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2

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oceans at

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Beach of

GLASS

A beach in California is covered in beautiful pieces of sea glass.
They are smooth, not sharp. They look like jewels.

And they used to be trash!
How did this happen?

My name _____



People call this beach "Glass Beach."

Trash or Treasure?

At one beach, the ocean turned pieces of trash into beautiful stones.

As You Read
Think about whether this beach should be protected.

One hundred years ago, garbage trucks didn't go to houses to pick up trash. Instead, people took their garbage to the beach—and left it there! People took all kinds of junk to the beach, like broken dishes, old bottles, and cars, and that made one beach in California a big mess.

About 50 years ago, things changed when people learned that garbage was bad for the ocean.

They started to clean up that beach. They hauled away the big pieces of metal and old cars. But they left behind a lot of pieces of sharp, broken glass.

Ocean at Work

The glass remained on the beach, but it changed. For years, ocean waves crashed onto the beach and rubbed against the sharp edges of the glass.

The ocean and sand turned those pieces of broken glass into smooth **sea glass**. The sea glass sparkles in the sun like millions of shiny jewels.



Disappearing Glass

Now people come from all over to see the beautiful beach, but there's a problem. People don't just look at the sea glass. Some people take pieces home as **souvenirs**, and all that beautiful glass is starting to disappear.

The people who take sea glass say they're not doing anything wrong because the glass used to be trash! They say it belongs to anyone who wants it.

Other people disagree and say the glass should be left alone. They want people to be able to come and see the beautiful beach for years to come.

Nature turned a pile of trash into a beautiful treasure. What should happen next?

—by Blair Rainsford

What Do You Think?

Should people be allowed to take the sea glass?

Yes No

Use the "Debate It!" page on the *Scholastic News* website to write your answer.



Sea Glass Colors

The different colors of sea glass on the beach come from different kinds of trash.



Red glass comes from old car taillights.



Blue glass comes from medicine bottles.



Green glass comes from perfume bottles.

