SIMPLER RECYCLING HULL

Hull City Council

Session Leader Notes

Part 2: Recycling and contaminated waste

This lesson introduces recycling and contaminated waste to Key Stage 1-2 students in an engaging and interactive way. It combines hands-on activities, creative expression, and discussion to ensure students understand how sorting waste properly and recycling can help protect the environment.

Recommended for:

Key stage 1-2 (Ages 5-11)

Session duration:

60 Minutes

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand the importance of the 3 Rs and their role in protecting the environment.
2. Understand what waste contamination is, why it is important to separate waste and how to do it correctly.
3. Identify simple ways you can reduce, reuse, and recycle at home and school.

Recommended group rules

- Listen to each other.
- Treat each other with respect.
- Engage with and enjoy the learning.

Materials (what you will need)

- **Provide at the start of the lesson:** Whiteboard and markers for answering questions.
- **For Slide 7/8:** Sort it Out - Recycling Sheet - **this activity can be done using this sheet or provide the below materials for a more hands on activity:**
  Contaminated waste items (e.g., dirty bottles, paper, cans, cardboard boxes, aluminium foil, etc.),
  Coloured bins or bins labeled : "Recyclable," and "Non-Recyclable",
  Access to a sink or wash facilities.
- **Slide 13 - Provide this sheet if the activity is to be done as homework :** Recycled City Sheet

Technical requirements

- A good standard of audio and visual for the group size for the short video on slide 6.

Lesson Outlines

Part 2: Recycling and contaminated waste

1. Introduction to recycling (10 minutes)

Start with a question: "What is recycling?"

- Ask students what they think happens to the waste that goes in our blue bin when it is taken away.
- Introduce the idea of recycling: "Recycling means turning old things into new things so we don't have to use as many new resources, and we can help protect our planet.".
- Explain how sometimes recyclable items can cause contamination if for example they have food waste in / on them and haven't been cleaned properly.

Video (Slide 6):

Before showing the video, go through the list of questions for students to think about whilst watching:

- What items can be recycled?
- Why should we recycle these items?
- What should we check for when recycling items?
- Where does food waste go?

Click for discussion...

- You can discuss this as a class afterwards

2. Sorting waste activity (15 minutes)

Introduction:

- Introduce the concept of waste contamination by showing a recycling bin filled with mixed items (e.g., pizza boxes with leftover food, dirty plastic bottles). This bin is contaminated.
- Explain that although some of these items are perfectly fine to recycle, contamination occurs when these items are not cleaned properly, making it harder to recycle or not possible at all.

Activity:

Sorting challenge: Can be done as a class or in groups as a competition.

Give them a "Recyclable" and "Non-Recyclable" bin and some different items (e.g., clean and dirty plastic bottles / glass jars, cans with food, cereal boxes with leftovers inside, paper with ink stains) and ask them to separate them into the "Recyclable" and "Non-Recyclable" bins.

If no physical items are available, use the handout sheets.

Reminder: If they are dirty, they need to be cleaned first – food waste can be composted.

Continued...

- Show how to effectively clean / empty these items. Once clean, add them to the correct bin.
- Once all items have been placed, discuss which items they have placed where and why. If doing this in groups, go round each group at a time and give them a point per correct item.
- Explain how waste processors can't reuse contaminated materials, and how it can make recycling more difficult or impossible, leading to more waste going to landfills.
- To finish off, discuss where all the remaining 'non-recyclable' items (if any) need to go.

3. The importance of recycling and reducing waste (10 minutes)

Discussion:

Ask: "Why is it important to recycle? What do you think happens to the Earth if we don't recycle?"

Emphasise the benefits of recycling, such as:

- Reducing the amount of waste put in the black bin.
- Saving energy and resources.
- Protecting wildlife and the environment.

Discuss the 3 Rs: "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle": Provide handout

- **Reduce** – Use less plastic and packaging. For example, using a reusable water bottle instead of a plastic one.
- **Reuse** – Using things again. For example, turning an old box into a toy or craft project.
- **Recycle** – Making things into new things. For example, recycling paper and plastic.

4. Activity - Recycled city (15 minutes)

- Using the materials we separated earlier, in groups or individually, create their favourite landmark from the city.

Sharing and discussion:

- Once the pieces are created, have students share them with the class and discuss what recyclable items they have used.

5. Conclusion and reflection (5 minutes)

Wrap-up discussion:

- Ask the students: "What new things did you learn today about recycling and sorting waste?"
- Summarise the importance of sorting waste into the right bins to help the environment and reduce landfill waste.

Exit Ticket:

- As a quick exit ticket, ask students to tell you one thing they will do at home or school to help reduce, reuse, or recycle. For example: "I will start using a reusable water bottle instead of plastic bottles."

Reflection for Teachers:

- Monitor students' understanding during the sorting activity and the city creation activity to ensure that they are grasping the differences between recyclable, and non-recyclable.