

Session Leader Notes

Part 4: Littering and its impact on the environment

This lesson plan introduces littering to Key Stage 1-2 students in an interactive, hands-on way. It is designed to engage students through discussions, activities, and creative tasks while helping them understand the importance of reducing litter in their surroundings to keep their community clean and tidy.

Recommended for:

Key stage 1-2 (Ages 5-11)

Session duration:

60 Minutes

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Understand what littering is and why it is harmful to the environment.
2. Learn how litter can harm wildlife and pollute natural habitats.
3. Recognise the importance of keeping our surroundings clean.
4. Discuss ways to reduce littering at school, at home, and in our community.

Recommended group rules

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

Materials (what you need)

- **Provide at the start of the lesson:** Whiteboard and markers for answering questions.
- **For Slide 10:** Litter Hunt Sheet, Litter picking equipment such as: Litter Picker, Bin Bags, Gloves Coloured bins or bins labeled: "Recycling Blue," "Compost Brown," and "General Waste Black Bin",
- **For Slide 14:** Pens and paper for poster designing.

Technical requirements

- A good standard of audio and visual for the group size for the short video on slide 4.

Lesson Outlines

Part 4: Littering and its impact on the environment

1. Introduction to litter (10 minutes)

Start with a question: "Have you been anywhere where you've spotted litter? Where does it go? How does it impact our environment?"

Discuss how littering means throwing waste, like wrappers, cans, or plastic bottles, in public spaces instead of in a bin. **It causes several problems:**

- Pollution
- Harm to wildlife
- Visual and ecological damage
- Discuss persistent waste (waste that doesn't break down easily in nature such as plastic). Mention how it can stay in the environment for hundreds of years and can cause long term harm.

Video (slide 4)

- A short video to explain how littering means leaving rubbish in places where it doesn't belong, like parks, streets, or the beach, and that litter can harm animals, block drains, make places look messy and impact the wider environment across the planet.

Click for discussion – Littered environments

Ask the following questions:

- Discuss how the littered environment looked and how it made them feel (dirty, sad, etc.).
- How would they feel if their favourite park or playground looked like this?
- What happens to animals or plants if there is too much litter around?

2. How can we prevent littering? (10 minutes)

Ask students how they can reduce littering:

(Click for answers)

- Take rubbish home
- Recycle whenever possible
- Use reusable containers
- Bring your own water bottle to school

Continues >



3. Why should we keep our environment clean? (10 minutes)

Group discussion:

Discuss the importance of keeping places clean. Discuss how everyone can help make the world a nicer place to live in.

Focus on:

- **Health and animals:** A clean environment prevents harm.
- **Safety:** Avoiding dangerous items like broken glass or sharp objects.
- **Tidiness:** A clean place is more enjoyable to play and work in.

Ask the students for ideas on how to keep their school or home environment clean.

4. Litter hunt activity (25 minutes)

- In pairs, have the class go outside into the playground and see how much litter they can collect and identify. Make sure they make a note of what has been found.
- Additional activity: Bring the items back into the classroom and separate them into general, recyclable and compostable waste and discard appropriately.

5. Recap (5 minutes)

Review:

- Recap the main points from the lesson: the dangers of littering; how to keep the environment clean; and ways to reduce littering.

6. Additional activity (20 minutes)

- Have students create their own 'Do Not Litter' poster using the knowledge they have learnt today and explaining the effects of littering within school and the environment.
- Make sure they include tips on how to reduce littering and note which items can go in which bin.

Exit ticket:

- Ask the students before they leave to share one thing they will do to help keep their environment clean.