

Lesson 5.2

Habits: Wasteful or Not



Source: Carl Hursh, Bureau of Land Recycling and Waste Management

Level: Senior Secondary/Tertiary (ages 14+)

Key Terms: habits, attitude

Subjects: Science, Social Studies

OVERVIEW/BACKGROUND

TIME FRAME

45 minutes – 1 hour

OBJECTIVES

The students will develop a positive attitude towards littering. Students will develop solutions to help reduce littering.

MATERIALS

This lesson requires the following resources:

- Chalkboard
- litter collection bags
- a map of the school building and grounds.

PROCEDURE

Ask the class what "littering" is. Ask the class whether any of the members have littered. What was littered? Why? Do the students know of any areas in or around the school where litter can be found?

1. Divide the class into small groups. Using student suggestions, select a destination for each group to search for litter. The locations can be indoors or outdoors and must be as specific as possible. Identify the locations on the map. The goal of the exercise is to collect and analyse **all** litter located within the selected area. Allow 15 - 30 minutes for the litter collection.

2. After the litter collection, have each group examine the collected litter materials. Each group should categorize the litter and determine the most frequent litter components. Record the data on the chalkboard. Have each group relate its experience to the class. Each group should identify its litter search area on the map.
3. After the group presentations, discuss:
 - a. Which locations yielded the most litter and why?
 - b. Can any of the littered items be recycled or used in some other way?
 - c. By examining the types of litter, can it be determined which age group may be most responsible for the problem?
 - d. Does the school or community have rules or laws against littering? If so, are the rules or laws enforced? What penalties are involved?
 - e. How is litter managed at your school?
 - f. Does the school provide refuse containers near the litter locations?
 - g. How can the amount of littering be reduced?
4. As a follow-up activity, repeat the exercise after a week or month has passed and compare the findings

ASSESSMENT

Students will be evaluated based on:

1. Active participation in class discussion.
2. Successful completion of related activities.
3. Addition of completed items to portfolio (optional).

Handout 5.2A

Let's Learn to Precycle

Exactly what is precycling? "Pre" means "before" and "precycling", means we can "preventing recycling" by taking a little action before. How do you do that? It's easy.

Here are some simple examples:

1. If you bring your own bags to the store with you, you not only prevent having to recycle additional bags, you recycle an existing bag.
2. If you buy less disposable items or none at all (cloth napkins, towels and diapers instead of paper ones), you prevent more things from ending up in a landfill, and you don't use any packaging.
3. If you buy "long life" products (such as batteries and light bulbs) or "concentrated" products, (such as juices or detergents) you not only prevent buying unnecessary packaging, but you prevent more products from ending up in a landfill!

Here are ten easy ways to PRECYCLE:

1. Bring reusable bags to the store with you. Cloth or paper will do!
2. Buy Large Quantities. If you buy products in bulk or in large sizes and quantities, you can put them in smaller containers as you need them and this uses fewer containers.
3. Buy products with the least amount of packaging or none at all. Items packed in multiple containers may look nice, but they are a waste!
4. Buy products packed in recycled packaging. If you have to use a container, it might as well be green. Additionally, you help support green corporations. (Important: make sure you look for the recycled symbol)
5. Don't buy disposable items (plates cups, pens, diapers, batteries, etc.) They only fill the landfill more.
6. Buy less paper towels and napkins or none at all. Use cloth ones!
7. Buy long life and concentrated items (batteries, bulks, etc.) This saves on packaging as well as product.
8. Don't purchase Styrofoam. It contains polystyrene, which is the most difficult material to break down in our landfill and is considered a hazardous waste.
9. Buy items in cardboard. aluminium, steel, glass, and plastic containers marked 1 and 2 (They are stamped on the bottom 1 and 2). These containers can be recycled more easily.
10. Read labels for ingredients. Stay away from chemicals that harm our plant and animal life and poison our land.

Precycle, and teach your friends and family how to PRECYCLE, too!

Handout 5.2B

Are you reducing the waste stream by precycling?

One of the most effective ways to reduce household garbage is to cut down on waste before it enters the home. Part of waste reduction is to "precycle." Another part of waste reduction is to "reuse" products in every way possible.

To rate your "precycling savvy," read the following list. Check each waste-stream-reduction technique you use.

