

# November activities

## Energy Pledge Month

Energy Pledge Month builds on all the energy awareness your students gained in October and encourages everyone in the school to pledge their commitment to making more energy-efficient choices. Why? Because more energy-efficient choices mean a more comfortable learning environment, a decrease in impact on the environment and a reduction in building utility costs, which leaves more money for school programming. Win-win-win!

As always, all the activities are optional. But we encourage schools to give them a try! It reinforces the “all hands on deck” approach to School Uplift and fosters energy-saving behaviors among students.

The process below is designed for classrooms, but the Energy Pledge theme and supporting activities can be adapted for extracurricular use.

To make this month’s theme easy to roll out, we’ll walk you through five key stages for creating and implementing your energy pledge:

1. Identify the pledge.
2. Adopt the pledge.
3. Track your progress.
4. Reinforce the pledge.
5. Celebrate the pledge.

Let’s dive in!

### **1. Identify the pledge.**

The goal here is to connect the key concepts and behaviors students learned during October’s Energy Awareness Month with energy-saving commitments students can make to start seeing a difference in energy reduction at school and at home. Here are some activities and resources to help you get started.

#### **Teacher key**

- Use class time to have students discuss different energy-saving behaviors they could practice and what impact they think the practices might have. Try these prompts, or come up with your own:

- ◇ What are some ways we can save energy in our classroom? What about the hallway? The cafeteria? The gym?
- ◇ How do you think practicing these energy-saving behaviors will help our school community?
- ◇ How will our actions help the environment?
- ◇ How could you practice some of these things at home?
- Have students brainstorm types of pledges they can make together as a classroom. Write down on the whiteboard or a piece of paper all the behaviors students brainstorm. Here are some examples:
  - ◇ Turn off the lights when we leave the classroom.
  - ◇ Make sure all electronic devices in the classroom are unplugged. If they can't be unplugged, make sure electronic devices are plugged into a smart strip when they're not being used or at the end of the day.
  - ◇ Shut off water when it's not being used, like while you're soaping your hands in the restroom.
- Have students vote for the top energy-saving pledge they want to make together, using your list of brainstormed ideas.

You can also have students come up with their own personal energy-saving behavior pledge to practice for the month at school and at home. Encourage your students to share with the class why they chose their unique pledge.

## 2. Adopt the pledge.

After students select an energy-saving behavior, the next step is to adopt the pledge! For the next month, students will put their pledge into action. You'll also want to share your classroom's pledge. Sharing the pledge publicly not only will provide students with greater support and accountability but can also inspire other students or classrooms to make their own pledges.

### Teacher key

We've provided **Energy Pledge card** templates at the end of this section, but you can also have students create their own! Here are a few suggestions for creating your own pledge cards and how to display them publicly:

- **Pledge hands:** Have students trace their hands on scrap paper, cut them out and then write their names and pledges on the hands. **Bonus:** Using scrap paper provides an opportunity to talk about the importance of reusing materials!
- **Pledge tree:** Using butcher paper, draw the outline of a tree and branches. Have students trace their hands on scrap paper to make "leaves." Have students write their names and pledges on the leaves. Hang the leaves from the tree.

- **Create your own:** Lead students in creating their own unique way of highlighting their pledges!

Don't forget to show off your pledges! Post the pledges around the **Our Energy Pledge sheet** found at the end of this section.

At the end of November, give the students their pledge cards to take home and share with their caregivers.

**Find the "Our Energy Pledge sheet" and "Energy Pledge card" templates at the end of this section. Or to download and print them, visit [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/](https://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/).**

### **3. Track your progress.**

To keep your students engaged throughout the month, use your tracking chart so students can see the progress they're making as a class or individually.

#### **Teacher key**

- Use the provided **Energy Pledge tracker**. Write your students' names in, and offer them a chance each day to color or place a sticker in their squares when they've followed through with their pledges. This tracker can be used for individual or classroom-wide pledges.
- Place your Energy Pledge tracker near your students' pledge cards.
- At the end of each school week, review the tracker with your class. Create a reward for 100% completion.

