



Playdough-Go-Round*

Activity P.y

GRADE LEVELS: K - 3

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will be able to experience and demonstrate a cycle by manipulating playdough.
- Students will show that with 100 percent recycling, material is not destroyed, but remanufactured.

MATERIALS:

Homemade playdough (see recipe below), aluminum can, pie tin, and foil sheet

TIME: 20 – 25 minutes

PROCEDURE:

Give each participant a small quantity of playdough, about the size of a walnut. Follow the script below:

Leader: I want each of you to roll your playdough and then flatten the ends to make a cylinder shape. [Demonstrate] Great! We've all made little cans! Now, exchange your can with someone nearby.

[Participants exchange playdough "cans."]

Leader: Do we all have someone else's can? Good. Now FLATTEN that can! Take the playdough you have and make a pan shape with it. [Leader walks around while making a pan or dish shape.] Now exchange with someone different from the first person you swapped cans with.

[Participants exchange playdough "pans."]

Leader: You're really following instructions well (or other encouraging words). Now FLATTEN that pan! Next, let's all make a flat shape, like a sheet. [Demonstrate] Good job! Okay, exchange with yet a different person.

[Participants exchange playdough "sheets."]

Leader: What's next? You guessed it! ROLL UP those sheets and flatten the ends. What do we have? [Demonstrate] Cans! Again!

Leader: Super! Please put the playdough back in the container. [Pass container around.] Let's talk about what we just did.

Questions: Did we throw away any of the playdough?

Did you EAT any of the playdough?

Did you have the SAME playdough all the time?

What have we just demonstrated? (Aluminum recycling)

Show the participants the aluminum can, pie pan, and foil. They should easily see the relationship

between what they just did and recycling—a complete cycle. With older participants, point out that not all recycling processes recycle 100 percent of the materials. Glass recycling is close to 100 percent, but a little material is lost in aluminum recycling. Paper recycling almost always requires some virgin material for strength.

PLAYDOUGH RECIPE

1 cup flour
½ cup salt
1 cup water
1 tbs. oil
2 tsp. cream of tartar

Mix wet ingredients first, in a pot on the stove. Turn heat on medium. Add dry ingredients. It will look awful at first. Cook until it “coagulates” and is quite hot. Turn out of pan. Knead a few times. Let cool. Store in airtight container. Recipe can be doubled successfully.

*Source: Tennessee Solid Waste Education Project, 1996