KOB’s social media and via email to participants and supporters.

All finalists will be invited to the Student Environmental Champions Awards in March 2026, where the winner will be revealed. Finalists are encouraged (but not required) to bring their physical artwork for display. All entries will be included in a slideshow presentation during the event. The winning entry will also be featured on KOB’s website, social media, and sponsor platforms after the event.

PRIZES

The winning submission will be recognized and celebrated with prizes from Keep Oklahoma Beautiful! All finalists will be invited to the Student Environmental Champions Awards in March 2026 (location TBA).

OKLAHOMA ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR SCIENCE

Below is a list of Oklahoma Academic Standards for science curriculums where incorporation of this art program is compatible. This list is not exhaustive, and we encourage educators to expand their lessons to subjects outside of the “Earth and Human Activity” standards. More information on the Oklahoma Academic Standards of Excellence can be found on the Oklahoma State Department of Education website.

4-ESS3.1 Earth and Human Activity

Disciplinary Core Ideas: Energy and fuels that humans use are derived from natural resources, and their use affects the environment in multiple ways; Some resources are renewable over time, and others are not.

Performance Expectations: Obtain and combine information to describe that energy and fuels are derived from renewable and non-renewable resources and how their uses affect the environment.

Clarification Statement: Examples of renewable energy resources could include wind energy, water behind dams, and sunlight; non-renewable energy resources could include fossil fuels (e.g., coal, oil, natural gas). Examples of environmental effects could include loss of habitat due to dams or surface mining, and air pollution from burning of fossil fuels.

5-ESS3.1 Earth and Human Activity

Disciplinary Core Ideas: Human activities in agriculture, industry, and everyday life have had major effects on the land, vegetation, streams, ocean, air, and even outer space. But individuals and communities are doing things to help protect Earth’s resources and environments.

Performance Expectations: Obtain and combine information about ways individual communities use science ideas to protect the Earth’s resources and environments.

Clarification Statement: Examples of information might include the use of natural fertilizers or biological pest control by farmers, replanting trees after cutting them by the logging industry, and the institution of recycling programs in cities.

OKLAHOMA ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR SCIENCE CONT.

6-ESS3.2 Earth and Human Activity

Disciplinary Core Ideas: Mapping the history of natural hazards in a region, combined with an understanding of related geologic forces, can help forecast the locations and likelihoods of future events.

Performance Expectations: Analyze and interpret data on natural hazards to forecast future catastrophic events and inform the development of technologies to mitigate their effects.

Clarification Statement: Emphasis is on how some natural hazards, such as volcanic eruptions and severe weather, are preceded by phenomena that allow for reliable predictions, but others, such as earthquakes, occur suddenly and with no notice, and thus are not yet predictable. Examples of natural hazards can be taken from interior processes (such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions), surface processes (such as mass wasting and tsunamis), or severe weather events (such as hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods). Examples of data can include the locations, magnitudes, and frequencies of the natural hazards. Examples of technologies can be global (such as satellite systems to monitor hurricanes or forest fires), or local (such as building basements in tornado-prone regions or reservoirs to mitigate droughts).

Keep Oklahoma Beautiful reserves the right to change, update, or otherwise amend these rules & guidelines at any time.