




How Clean Is the Air Today? Worksheet









Sometimes the air is clean. At other times, it is not. Engineers and scientists measure how clean the air is and rate it using the Air Quality Index (AQI) or the Pollution Standards Index. (The names may be different, but they mean the same thing.) The Air Quality Index focuses on the health effects that can happen within a few hours or days after breathing polluted air. A low number means the air is clean. A high number means it is very polluted and unhealthy.

A number less than 50 means clean air. 

A number from 50 to 100 means smog is in the air. 

A number of 100 or more means the air is very polluted. 

In the table below, mark the box that tells what the AQI number means.

If...		The air is clean.	The air has some pollution in it.	The air is very polluted.
The Air Quality Index is 30. 				
The Air Quality Index is 150. 				
The Air Quality Index is 70. 				
The Air Quality Index is 36. 				
The Air Quality Index is 200. 				
The Air Quality Index is 60. 				
The Air Quality Index is 41. 				
The Air Quality Index is 205. 				

Source: <http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/exec/sbea/education/terrell/worksheets/Grade4HowCleanIsTheAirTodayAndAnswerKeyEarthsNaturalResources-Air.doc>

Now you have a better understanding of the Air Quality Index. How does this help you?

A number that is less than 50 means that the air is fine. You can do whatever you want when you are outside.










A number from 50 to 100 means the air is becoming polluted. You should avoid playing or working outside around noon. It is best to go out early or later in the day. Do you know why? Polluted air can harm you. When you work or play you breathe in more air.



A number of 100 or greater means the air is dangerous. You should stay inside. Try to use an air condition or fan to keep the air moving. Rest, if at all possible, so you breathe less air and fewer pollutants enter your body.



In the table below, mark the box that tells what you should do for each AQI number.

If...	Play outside.	Don't play outside around noon.	Stay inside.
The Air Quality Index is 45. 			
The Air Quality Index is 15. 			
The Air Quality Index is 180. 			
The Air Quality Index is 236. 			
The Air Quality Index is 91. 			
The Air Quality Index is 25. 			
The Air Quality Index is 69. 			
The Air Quality Index is 122. 