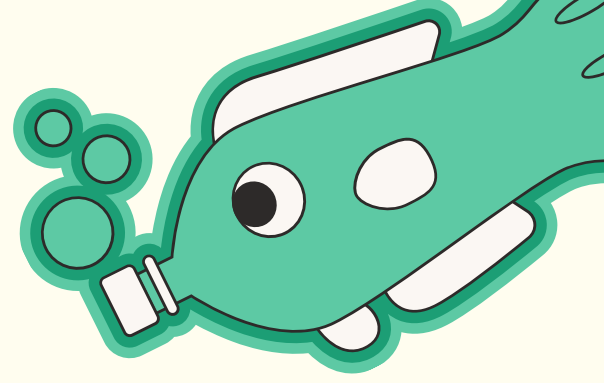
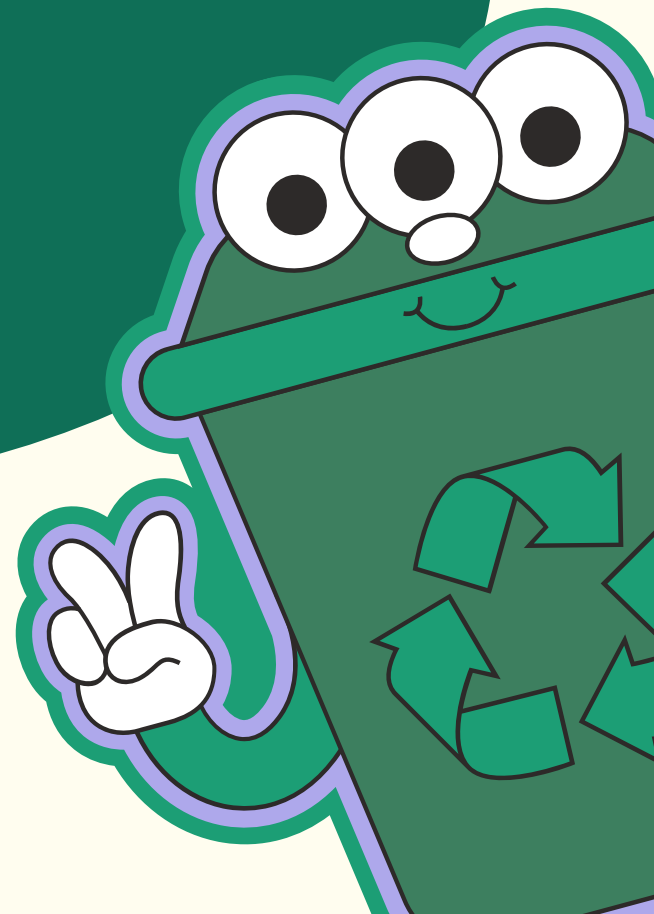




LITTER EDUCATION: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (Ages 5-12)

UNCAPPED OK! OFFICIAL RULES & GUIDELINES 2026-2027



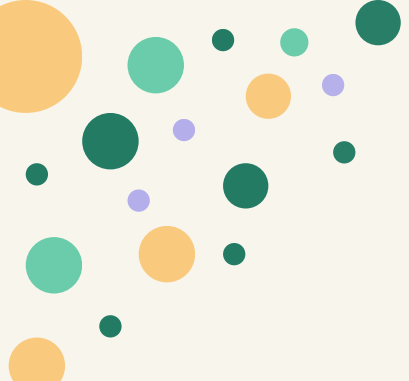


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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

We are challenging elementary school students to tackle the issue of littering by creating a work of art from plastic bottle caps. All submitted art pieces will be judged by KOB staff using a rubric provided in this document. Staff will select the top 3 finalists from each division, who will then be shared publicly for a *Community Favorite* vote.

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 their 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.

WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR

If you participated in UnCapped last year, welcome back! A few things have changed this year. These guidelines lay it all out, but don't hesitate to email me at education@keepok.org with questions.

