


# RESILIENT NORTHEASTERN NEW JERSEY



**Ages 8 - 11**

## Introduction to Resilient **NENJ**

Today, we're going to talk about something pretty important called the "Resilient Northeastern New Jersey Program." This program is like a team of smart and caring grown-ups who are working together to make our town in Northeastern New Jersey stronger and safer, kind of like building a shield around it.



Now, you might have heard about something called "climate change." It's like when the Earth's weather starts acting a bit strange, making things too hot, too rainy, or even causing big storms.

The Resilient Northeastern New Jersey Program is here to help our community be ready for these changes and protect us.

**This program has three main goals:**

- **Protecting Natural Spaces:** They want to make sure our beautiful parks, forests, and marshes stay healthy. That means planting more trees and using special plants to keep the sea from getting too close.
- **Reducing Carbon Footprint:** They're working to use less energy and create less pollution. This can be done by walking or biking instead of using cars, using energy-efficient light bulbs, and being careful about using too much electricity. You can also focus on keeping storm drains clear by picking up litter which will prevent flooding and streets clean!
- **Preparing for Extreme Weather:** The program helps us be ready for big storms and floods. We have emergency plans and safe places to go if something really wild happens.



So, these grown-ups are like our town's guardians. They're making sure our community is strong and ready for anything that comes our way. And guess what? You can be part of this superhero team too by learning about how to take care of our environment and making your home and town even stronger!

# RESILIENCE HEROES



## Resilient NENJ: Resilience Heroes

In a quiet corner of Northeastern New Jersey, two young friends, Samantha and Jared, embarked on a remarkable journey. They had always loved exploring the woods near their homes and watching birds in the nearby marsh. But lately, something was amiss. The marsh seemed smaller, and the birds were disappearing.

One sunny afternoon, while Samantha and Jared were hiking in the woods, they stumbled upon a sign that read, "Resilient Northeastern New Jersey: Protecting Our Home." Curious, they followed the sign, which led them to a gathering of people who were talking about climate change.

Samantha and Jared listened intently as experts explained how climate change was affecting their town. They learned about the Resilient Northeastern New Jersey program and its mission to make their community stronger in the face of climate challenges.

### The program had three important goals:

- **Protecting Natural Spaces:** Samantha and Jared discovered that their beloved marsh was shrinking because of rising sea levels. They decided to join a group that was working to protect this special place. They learned about planting native plants to create a barrier against the sea and provide homes for wildlife.
- **Reducing Carbon Footprint:** The experts explained that people needed to use less energy to reduce the pollution causing climate change. Samantha and Jared started walking or biking to school instead of taking the car and reminded their parents to do the same. They also learned about energy-efficient light bulbs and appliances.
- **Preparing for Extreme Weather:** Samantha and Jared's town was also getting ready for storms and flooding. They volunteered to help build a community shelter and participated in emergency drills so everyone would know what to do in case of a big storm.

As the months went by, they saw positive changes in their town. The marsh started to come back to life, and the birds returned. The air felt cleaner, and the community felt safer.

One stormy night, a big rainstorm hit their town, but because of the Resilient Northeastern New Jersey program, they were prepared. The community shelter was a safe place for everyone, and the trees and plants they had planted helped absorb the rainwater, preventing flooding.

Samantha and Jared realized that they were making a real difference by being part of the Resilient Northeastern New Jersey program. They were helping to protect their town from the effects of climate change and making it a better place for everyone to live.

Their adventures continued as they learned more about climate change, and they were determined to inspire others to join their quest to protect their home and the environment. Together, they believed they could create a brighter, greener future for Northeastern New Jersey.



# Resilient NENJ: Short Story Exercises

## Workbook Exercise 1 (Ages 8-11): "Resilience Heroes"

**Objective:** Help older readers understand the Resilient Northeastern New Jersey program and its goals from the second story.

### Instructions:

1. Read the story "Samantha and Jared's Climate Quest" with the children.
2. After reading, discuss the Resilient Northeastern New Jersey program and its three goals: protecting natural spaces, reducing the carbon footprint, and preparing for extreme weather.
3. Provide a list of actions related to these goals, such as "Planting native plants," "Walking or biking to school," "Using energy-efficient light bulbs," "Participating in emergency drills," etc.
4. Ask the children to choose at least one action from each goal and write or draw a picture of themselves doing that action.
5. Encourage them to think about how these actions can make their town stronger and more resilient to climate change.
6. Have a group discussion where each child shares their chosen actions and explains why they think these actions are important for their community.

## Workbook Exercise 2 (Ages 8-11): "Climate Preparedness Challenge"

**Objective:** Help older readers think about climate preparedness and emergency planning from the second story.

### Instructions:

1. Read the story "Samantha and Jared's Climate Quest" with the children.
2. After reading, discuss how Samantha and Jared's town prepared for extreme weather, like storms and flooding.
3. Explain the importance of being prepared for emergencies and extreme weather events.
4. Provide a list of items that could be useful in an emergency, such as flashlights, batteries, non-perishable food, first-aid supplies, and a list of important phone numbers.
5. Ask the children to create their own "Emergency Kit" list by selecting items from the provided list.
6. Encourage them to draw or write a brief description of each item.
7. Discuss where they think it's best to keep their emergency kit at home, so they can easily find it in case of an emergency.
8. Optionally, challenge the children to share their emergency kit lists with their family and make a plan for what to do during a storm or other emergencies.