**Find the "Energy Pledge tracker" at the end of this section. Or visit [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/](https://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/) to download and print it.**

### **4. Reinforce the pledge.**

Spread the enthusiasm outside your school! Reinforce the pledges by sharing them with families and caregivers, school board members and other community stakeholders.

- Share information like the number of students making pledges, the number and types of pledges made, and photo or video content of students following through with their pledges (if this is in line with school policy).

- Share the results to:
  - ◊ Your school's newsletter
  - ◊ The Energy Dashboard, emphasizing the students' impact on energy reduction
  - ◊ Your school's social media accounts
  - ◊ Take-home handouts

Remember, the end of the month doesn't have to be the end of the pledge! Continue encouraging students to stick with their pledges or to try a new one. **While the monthlong commitment is important, the ultimate goal is to create lasting energy-conscious choices and behaviors.**

### 5. Celebrate the pledge.

Don't forget to celebrate your students' hard work! Here are some simple ways to do that.

- **Share the results:** Talk about the results of Energy Pledge Month in schoolwide or classroom discussions, staff meetings, social media updates and updates to caregivers. Recap things like the number of students making pledges, the number and types of pledges, the most creative pledges, etc. Work with your Energy Team to view specific energy-reduction metrics.
- **Offer rewards:** To the extent that they're allowed and financially possible, reward students for sticking to their pledges all month. Try one of these ideas, or come up with your own:
  - ◊ A class or schoolwide pizza party
  - ◊ Free Day Friday where students get to pick a fun activity to do for the day
  - ◊ A principal shout-out at an assembly, over the PA, in a classroom drop-in or during video announcements
  - ◊ A movie or documentary to watch, for upper elementary students. (*Flip back to "October activities" for a list of fun and engaging energy-related films.*)
- **Get feedback:** Have teachers, Energy Team members or other school staff regroup with students at the end of the month to learn about their experiences with Energy Pledge Month. Use their feedback and insights in future School Uplift activities. Ask questions like:
  - ◊ What did you like about Energy Pledge Month?
  - ◊ What kinds of things did you learn throughout the month?
  - ◊ What did you find hard about keeping your pledge?
  - ◊ How do you think our actions have helped our school community?
  - ◊ How do you think our actions have helped the environment?

# **Our Energy Pledge**

**We pledge to**

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**for the month of November to  
help our school save money,  
be more comfortable  
and protect the environment.**

**I pledge to**

\_\_\_\_\_

**for the month of November.**

**I will try to practice my  
energy-saving action at  
school and home.**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_







## Instructions for before and after school, during lunch or during extracurricular activities

### Week 1

- Work with your school's Energy Champion to present Energy Pledge Month to students.
- Set up a table in a highly trafficked area, like outside the lunchroom or main entrance.
- Share examples of the types of pledges students could make, like:
  - ◊ Turn off classroom lights on the way to lunch, PE and dismissal.
  - ◊ Close windows and doors when appropriate.
  - ◊ Turn off the water while you're soaping your hands.
- Have students choose a pledge they'll commit to practicing for the month of November.
- Have students sign their **Individual Energy Pledge cards**. Hang the energy pledges near the Energy Dashboard or in a prominent place in the school.

**Quick tip! Hang pledges around the school for more visibility and accountability – a great spot is near the Energy Dashboard!**

### Weeks 2-4

- Hold weekly check-ins with students to discuss their pledge successes and challenges.
- Give students an opportunity to share their experiences at the end of the month. Try some of these prompts:
  - ◊ What did you like about the energy pledge?
  - ◊ What did you find hard about keeping your pledge?
  - ◊ How do you think our energy-saving actions have helped our school community and the environment?
  - ◊ Why is it important to keep practicing energy-saving behaviors?
- Challenge students to continue their commitments.

**Find the "Individual Energy Pledge card" at the end of this section. Or to download and print it, visit [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/](https://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/).**



### Creating pledge cards

We've provided pledge card templates, but you can also have students create their own! Here are a few suggestions for creating your own pledge cards and how to display them publicly:

- **Pledge hands:** Have students trace their hands on scrap paper, cut them out and then write their names and pledges on the hands. Post the pledges around the **Our Energy Pledge sheet** found at the end of this section. **Bonus:** Using scrap paper provides an opportunity to talk about the importance of reusing materials!
- **Pledge tree:** Using butcher paper, draw the outline of a tree and branches. Have students trace their hands on scrap paper to make "leaves." Have students write their names and pledges on the leaves. Hang the leaves from the tree.
- **Create your own:** Lead students in creating their own unique way of highlighting their pledges!

