



What's Recyclable?

Activity P.bb

GRADE LEVELS: K - 3

OBJECTIVE:

Students will identify recyclable materials and learn how to prepare these materials for recycling.

MATERIALS:

- items that are recyclable in your area
- old magazines

Note: For this activity, concentrate on items that are recyclable in your area. Stress that as recycling becomes more available, more items will be recycled.

VOCABULARY: aluminum, plastic, glass, paper

BACKGROUND:

Some materials are easier to recycle than others. Many objects, while recyclable, may not be collected in your area. It is important to know what materials can be recycled locally and how to prepare them for recycling.

The most common recyclable materials are clear glass, certain types of plastic, newspaper, and aluminum. Some communities also recycle steel (tinned) cans, cardboard, magazines, many types of plastic, and brown and green glass. As recycling grows, more and more items will be recyclable. The method of collecting recyclables also varies from community to community. For example, some areas have recycling bins that are distributed to each household. These bins are used to collect a family's recyclables for a certain period of time, such as one week, and then are picked up by special recycling trucks. In other areas, central recycling collection centers receive recyclables that families collect and then bring to the center. In some areas, collection centers pay for recyclables.

PROCEDURE:

1. Ask: What's recyclable in our area? Discuss this with the class and explain the recycling options available. Ask: Do you recycle at home? What items? Where do they go?
2. Show examples of recyclable objects.
3. Ask: How do you prepare recyclables for collection? (Again emphasize methods in your area. Should aluminum cans be crushed? Should newspaper be bundled with string or placed in paper bags? Should milk and water jugs be crushed?) Also discuss methods to keep recyclables from becoming unsightly. (Always rinse and dry containers to prevent attracting pests, etc.)
4. Ask each student to select a picture of an object that is recyclable from an old magazine. Each child will explain to the class why the object is recyclable and how to prepare the item for recycling. Have the class make a large poster-size collage of all the items and keep the poster on display.

EXTENSIONS:

1. Have students make a “How to Recycle” book to take home.
2. Share the Save, Sort, Recycle activity with the class. You may want to laminate for permanent use.

*Source: Action for a Cleaner Tomorrow: A South Carolina Environmental Curriculum