

Making Waste Wonderful

Plastic

A learners guide



Helping schools and communities reduce waste

Plastic information

Plastic facts

- Plastic containers today are lighter and use less material than they used too.
- N.Z. recycles approximately 21% of the total plastics found in the waste stream, that's 209,525 tonnes a year.
- At the moment the West Coast Region only recycles a small amount of the plastics in its waste stream, recycling milk and soft drink bottles water and juice bottles only.

Plastics and Its effects on the environment

- Plastics last a long time to break down in the environment. It is estimated that some plastics could last up to 500 years before they completely breakdown.
- In the oceans or on land, plastic litter is a hazard to all life as it can cause animals to become trapped in the plastic, cause fish to drown, and animals/fish can swallow it.
- Burning plastic is not a solution as plastic release gases that are poisonous unless they are burnt in specially controlled conditions.

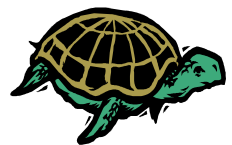
Directions: Read the information above and write down three ways plastic could harm fish, and animals in our seas and on land If your not sure do some research or discuss with you classmates.

Bonus Activity: Take a walk on the beach with a bag and collect all the plastic you find. Bring it back to class and discuss ways this could harm fish and wildlife and think of some ideas on how to stop people and boats littering the beaches and oceans.



Plastics can harm fish and animal life by:

1



2

3



Plastic Information

Why Recycle

- Too stop using a resource that we only have a limited supply of such as oil, so saving it for the future.
- Saves space in the landfill or transfer station bins.
- Helps to make new plastic products from recycled materials.

How you can help to reduce plastics in your waste stream

1. Buy groceries in bulk when ever possible avoiding plastic containers that are only going to be used once.
2. Use less plastic wrap at home and in your lunch box.
3. Take your own bags to the supermarket.
4. Reuse your plastic shopping bags.
5. Sort and wash your plastic bottles for recycling and take them to your local transfer station or landfill. If you have a kerbside collection that collects plastics put them out for recycling

What can I recycle

On the West Coast we currently only recycle

- Milk bottles
- Soft drink fizzy bottles such as orangeade, lemonade
- Juice bottles
- Water bottles If the water bottles are **blue** in colour make sure you recycle them in the bag marked **MIXED- which have the green and brown plastic bottles in** at most Landfill and Transfer stations.

To recycle your plastic containers take the lids off and put them in the rubbish then

WASH

SQUASH your container/bottle

Directions: Look around your school for plastic packaging material such as bottles and ice cream containers. How many ways can you think of reusing these items? Get into groups and have a competition in the class to see who can come up with the most ideas.

Bonus activity: Make one of your ideas and put it to use

Here are some ideas Turn a 2-litre drink bottle into a pencil holder, a worm composting system. a bird feeder. Do some more research for extra ideas.

List your ideas below:

Draw a design to make your idea

Some more Activities

Divide your class into groups and have a discussion about what the world would be like without plastics.

First step

Draw and decorate some labels with these headings on

- Clothing
- Sport
- Furniture
- Toys
- Household items
- Packaging

Step 2

Put these headings into a container

Step 3

Divide your class into 6 groups and select a leader

Step 4

Lucky dip into the container and take out a topic for discussion in your group

Here are some ideas for discussion

- What was used before plastics?
- What are the disadvantages of plastic?
- What are the benefits of plastics?
- What are we going to do in the future when there is no oil to make plastics with?

List some of your discussion ideas below

The Great Plastic Experiment

Bring a plastic bottle or container to school and try some of these experiments.

1 Draw the bottle/container.

2. What type of plastic is it?

3. What is its

- Texture?
- Colour?
- Smell?

4. What are the effects of sunlight on the container after 4 weeks or longer?

5. What happens if you bury it in the soil for 4 weeks or longer?

6. What are the effects of water on the container/bottle?

7 Can it be recycled?

8.Can it be reused?

9.Can it be replaced with another material?