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## Group energy pledge

Like the individual energy pledge, the group energy pledge encourages students to practice energy-saving behaviors through a public commitment. With the group energy pledge, students can support one another and hold each other accountable.

### Instructions

Have the entire class or group brainstorm energy-saving pledges they could make. Then have students vote on which one they'd like to commit to and practice for the month of November.

Encourage students to come up with something that will be meaningful to them. Here are a few ideas:

- Turn off the lights in the lunchroom on Fridays.
- Choose one day of the week to be a "device-free" day (no cellphones, personal laptops or tablets).
- Write to a local representative about an energy-related topic.
- Write energy-saving behaviors in chalk on school sidewalks.

Use this activity in any group setting, including after-school clubs, homeroom, a specific class or an entire grade level.



### Sharing group energy pledges

Once the group has decided on their collective pledge, have one student write the pledge on a piece of butcher paper, or use the **Classroom/Group Energy Pledge card** found at the end of this section. Have students sign their names, and then hang the butcher paper and the **Our Energy Pledge sheet** in a prominent location in the classroom or school hallway.

Find the "Classroom/Group Energy Pledge card" and the "Our Energy Pledge sheet" at the end of this section. Or to download and print them, visit [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/](http://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/).

## Energy Pledge competition

Create excitement and enthusiasm around Energy Pledge Month by incorporating a little friendly competition! The Energy Pledge competition can be structured for classes to compete against each other (homeroom vs. homeroom or class period vs. class period) or for students to compete against one another within their class. This activity works best in a classroom setting but can be modified for an after-school club or other group setting.

### Instructions

1. Make copies of the **Energy Pledge competition sheet** provided at the end of this section.
2. Hold a classroom brainstorming session for students to come up with energy-saving behavior ideas if you didn't do this in the individual or group energy pledge activities.
3. Have students select the energy-saving behavior they're willing to commit to practicing throughout November, and then have them sign individual pledge cards. Use the **Individual Energy Pledge card** provided at the end of this section, or revisit the "Individual energy pledge" section for ideas on how to create your own.
4. Hang all the pledge cards in a prominent place in the classroom or school hallway. Near the Energy Dashboard is always a good spot!
5. Have students record and date each time they complete their energy-saving behaviors on their Energy Pledge competition sheet. For example, if the pledge is to turn off lights when leaving a room, your student would write "Computer lab, 11/3" after completing that energy-saving behavior. Any energy-saving action anywhere counts—students aren't limited to school only! Remind students to keep their sheets in a handy location, like a day planner.



6. Have students ask a peer or adult who witnesses their energy-saving behaviors to verify the action by initialing the sheet. If students are alone at the time, they can talk to a peer or adult about why their particular energy-saving behaviors are important. That person can then initial the sheet as verification.
7. Have students fill in how many points their actions are worth. Each time students fulfill their pledges, they earn **5 points**. Anytime they practice another energy-saving behavior different from their pledge and have it verified, they earn **1 point**.
8. Sustain students' momentum throughout the month by holding weekly check-ins to tally points. Then, display the totals where everyone competing can see them!

The class or student with the most points at the end of the month gets a reward!

**Find the "Individual Energy Pledge card" and "Energy Pledge competition sheet" at the end of this section. Or to download and print them, visit [energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/](http://energyright.com/business-industry/school-uplift/resources/).**

## Giving thanks for energy

This activity is designed to get your students thinking about all the ways they use and benefit from energy in their daily lives and connecting those ideas to the Thanksgiving holiday. You can use this activity in the classroom, as a small-group activity, during a school assembly or in an after-school club.