- Think before you buy any item. Do you really need the item? Can you do with what you already have?
- When you purchase items from the store, evaluate each one as to cost, convenience, and environmental impact. Consider how many pieces will have to be discarded.
- Buy food and other goods including laundry detergents in bulk and large sizes, reducing the packaging you take home. Avoid individually wrapped items.
- Whenever available, buy concentrated products.
- Buy for content, not the container. Avoid over packaged products, for example, excess bags, boxes, and wrappers.
- Avoid plastic packaging, but if you have to buy it, choose refillable containers.
- Avoid single-serving packages.
- Choose recyclable packaging, such as glass, aluminium, or paper.
- Eat less highly processed foods.
- Buy durable products. Consider operating costs and the lifespan of the item you are purchasing. You may have to pay a little more, but you will get more value for your money.
- Buy "loose" produce rather than produce packed in plastic-wrapped trays.
- Purchase reusable storage containers instead of throwaway plastic bags.
- Buy recycled materials - look for the words "made from recycled material" and the recycling symbol.
- Buy eggs in cardboard cartons - never polystyrene.
- When given the choice between "paper or plastic" bags, select the type that you will reuse for another purpose.
- Ask clerks not to bag small purchases.

- Reuse paper grocery bags by storing your old newspapers for recycling.
- Take your grocery bags back to the store to keep from having to get new ones.
- Carry reusable cloth or plastic tote bags when you go shopping.
- Avoid disposables such as plastic razors, foil baking pans, disposable dishes, lighters, and throwaway cameras.
- Select less toxic commercial products or use a less toxic homemade substitute.
- Substitute refillable, manual-pump-spray containers for aerosols.
- Purchase products made to be used many times, such as cloth diapers, cloth napkins, dish towels, rags, sponges, dishes, silverware, and rechargeable batteries.
- Buy appliances that are easy to repair; then, instead of discarding them, repair them.
- Make a "waste-reduction kit" of twist ties, paper bags, and plastic bags. Take this kit along with you when you shop.
- Buy second-hand, rent, or share items. Watch your local paper for good buys. Consider sharing the cost of expensive items. Rent seldom-used items.

Source: Mississippi State University Extension Service

Handout 5.2C

Are you reducing the waste stream through reuse?

To rate your "recycling savvy," read the following list and check each waste-stream-reduction technique you use.

- Save and reuse boxes and packaging materials.
- Return extra wire hangers to the dry cleaners so the hangers can be reused.
- Use glass jars for storing foods, screws and nails, and sewing supplies.
- Donate old books to libraries.
- Donate old magazines to hospitals, clinics, personal care homes, and/or nursing homes.
- Donate unwanted appliances, household items, toys, and clothes.
- Save those little things, for example, ribbons, string, rubber bands, and paper clips. You can use them over and over.
- Make a compost pile from your food and garden wastes.
- When you cut your grass, leave the clippings on the lawn or place them in your compost pile.
- Old, outdated furniture can be reupholstered or slip-covered. Have padding added to the furniture to give it a new look. Often the frame can be modified slightly to change the way it looks.
- Old pieces of furniture can be repaired or finished with special finishes such as splattering, sponging, or rag painting, which takes little time and skill.
- If you change your own auto oil, take the drained oil to a local service station or recycling centre. The facility may charge you about 10 cents per litre to dispose of your oil.
- Reuse scrap paper that's printed on one side. Use the blank side for phone messages or notes.
- Save Styrofoam peanuts and other packing materials to use with your next fragile package.
- Paint and other household chemicals in their original containers with the original labels can be shared with neighbours or a youth group that does projects in the area.

- Save used gift-wrap, and use it again on a smaller package.
- Cut old bedding, draperies, and clothes into pieces for rags, or use them in braided rugs or patchwork designs.
- Remove nails and hardware from used lumber so it can be reused in smaller projects.
- Use broken concrete and bricks in a rough retaining wall.
- Sell your unwanted items in yard sales, classified ads, community bulletin boards, or consignment shops.
- Buy used products and goods when they will do the job as well as a new item. They cost less and reusing them helps reduce waste and conserves energy and raw materials.

Source: Mississippi State University Extension Service

Handout 5.2D

Waste Wise Quiz

Fill in this quiz and check your score. For each question you will receive:
2 points for **Usually**, 1 point for **Sometimes**, 0 points for **Never**

Does your family:	Usually	Sometimes	Never
Reduce			
1 Buy products that can be reused or recycled?			
2 Take your own basket, bag or box when shopping?			
3 Buy products with as little packaging as possible?			
Reuse			
4 Reuse old shopping bags?			
5 Give unwanted clothes, toys and books away?			
6 Use paper with writing on one side for rough work?			
Recycle			
7 Recycle aluminium and steel cans, glass and plastic bottles, and cartons?			
8 Recycle paper and cardboard?			
9 Buy goods made from recycled materials e.g. recycled writing paper			
Compost			
10 Put fruit and vegetable scraps in a compost bin or worm farm?			
11 Use leaves or grass clippings as mulch on the garden?			
12 Put out garden waste for council green waste collection?			
Litter			
13 Put litter in litterbins?			
14 Clean up your dog's droppings from parks or streets?			
15 Help in special litter clean up events? (e.g. Adopt-A-Beach Programme)			
Your family's score (out of 30)	<input type="text"/>		