**AIM: How can we determine the level of toxicity in our environment?**

**DO NOW**

**Directions:**

1. Read the following article “Contaminating Our Bodies With Everyday Products”.
2. Answer the questions based on the article.

**Motivation**: Founded in 1993 by Ken Cook and Richard Wiles, The Environmental Working Group (EWG) is an American environmental organization that aims to empower people to live healthier lives in a healthier environment. With breakthrough research in areas such as education, toxic chemicals, agricultural subsidies, public lands they aim to drive consumer choice, civic action and corporate accountability. EWG is a non-profit organization (501(c)(3)) whose mission, according to its website, is "to use the power of public information to protect public health and the environment.”

**Objectives**:

1. To determine the toxicity levels of food, water and household chemicals.
2. To increase awareness of ingredients in products in order to make better choices for our health.

**PART I: EWG Food Score: RATE YOUR PLATE!!!**

**Procedure:**

1. Type [www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org) into the search engine.
2. Scroll down the page until you see a set of categories.
3. Click on “EWG’s Food Scores Rate Your Plate”.
4. Click on Food Scoring Factors.
5. Type in your snack and brand.
6. Answer the questions in your observation sheet.

**PART II: EWG’s Guide to Healthy Cleaning**

**Procedure:**

1. Return to the home page of the EWG website.

2. Scroll down the page until you see a set of categories.

3. Click on “EWG’s Guide to Healthy Cleaning”.

4. Using the Household Cleaning Products Sheet you took home, type in each product one by one.

5. Fill in the chart on your observation sheet and answer the questions.

**Part III: EWG VERIFIED**

**Procedure:**

1. Return to the home page of the EWG website.

2. Scroll down the page until you see a set of categories.

3. Click on “EWG Verified”

4. Scroll down the page and click on “Download Criteria”.

5. Based on the information, answer the questions on your observation sheet.

**OBSERVATION SHEET**

**PART I: EWG Food Score: RATE YOUR PLATE**

**Questions:**

1. How does EWG determine the score of your snack?
2. How did your snack score? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Choose another snack from one of your classmates. Repeat steps 4 and 5.
4. How did your classmates snack score? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Look around your class. Where there any snacks from your classmates that had a higher or lower score than your snack?
6. What was the snack and how did EWG rate this snack?
7. Based upon the rating system of EWG, explain how these snacks were rated and how they received their score?
8. Try the snack knowledge; would your change the food you snack on? Why or why not?

**PART II: EWG’s Guide to Healthy Cleaning**

**Household Products Checklist**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Brand(s)** | **Score** | **Ingredients of Concern to EWG** | **AnimalTesting** | **Green Certified** |
| **All Purpose Cleaner** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Bleach** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Liquid Soap** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Furniture Polish** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Laundry detergent** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Glass Cleaner** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Air Freshener** |  |  |  |  |  |

**Questions:**

1. How does the EWG rate their household products? How do they determine their scale?
2. How do your products rate?
3. Based on the EWG site, what are the active ingredients of these household products? Are these ingredients a “concern”? Explain.
4. Is this product tested on animals? Click on the left hand column with the paw logo.
5. Is this product green certified?
6. Within your group/ class, are there any classmates that have a household product that had an A rating? What is the name of that product? How did it rate?
7. If your product scored an “F” what would be a better product for your household?

**Part III: EWG VERIFIED**

Questions:

1. What types of products does EWG endorse?
2. What does it mean to “Score Green”?
3. The EWG bans products that contain ingredients of concern.
4. Research the European Union’s Category 1 designated endocrine disruptors.

<http://eng.mst.dk/topics/chemicals/endocrine-disruptors/the-eu-list-of-potential-endocrine-disruptors/>

1. Do any of your products above have any endocrine disruptors? If so, which products and what is the disruptor?

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1. What are “Good Manufacturing Practices? According to the EWG?

SUMMARY:

State three things you learned about this exercise.

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How would you improve this exercise?

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