### **Before Thanksgiving break**

Set aside time before Thanksgiving break to discuss the different ways energy is used in students' daily lives. Ask students to think about something they value as it relates to Thanksgiving that requires energy. Here are some sample questions:

- What are some of your Thanksgiving traditions? Do any of them require energy? In what way? *(Here are some examples if students get stumped: cooking a turkey, driving to see relatives, watching a football game on TV or hanging up holiday lights.)*
- What are some ways you could use less energy during Thanksgiving?
- Why is it important to be mindful of our energy use?
- How does the energy we use connect to natural resources?
- What else important in your life requires energy?

### **After Thanksgiving break**

- Hold a post-Thanksgiving classroom discussion about the ways students noticed energy being used around the holiday.
- Ask students to share any ways they practiced energy-saving behaviors over the break.
- Discuss how students can continue their pledges in new and different ways during the rest of the holiday season.



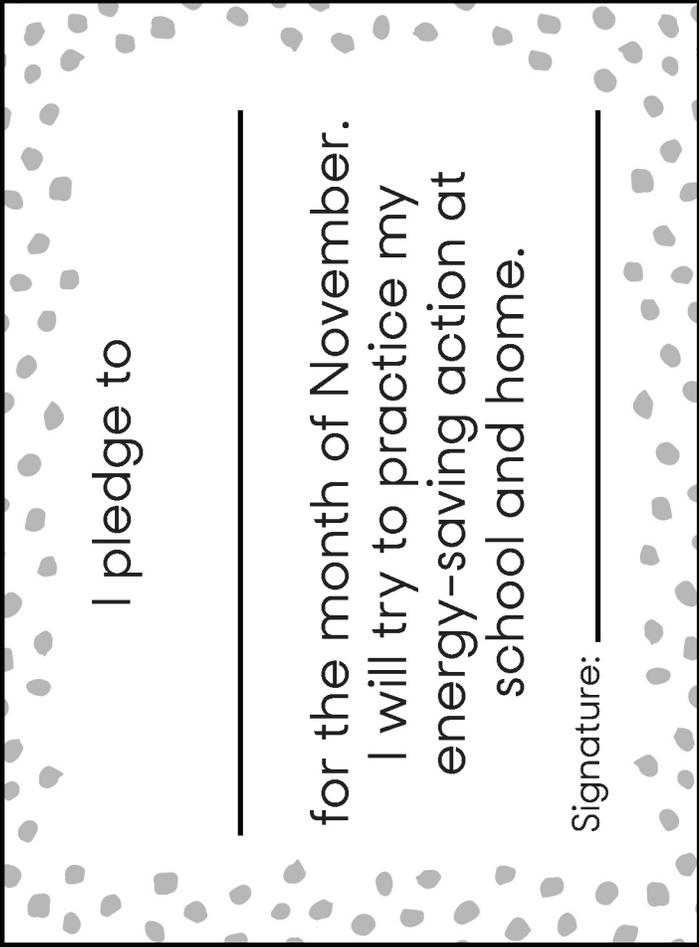
# Our Energy Pledge

We pledge to

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for the month of November to  
help our school save money,  
be more comfortable  
and protect the environment.

