

# The Week Junior Teacher's Guide

**In this issue we will** learn shocking statistics about how much food is wasted in the United States and other countries and ways people can help reduce waste. Students will have the opportunity to discuss whether or not students deserve mental health days. Finally, discover how people around the world celebrate spring.



## This week at a glance

Page	News	Discussion points	Article type
2	UN issues report on food waste	How much food is wasted yearly in the United States? Explain how the federal government plans to reduce food waste. Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your response.	Big News
4	Education leader for nation is confirmed	Explain why the US Department of Education was established. Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your response.	National News
10	Endangered ferret is a cloning first	Explain the cloning process. How is the ferret, Elizabeth Ann, helping her species survive? Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your response.	Animals & Environment
12	The season of color and growth	Write a 1–2 paragraph summary explaining how spring is celebrated all around the world.	All About
15	Coca-Cola to test paper bottles	What is the main idea of the article? Provide details that support the main idea.	Science & Technology

### THIS WEEK'S BIG DEBATE: DO STUDENTS DESERVE MENTAL HEALTH DAYS?

**YES**—students need the break | **NO**—kids would take advantage

#### ACTIVITY:

- Invite students to watch the TEDx Talk on why students should have [mental health days](#).
- In small groups or online breakout rooms, invite students to discuss the following questions: **A)** Do you ever feel stressed or overworked at school? Why? **B)** What do you do when you feel stressed or overworked at school? **C)** Do you think mental health days would be helpful for students? Why?
- Have student groups share responses and thoughts about the TEDx Talk.
- Ask student groups to create a poster that argues whether or not students should have mental health days. Each poster must include a title, reasons, examples, peer quotes, and visuals.

Have your students visit [theweekjunior.com/polls](http://theweekjunior.com/polls) to vote. We'll publish the results next week.

### What you need to know

- In 2018, Utah passed a bill allowing students to take a mental health day as an excused absence from school. Oregon enacted a similar law in 2019.
- Students in other states, including Colorado, Florida, and Washington, are attempting to get mental health day laws passed.
- In 2019, the Pew Research Center reported that 70% of teens surveyed identified anxiety and depression as major problems among their peers.

#### NOTES

---



---

## This week's big news

### UN issues report on food waste

Page 2

#### Let's Discuss

1. What is the United Nations and why does it exist? Explain the new information that was revealed in 2021. Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your response.
2. Explain in detail the effects of food waste. Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your response.
3. How can families help to reduce food waste? Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your response.

#### Vocabulary

United Nations  
Paris Agreement  
Carbon dioxide

#### TWJ Kids Take Action

*In school or remote*

Invite students to create a poster that tells how much food is wasted in the United States and what people can do to reduce waste. Encourage students to conduct further research on food waste.

### Education leader for nation is confirmed

Page 4

#### Let's Discuss

1. Who is the newly confirmed US secretary of education? Explain their career journey. Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your response.
2. What are the responsibilities of the US secretary of education? Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your response.
3. How did people react to Dr. Cardona's confirmation? What is his first task? Be sure to use evidence from the text to support your response.

#### Vocabulary

US secretary of education  
Senate  
Superintendent

#### TWJ Kids Take Action

*In school or remote*

Dr. Miguel Cardona is the new US secretary of education. Write a letter to Dr. Cardona telling him about your school and what new programs or activities you would like to see in American schools. Be sure to include all parts of a friendly letter.

### Last Week's Poll:

Last week we asked you if a world leader's age matters. Many of you (40%) feel that it is a factor in leadership, but more of (60%) you said age doesn't matter.

### Virtual Activity

Share your screen and invite students to learn "[How Do Bees Make Honey](#)". Encourage students to take notes. Have students answer the following questions: **A)** What did you learn? **B)** Do you think the video did a good job of explaining how bees make honey? Why or why not?

### Brain Booster

Bees are an important part of life on Earth. Research and write a 5-paragraph essay about honey bees. Guiding research questions:

- A) What are the main stages in their life cycle?
- B) Where do they live?
- C) How do they make honey?
- D) How do they communicate?
- E) Why are they important?
- F) What do bees need to survive?

#### NOTES