

Understanding Waste



INTRODUCTION:

We do understand that managing the waste that humans are creating as part of different activities has become a daunting task today. It will help reduce waste if we “extract the maximum practical benefits from products and generate the minimum amount of end waste”. Some of these principles are of utmost importance when we look at waste management.

- REFUSE material or products like disposable plastic whenever and wherever possible.
- RETHINK before creating waste, or think of alternative products for reducing waste.
- REDUCE to limit the amount of waste one creates in the first place. This includes buying products with less packaging.
- REUSE something again that you would normally throw away (eg. Glass jar for food or plastic bags for bin liners.)
- RECYCLE products. This is only recommended when reducing and reusing are not possible.

Eco-Schools Steps: Audit, Curriculum linkages, Inform and Involve, Evaluation and Monitoring
Curriculum Linkage: Science/ Environmental Studies/Social Science



This lesson plan will introduce students to the principles of waste management. Through a reflection of what they used and the waste they created, the lesson plan will enable students to rethink prior to creating waste. It looks at providing a hands-on experience to students in data collection through surveys. It also encourages students to interpret and represent the data. The learning processes include hands on engagement, classroom interaction, group work, analysis of responses and communicating about the topic through an article.

Objectives:

Students will be able to

- explain what constitutes waste.
- identify ways to handle the problem of waste.
- realize the importance of managing waste.

Time required/ Duration:

- **Classroom session 1:** 45 minutes to get students to classify different things they use and then introduce the concept of waste. Further introduce students to the concept of R's = Refuse, Rethink, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.

Resources Required:

- Student writing material including notebooks and pen.
- Copy of Resource 1 - Understanding waste Management Principles.



Activity

Classroom session **1**

- Ask the students to make an individual list of all the things they used on the previous day. The list should include everything including toys, food, paper napkin, plates, notebook, clothes, pencil, etc.
- Ask the students to categorize these things and tabulate them into things that can be used again or were disposed.
- Discuss with students that once we find no 'use' for any particular "thing" it tends to become 'Waste'. Introduce the concept of what is waste and highlight to students what might be waste for one person may not necessary be waste for another person.
- Introduce students to the concept of Refuse, Rethink, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.
- Ask students to go through the list of things under "was disposed" and see if they can categorize them into one of the following Refuse, Rethink, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle using the table in resource 1 (Understanding Waste Management Principles). Emphasize to students that by doing this, they are helping reduce the "waste" generated.
- Randomly ask some students to read out their individual list and discuss.

Evaluation

How and why students have classified some will help assess whether students have understood the concept of waste, the need to manage waste as well as the principles of managing waste.

Resource 1

Understanding Waste

Sl. No.	Things used	Can be used again (Yes/No)	Was disposed	Take a re-look at the "Was disposed" list and see if you can instead classify it as a possible alternative into one of the following				
				Refuse	Rethink	Reduce	Reduce	Recycle