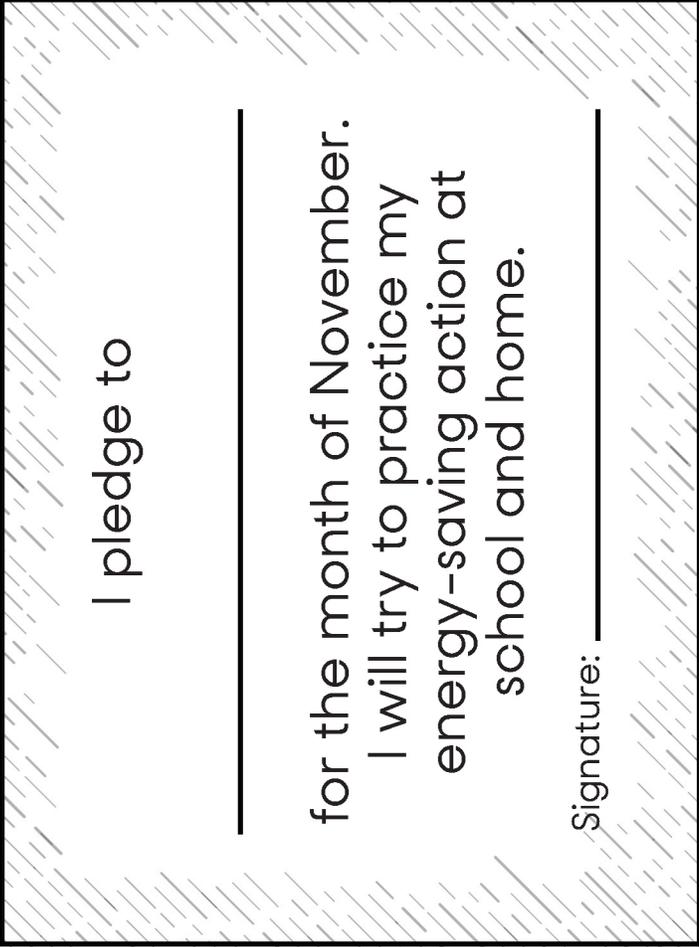


I pledge to

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for the month of November.  
I will try to practice my  
energy-saving action at  
school and home.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

