

Volunteering

Read the persuasive essay. Then, answer the questions about what you read.

You've seen people in need on the news after a hurricane, earthquake, or other disaster. Perhaps you've walked past homeless people who are living on the streets. Or maybe you've been to an animal shelter and wished you could give every pet a home.

So, what can you do to help people (or animals) who need it? The answer is — volunteer! Volunteering means spending some of your free time helping others. You may volunteer to help other people, such as the families who lost their homes after a natural disaster. But you can also volunteer to protect animals, the environment, or any other cause that you care about.

Volunteering helps others, but it can also help you, too. If you're upset about something that's happened — like a hurricane or other disaster — doing something about it can be a great way to cope with your feelings.

Volunteering also lets you see your own life in new ways. Sometimes it's easy to worry about stuff like grades or get annoyed because you don't have the most expensive sneakers or the newest computer game. Volunteering lets you spend some time focusing on others for a while. Lots of people — and kids — find that they really enjoy volunteering. Volunteer experiences often put you in a different environment and expose you to people and situations that you wouldn't have come across in your regular life. For instance, you might learn that just on the edge of your town are some kids who really need winter clothes.

It feels good to be able to meet a need like that. You'll know that, thanks to you, some kids have warm coats, hats, mittens, and boots. Whether it's winter clothes, food for the hungry, or homes for unwanted pets, doing volunteer work means one very important thing: You make a difference in the world.

So, where do you start? Some of you may already know about volunteering and service through 4H, Boy Scouts, or Girl Scouts. Religious organizations, like churches, synagogues, and mosques, also organize volunteer and charity work.

School is another good place to start if you're looking for volunteer ideas. Ask a teacher, school counselor, or librarian for ideas. Your local parks department also might have some suggestions for how kids can volunteer.

Some places want volunteers who are 12 or even older, depending on the job. Often kids start volunteering by working alongside their parents. For instance, you might be too young to prepare food at a soup kitchen, but if your parents volunteer there you might be able to go along and pitch in.

Volunteering is a great way to have fun with your family. Talk to your parents, brothers, or sisters and see what they might be interested in doing. Find something you all agree on. Here are some ideas for things you can do as a family — or with a group that has adult supervision:

- Clean up a park or along a river.

- Plant trees or flowers in your local community.
- Serve food at a homeless shelter.
- Deliver meals to people who are elderly or ill at home.
- Clean up a school or other public building.
- Count wildlife or plants for environmental groups.

(From <https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/volunteering.html>)

1. What is the author trying to convince you to do? _____

2. What information does the author give you to try to convince you? _____

3. What are the benefits of doing what the author is trying to convince you to do? _____

4. What are some ways that you can do what the author is trying to convince you to do?
