

Session Leader Notes

Part 1: Introduction to waste

This lesson plan is designed to engage Key Stage 1–2 students through interactive activities, visuals, and discussions, making the concept of waste management accessible and fun.

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 waste is and why it is important to reduce waste.
2. Learn about the different types of waste, the bins they go in and how they are sorted at home.
3. Identify strategies to minimise waste at home, school, and in everyday life.

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 9:** Waste Picture Sheets and Waste Info sheets (keep hold of these to refer to in all 5 lessons), Coloured bins or bins labeled: "Recycling Blue," "Compost Brown," and "General Waste Black Bin", Assorted waste items (paper, plastic bottles, cardboard, food scraps, etc.).
- **For Slide 18:** The 3Rs handout (keep hold of this to refer to in all 5 lessons).
- **For Slide 19 (Extra Activity that could be done as homework):** Paper for drawing or making posters.

Technical requirements

- A good standard of audio and visual for the group size for the short video on slide 7.

Lesson Outlines

Part 1: Introduction to waste

1. Introduction to waste (10 minutes)

Start with a question: "What happens when we throw something away? Where does it go? Does it just disappear?"

Click for discussion...

- Briefly introduce the concept of waste and explain that waste is anything we don't need any more or can't use.
- Have the word "waste" on the board and have students give examples of things that become waste (e.g., paper, food scraps, plastic bottles, etc.). Make sure you let the students answer before clicking again to reveal examples.

Video (Slide 7):

- A short, engaging animated video introducing the different bins we have (cartoon characters) that give examples of what rubbish goes in them, where the rubbish goes and why recycling and composting are important.

Click for discussion...

- Discuss which items go into which bin, revealing the answers one click at a time.

2. Types of waste and sorting activity (15 minutes)

Introduce the different bins: Explain the three main types of waste:

1. Recycling (blue) – Items like paper, plastic bottles, cans, and glass that can be made into new products.
2. Brown Bin / caddy food bin – Organic waste like food scraps and garden waste that can break down (be composted) into soil.
3. General Waste (Black) – Things that can't be recycled or composted (like dirty tissues, broken items, etc.).

Sorting activity:

1. Set up the bins Recycling, Brown Bin and General Waste.
2. Divide students into small groups and give each group a selection of waste items (e.g., paper, food scraps, plastic bottles, cardboard) and each child the picture handouts (to take home) as a reminder of what goes in each bin.
3. Ask students to sort the items into the correct bins.
4. After the sorting activity, discuss why each item belongs in the specific bins.

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Click for discussion...

- Ask: "Why do you think it's important to take care of waste and not just throw everything in the black bin?"
- Introduce the idea that when waste is thrown away, it can harm the environment, animals, and even our own health.

3. The importance of reducing waste (10 minutes)

Discussion on reducing waste:

Ask: "What are some things we could do to create less waste?"

And: "Can you think of other ways to reduce waste at home or at school?"

Allow students to list some examples before clicking through answers.

Introduce the idea of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (the 3 Rs):

- **Reduce** – Using less. 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. (Extra activity) Waste reduction tips & poster creation (15 minutes)

- Provide students with paper and markers to create a poster that shows how they can reduce waste at school or at home. Encourage them to include the 3 Rs.
- Allow students to share their posters with the class once they are finished.
- These could be put up around the classroom as reminders.

5. Conclusion and reflection (5 minutes)

Review:

- Go over the main points: What is waste, how to sort it, and the importance of reducing waste.
- Discuss the 3 Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) and how students can apply them at school or at home.

Exit Ticket:

- Ask each student to write or share one way they will reduce waste at home or school. This can be something simple like bringing a reusable water bottle or recycling more.

Reflection for Teachers:

Some classes may need more time to grasp sorting, while others may be ready to focus on reducing waste. The sorting activity and poster creation should provide opportunities for hands-on learning but make sure to reflect on what they have learnt.