



Why Recycle?

Lesson 1

Estimated Time: 25 minutes

Student Objective:

I can describe what happens to waste after it has been thrown away.

Materials:

- opaque bag or box
- examples of recyclables or other waste
- pictures of a landfill and incinerator
- chart paper with "What Can It Become?" headings attached
- picture cards for "What Can It Become?" activity
- glue stick or tape

Introduction: Mystery Bag

Bring in a bag of recyclables or other waste. This could be from your home or some of the waste and recyclables collected in your classroom. Make sure the kids can't see what is inside your bag.

Today, I brought in a mystery bag and I'm wondering if you can guess what I have inside. I'll give you some clues, and I want you to think before you make a guess.

You can shake the bag and give the kids some clues to help them get some ideas. You may need to change the clues listed to fit your community and school.

Possible Clues:

1. We make this every day at school and at home.
2. Someone will come take it from your home.
3. We put it in a black bin or blue bin.
4. Some of the things in this bag can be made into something new.

Keep giving clues until students can guess that you have "trash" in your bag. Pull out the items to show the kids what you have inside.

Most people that live in America create over 4 pounds of waste each day. That weighs almost as much as a bag of flour you might get at the grocery store. It doesn't sound like very much, but it adds up quickly. In a year, a person would have created about 1,460 pounds of waste, and that weighs almost as much a full grown cow! But that much waste also takes up a lot more space than a cow. So where does it all go?

Discussion: What happens to our waste after it gets thrown away?

What do you know about where your waste goes after it is picked up from school or your home?

After getting some of their ideas, show the picture of a landfill and incinerator.

The waste that we put in our garbage bins usually ends up in either a landfill, where it is packed down to save space, or an incinerator, which burns the waste. While we definitely need these for some of our waste, we don't want all of our waste to go to landfills or incinerators. It takes up space for a long time waiting to decompose, or rot, in a landfill. Even burning waste takes up space because there

Materials- Lesson 1

What Can It Become?- picture cards



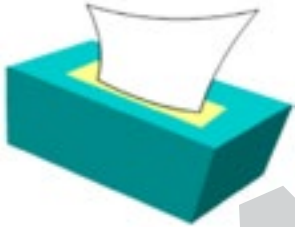
new aluminum can



new plastic bottle



airplane parts



tissues



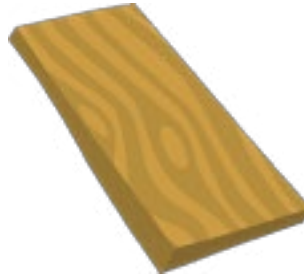
office paper



bicycle



fabric



building materials



carpeting



fiberfill for jackets

What Goes in the Bin?

Lesson 2
Estimated Time: 30 minutes



Student Objective:

I can sort items to show what is or is not recyclable.

Materials:

- examples of recyclables (or pictures)
- trash bin
- recycling bin
- projector/large screen to show video (linked to the right)
- copy of "Can it be Recycled?" for each student
- copy of small sorting pictures for each student
- scissors and glue for each student

Review: Where does our waste go?

Yesterday, we learned about what happens to our waste that we put into the trash bin and what happens to the waste that we can recycle. Turn and tell a partner where our trash goes after it is picked up. Now tell your partner what happens to our recyclables.

Video: Where does our recycling go?

We found out yesterday that our recyclables can be made into new products, but we still don't know how that happens. Where do they go after they are picked up from our school or our homes? Today, we are going to watch a video that shows us the first step in turning our recyclables into new and useful products. Watch closely because the video is also going to help us to know what CAN go into our recycling bin. This will help us with a game we are going to play after the video.

You can click on the picture to the right to access the Materials Recovery Facility video. You can also search youtube.com for "Dem-Con Materials Recovery, Green Grades Part II". As you watch, you may want to pause after each material is discussed: fibers, metals, plastics, and glass. Have the kids restate what they just found out could be recycled.



Greener Every Day Video

New Learning: What can be recycled?

So now we know that our recyclables get taken to a special facility, a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) to be sorted out by machines and workers. But did you hear that there are some things that can't go into the recycling bin? In fact, putting the wrong things in the recycling bin can cause problems for the machinery at the MRF. So how do we know what can be recycled and what can't?

Learn to ask yourself, what is it made of? Remember in the video how there were 4 main categories of things that could be recycled? Try to think about the 4 red objects that we watched go through the machinery. (a fiber box, a metal pop can, a plastic milk jug, and a glass jar). If the container or packaging you are wondering about is made of paper, metal, plastic, or glass, it may be something you can put in your recycling bin.



Something New

Lesson 3

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

Student Objective:

I can give examples of new products that can be made from recyclable materials.

Materials:

- chart paper and marker
- projector/large screen to show video (linked on the next page)
- plastic bottle (or provided picture)
- aluminum can (or provided picture)
- cardboard box (or provided picture)
- glass bottle (or provided picture)

Review

Did anybody go home last night and show your family your recycling poster? Did your families learn anything new about what should or shouldn't go in the bin?

I've got a challenge for you and your partner. See if you can list at least 3 things that you remember you can recycle, and three things you can't recycle.

As a class, work together to make a list with as many different and accurate items as possible (recyclable and not). If you wish, this could be hung by your classroom recycling bin.

Videos: Now what happens?

So far, we know that the material we put in our recycling bins gets picked up and brought to the MRF to be sorted. But on the first day, we learned that recycled materials can be made into new things. We still don't know how that happens! Today, you will get to see how glass, fibers, plastic, and metal are made into new products.

Begin by holding up the cardboard box (or picture).

Does anybody have a prediction as to what useful product this cardboard box might become after it has been recycled?

After students give their predictions, show the "fibers" video. You can access the video by clicking on the appropriate picture on the next page. Otherwise, search youtube.com for "Dem-Con Product Life Cycle Feature- Fiber". Repeat for the three remaining materials.

Is it...



fiber



plastic



metal

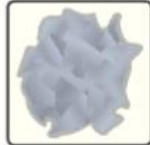


glass

Edit

Reset

?



Name _____

Can it be Recycled?

Hang this near your recycling bin at home.



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Make a recycling sign
for your home.



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