



# What Is Trash?\*

Activity P.c

GRADE LEVELS: K - 3

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will be able to state the difference between recyclables, biodegradables, and the leftover that must be disposed of.

**CONCEPT:** Our class generates a great deal of trash daily. Trash can be divided into three categories.

**MATERIALS:**

- classroom trash (one day's worth)
- Sesame Street song "I Love Trash"

**VOCABULARY:** reusable, recyclable, biodegradable, disposable

**PROCEDURE:**

Collect the trash which accumulates in the classroom after one day. Help the students separate it into three categories:

- recyclables
- biodegradables, and
- the leftover that must be disposed of Reusables, Recyclables

Discuss some ways in which these materials can be **reused or recycled**. Sandwich containers can be used many times; papers of various types can be reprocessed and recycled. Find out how Oscar on Sesame Street is using what other people throw away. Learn his song, "I Love Trash."

## **Biodegradables**

These are materials that will rot over a short period of time. In a plot on a school yard, bury some samples of biodegradable trash; unearth the trash periodically to see what is happening. Record what you see. You might also bury some paper, glass, or metal trash at the same time for comparison.

## **The leftover that must be disposed of**

This is trash that will not decay and cannot be recycled. Are there some reusable or recyclable materials that could have been substituted for disposable materials? Discuss what happens to trash in your community.

\* Source: Cornell Waste Management Institute Trash Goes to School