1. **New curriculum about litter and recycling that is totally free.** UnCapped now comes with curriculum including vocab, discussion prompts, activities, and more, all ready to use. Explore it, let students dig in, then turn what they learn into an art project!
2. **Registration and submission are now one step.** No more registering in the fall and submitting separately in winter. There's just one form, one deadline, and longer to make a great project!
3. **New timeline.** Dates have shifted from past years, so double-check them in the timeline below.
4. **Voting has changed.** In past years, all entries were posted publicly for a week of online voting, and the top three vote-getters became finalists before judges picked a winner. **This year,** KOB staff select the finalists directly. Those finalists go into a public *Community Favorite Award* vote. The actual contest winner is chosen separately, by KOB staff.

CONTEST TIMELINE



Competition Opens

August 11

Competition Closes - Submissions DUE

January 31

Judging Period

February 1-5

Community Favorite Voting

February 8-12

Winner Announced and Honored

March 2027 at the
Student Environmental Champions Awards

ELIGIBILITY & HOW TO ENTER

Elementary school aged students in public, private, and parochial institutions, as well as those who are a part of any extracurricular group (Boy Scouts, library, etc.) and home-schooled, are eligible to participate.

- **Individual Entries:** Preferably only students who are home-schooled or in small groups 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 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 submit their project and the accompanying essay within the designated period (August 11-January 31) as listed in the contest timeline.

Entrants retain ownership of their physical artwork. Winning pieces may be displayed at the Student Environmental Champions Awards.

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.
- Bottle caps can be decorated (i.e. painted, googly eyes, etc.)
- All art and essays must be entirely original work. **Your piece could depict local landmarks, native animals, Oklahoma scenery, or anything that communicates your environmental message.**
- 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.

ESSAY

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

Explain the message behind your artwork. How does your piece show why litter and recycling matter, and encourage others to 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 the provided submission link during the period outlined in the contest timeline.

***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)**

JUDGING PROCESS

All entries will be reviewed and scored by KOB staff using the official rubric. Staff will select 3 finalists per division based on rubric scores.
(See rubric below and on the competition webpage)

Finalists from all divisions will then be shared publicly for a *Community Favorite vote* - a separate recognition that does not affect the main competition outcome.

PRIZES

Finalists will be recognized with a certificate and a celebration hosted by KOB staff (details TBD). Division winners will be invited to the 3rd Annual Student Environmental Champions Awards for an awards ceremony including a free meal and a day at the venue! (Previous year's venues: Jenks Aquarium & OKC Zoo)

RUBRIC

Category	5 - Exceptional	4 - Excellent	3 - Proficient	2 - Developing	1 - Beginning
Creativity & Visual Impact / 5	Artwork is strikingly original and visually compelling. The design is intentional, cohesive, and immediately communicates a clear idea or story.	Artwork is creative and visually engaging. The design is thoughtful and communicates a clear idea.	Artwork shows creative effort. The design is recognizable and has a general theme, though some areas feel unfinished.	Artwork shows some effort but the design is unclear or inconsistent. The idea is hard to identify.	Artwork appears incomplete or unrelated to an environmental theme. Little evidence of planning or creative intent.
Use of Materials / 5	Bottle caps are used in a highly inventive and skillful way. Coverage and arrangement are excellent, showing strong craftsmanship.	Bottle caps are used effectively and with clear intention. Coverage is thorough and arrangement is deliberate.	Bottle caps are used appropriately. Coverage is mostly complete and arrangement supports the overall design.	Bottle caps are present but use feels random or incomplete. Coverage could be improved.	Very few bottle caps are used or materials guidelines were not followed.
Environmental Message / 5	The artwork powerfully communicates a message about recycling or litter. The connection to Oklahoma or the natural world is clear and meaningful.	The artwork clearly communicates an environmental message. The connection to recycling or litter is evident.	An environmental message is present but could be stronger or clearer. The connection to recycling or litter is implied.	An environmental message is attempted but is vague or only loosely connected to the topic.	No clear environmental message is present. The artwork does not connect to recycling or litter.
Essay Quality / 5	Essay is thoughtful, well-written, and fully addresses the prompt. Students clearly explain their message, what they learned, and how their community can take action. Writing is engaging and age-appropriate.	Essay addresses the prompt well. Students explain their message and learning clearly. Writing is clear and organized.	Essay addresses most parts of the prompt. Key ideas are present but some could be developed further. Writing is mostly clear.	Essay partially addresses the prompt. Key ideas are present but underdeveloped. Writing may be unclear in places.	Essay does not address the prompt or is missing. Writing is very limited or hard to follow.

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.