



Worksheet 1. Reading: *Messy Yards*

Read this website article about a county in Virginia (in the United States). Then review the glossary and complete the exercises that follow it.

1 Most residents of this county know that there are some things your neighbor shouldn't have
2 to look at. When these things are left in your yard, they turn into a mess, and make the
3 neighborhood ugly for everybody.

4 For example, sometimes we see tools, lawn mowers, and other equipment, which has been
5 left on the lawn after use. You must put away all these things every time. You could put
6 them in your garage or in a shed on your property.

7 Here's another example: Sometimes there are excess construction materials in a yard after
8 a building or remodeling project. You must get rid of these materials.

9 The Number One culprit that causes ugliness in our neighborhoods is *outside storage*. When
10 you store things outside the house — things that are supposed to be inside or in a garage
11 — it detracts from the appearance of the entire neighborhood. A mess in the yard sends a
12 loud signal to potential home buyers, visitors, and even criminals. It says that people who
13 live in the neighborhood do not care about the appearance or the safety of their homes, and
14 that no one else is supposed to care about them either.

15 But our county does care. The County Code contains ordinances that protect the health,
16 safety, and well-being of its residents. One ordinance states that you must not store items
17 in view of the public. Another ordinance states that you have to store your trash in lidded
18 containers, which must be at the curb only on the day of collection, and must not be visible
19 at other times. Another law states that there must not be any junk in public view.

20 There are some residents who have violated these ordinances and left things in their yards
21 which they should not have left there. Perhaps they didn't know what to do with all their
22 stuff. If you are wondering how to comply with the ordinances, why don't you call the
23 county offices at 555-132-4444 for specific instructions, or visit our website?



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24 The phone message and the website give you details about how you should store your
25 things out of view, or get rid of them. In brief, if you want to get rid of things:

- 26 • you could give them away to a person or to a charity
- 27 • you could throw them away in the trash
- 28 • you could take them to a landfill for recycling
- 29 • you could sell things at a yard sale or on the Internet

30 When people are dealing with trash and junk, they may wonder why they bought so much
31 stuff in the first place, and then left it all in their yard to turn into trash and junk. Maybe
32 they shouldn't have bought it and they are saying to themselves: "I didn't have to buy that
33 stuff. I shouldn't have bought it." Maybe the next time they need a piece of equipment,
34 they will say to themselves: "Hmm...I could rent this, or I could borrow it instead of buying
35 it. Then I don't have to worry about storing it."

36 Let's make a greater effort to keep our county beautiful!

Glossary

Line 4 *lawn mower* — a machine used to cut grass

Line 6 *shed* — a simple small building used to keep things in

Line 6 *property* — something you own, such as land

Line 17 *trash* — things that you throw away, such as empty bottles, used paper, food that has gone bad, etc.

Line 18 *curb* — the side of a walk next to the street

Line 19 *junk* — old or unwanted objects or equipment that have no use or value

Line 28 *landfill* — a place where garbage is buried

Line 29 *yard sale* — a sale of used articles, usually held in the yard of a house





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Comprehension practice

In each item, circle the letter of the completion that makes the sentence true, according to the article.

1. This article is addressed to the residents of a _____.
 - a. city
 - b. county
 - c. state
 - d. country

2. The article _____.
 - a. forbids the use of lawn mowers
 - b. prohibits remodeling
 - c. does not allow residents to have a mess in their yards
 - d. describes crimes that lead to jail

3. Residents must not _____.
 - a. keep trash in their yards
 - b. keep junk in their yards
 - c. store things in their yards
 - d. all of the above

4. Residents don't have to _____.
 - a. clean up their yards
 - b. use trash cans with lids on top
 - c. worry about storing equipment if they don't buy it
 - d. all of the above

5. It's all right to have _____ in your yard.
 - a. a mess
 - b. trash
 - c. junk
 - d. none of the above

6. If you want to get rid of things, you _____.
 - a. could give them to a charity
 - b. must bring them to a landfill
 - c. must not sell them at a yard sale
 - d. none of the above