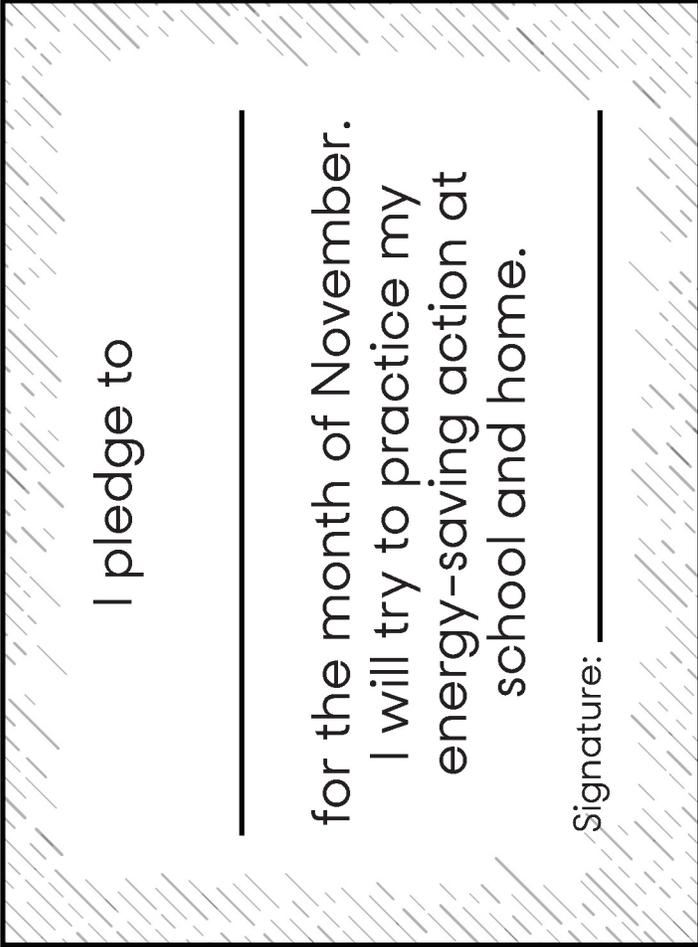


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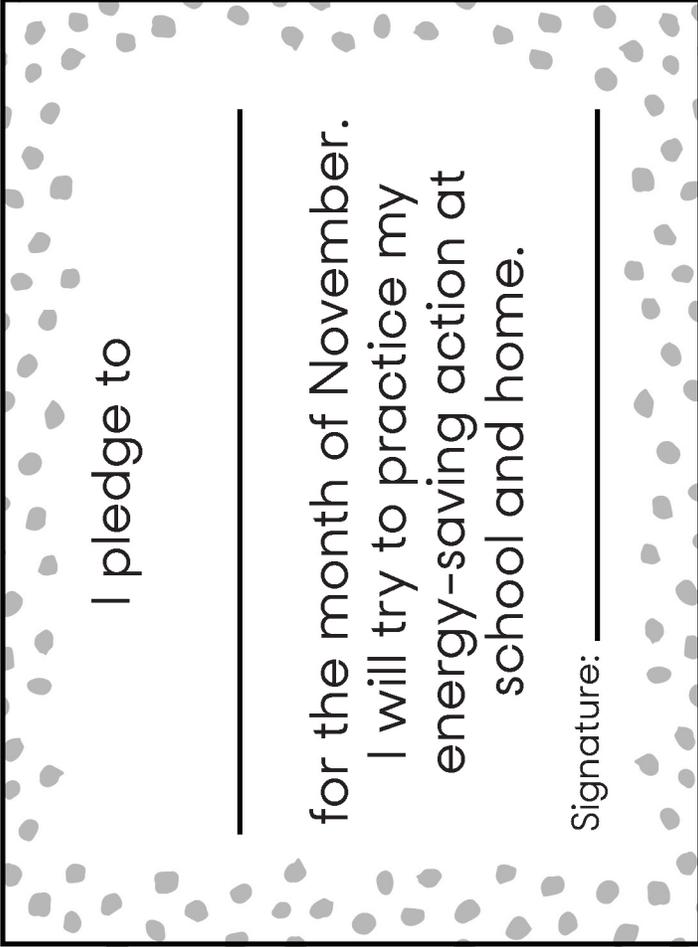


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We've outlined four different activities for the month. As always, all the activities are optional. But we encourage schools to give them a try! It reinforces the "all hands on deck" approach to School Uplift and fosters energy-saving behaviors among students.

These activities are designed to be used in the classroom, but they can also be used in before- and after-school programs or as extracurricular activities. Here's what's coming up:

1. Individual energy pledge
2. Group pledge
3. Energy Pledge video competition
4. Giving thanks for energy

## Individual energy pledge

### In-class instructions

#### Week 1

- Break students up into small groups. Have them spend 10–15 minutes brainstorming all the ways they use energy every day, as well as how they could reduce that energy use. These ideas can apply at school and at home.
- Help students who are feeling stuck to get more specific by having them think of ways they can save energy in the classroom, hallway, cafeteria, library or gym.
- Let the groups take turns sharing their ideas with each other. Discuss the connection between energy-saving behaviors and the impact those behaviors could have on their school, community and environment. For example, unplugging a laptop at the end of the day prevents it from using energy all night.



- Have students decide on one energy-saving action they want to take for the month of November. Here are some suggestions:
  - ◊ Turn the lights off when leaving a room.
  - ◊ Turn off video game consoles when done for the day.
  - ◊ Carpool with friends when going to the same location.
  - ◊ Save water by taking shorter showers.
- Give students time in class to share what pledge they'll be taking and why.
- Have students write their pledges on an **Individual Energy Pledge card**, found at the end of this section. We've also provided some ideas below for creating your own pledge cards.
- Hang the pledge cards in a prominent place in the classroom or hallway.

**Quick tip! Publicly sharing pledges provides greater support and accountability for students to stick with their pledges.**

#### Weeks 2-4

- Hold weekly check-ins with students to discuss their pledge successes and challenges.
- Give students an opportunity to share their experiences at the end of the month. Try some of these prompts:
  - ◊ What did you like about the energy pledge?
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## Energy Pledge video competition

Create excitement and enthusiasm around Energy Pledge Month by incorporating a little friendly competition! This activity is a great add-on to the individual energy pledge activity.

The Energy Pledge video competition is structured for groups of students to compete against each other. It works best in a classroom setting but can be modified for an after-school club or other group setting!

### Instructions

- Have students select their energy-saving behavior for the month, then split students into small groups. You can also choose to have the entire class make one video and compete against other classes making videos.
- Have each group make a video demonstrating how everyone in the group is practicing their individual energy-saving action.
- Encourage students to make fun and creative videos! They could integrate a popular song, make a Tik-Tok-style video, create a reality TV show, etc.
- Submit each group's video to your school's Energy Champion once they're complete. The Energy Champion will coordinate sharing them with the student body.
- Have students vote for their favorite video.

The group or class with the most votes will earn a reward.



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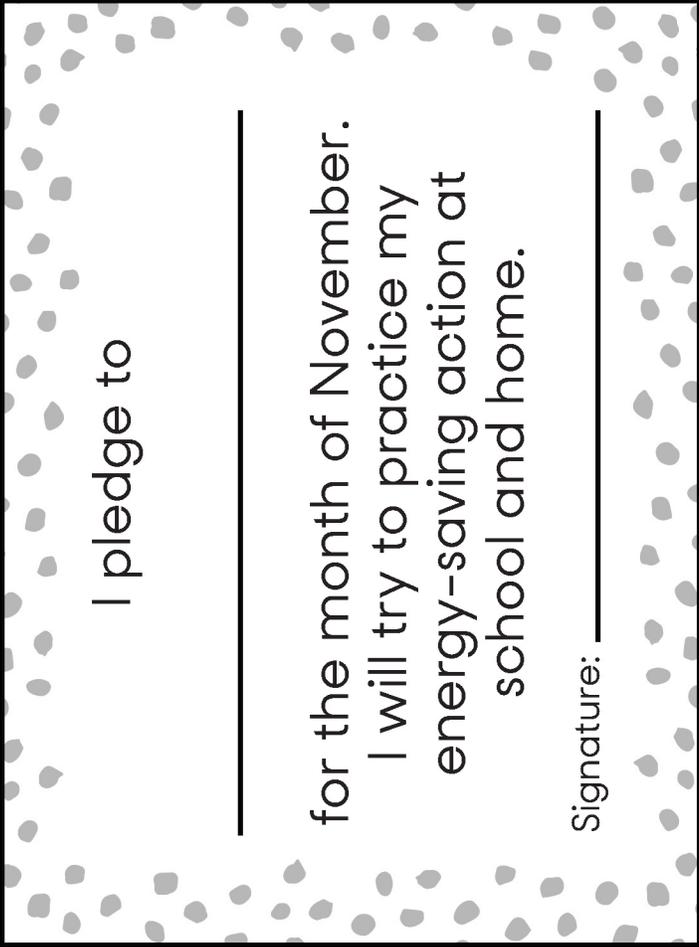
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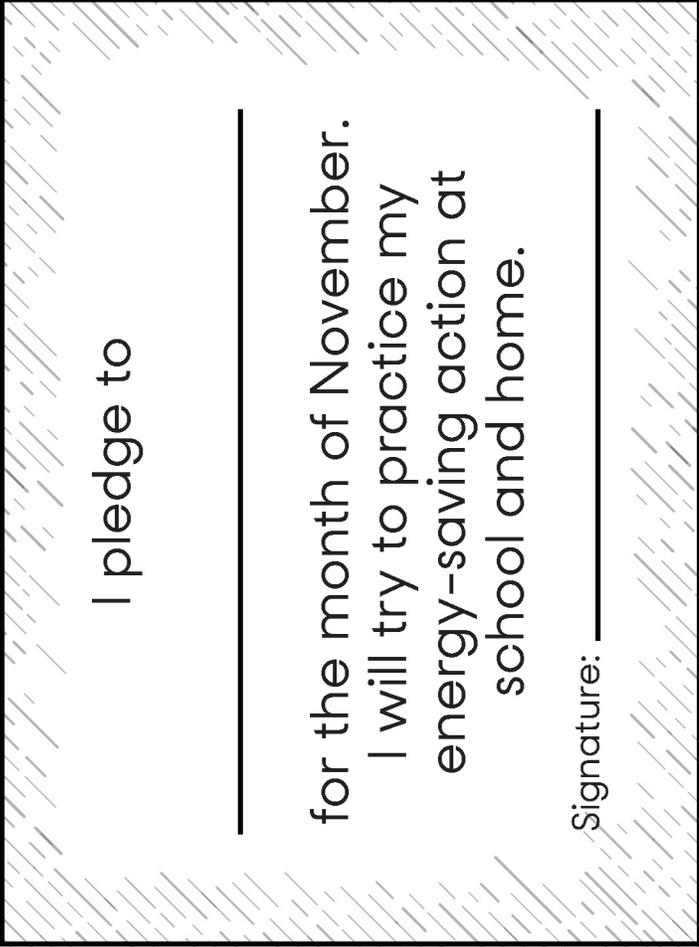


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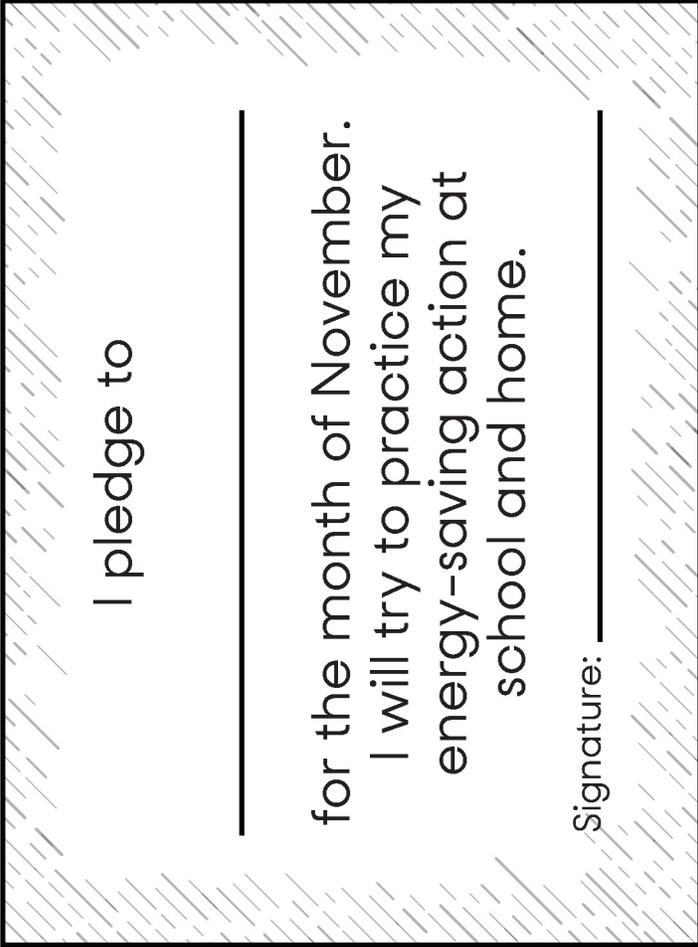


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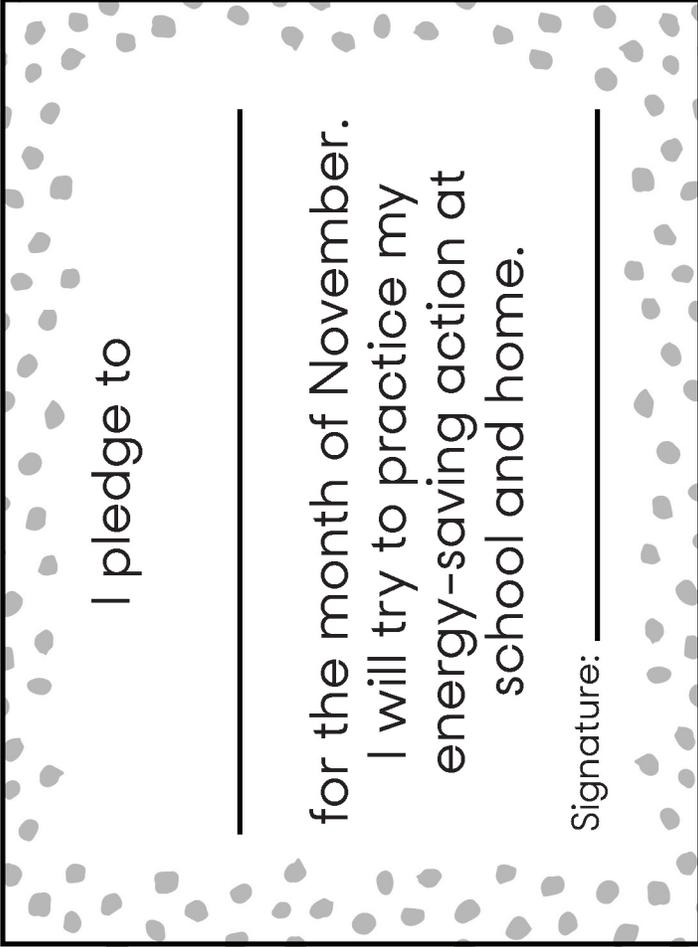


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