

Geographical Association - Young Geographers Project

Wendy Hardman Leighton Primary School, Crewe - Why Recycle?

Activity 1: Why do we need packaging?

Prior learning

An understanding of the three R's - reduce, reuse, recycle

Learning objectives

- To understand why we need packaging
- To identify a range of materials used for packaging

Resources

Various types of packaging
Post-it notes
Worksheet to record findings
Magnets

Homework activity to precede lesson: Children to bring in examples of packaging from home. This will involve health and safety points:

- No breakable objects e.g. glass
- No sharp objects
- Packaging must be 'clean' (e.g. none which has been used to wrap meat)

Introduction

Class discussion: Why do we need packaging?

Main activity

Explain to children that the objective of this part of the lesson is to identify the different materials used in packaging. Each child then identifies the type of material/s used in their packaging and writes it down on a post-it note. Children then take it in turns to add their post-it note to the whiteboard and build up groups of materials used in packaging e.g. paper, wood, metal, plastic etc. Identify the groups as a class.

Using Internet research and source books, children work in groups to investigate one type of packaging.

Answer the key questions:

- What is the material?
- Where does it come from?
- Is it necessary?
- Can it be recycled?

Plenary

- Each group to feedback findings to rest of class.
- What happens to our waste if we don't recycle it? Discussion.

Activity 2: Answering Questions

Learning objectives

- To understand what happens to packaging if it is not recycled
- To understand that the collection of raw materials can damage the environment

Resources

Computers with Internet access
Source books/ leaflets

Introduction

Today we are going to answer two important questions discussed in the plenary session of Activity 1:

1. What happens to our waste if it is not recycled? (Use Google Earth to investigate Maw Green Landfill Site, Crewe)
2. Where do the raw materials for packaging come from? We are going to investigate this second question using aluminium cans as an example. (Use Google Earth to investigate area south of Mandeville, Jamaica)

Main activity

Children work in mixed-ability groups to investigate one of the key questions. They will start by setting enquiry questions establishing the types of areas they want to investigate and decide where they are likely to find that information. They will then allocate tasks to group members.

The outcome of the activity should be a well-presented, informative poster.

Plenary

Groups will feedback their findings to the rest of the class.

Establish that our next step is to investigate what happens to waste (in particular aluminium) when it is recycled.

Activity 3: Finding Out More

Learning objective

- To gain a greater understanding of what happens to recycled materials by visiting our local recycling centre and exploring online through a virtual tour of an aluminium recycling plant

Resources

Local maps
Computer programs e.g. Google Earth, Mapping Sites
www.thinkcans.com

Introduction (Prior to visit)

Discuss the forthcoming visit with the children.

Key questions:

How will we get there?

Children to work in groups to plan a route and decide method of transport. Feedback to rest of class, discuss best route, safest and most environmentally friendly method of transport.

What do you think the recycling centre will be like?

Ideas on post-its to be saved for comparison after the visit.

What do we want to find out from our visit?

Class discussion and exchange of ideas leading to development of questionnaires to be used on visit.

What questions can we ask?

Children to work with a partner to devise a short questionnaire.

Visit to Recycling Centre

Introduction by the Site Manager on a hill overlooking the site. The children will have the opportunity to ask their questions from their questionnaires. Tour of the site and time for the children to find the correct place to recycle their own piece of packaging.

Follow-up work

Children to use the Think Cans website to complete a virtual tour of the Novellis aluminium can recycling plant which recycles all cans in the UK. This follows the process through from the arrival of the cans at the site to the departure of the pure aluminium ingots for transport to rolling mills.

Plenary

Feedback findings from visit and discuss next steps.

Activity 4: What can we do?

Learning objective

- To begin to develop a collective responsibility towards our environment and an understanding that they can make a difference

Introduction

Recap on prior activity and findings. Look at photographs of the visit and discuss the children's feelings. Main activities should then be child led but could include the following:

Example main activities (To be carried out in groups)

- Writing letters to the school governors proposing idea and requesting support
- Writing letters to Novellis asking for information/ display materials/ visit to school by representative
- Writing letters to the Chronicle arguing the need for recycling
- Making recycling containers for collection
- Using PowerPoint to create a presentation for use in a dedicated assembly
- Display - Why Recycle?

Plenary

The future of recycling in our school.

Word bank

Reduce
Re-use
Recycle
Raw material
Waste
Environment
Materials
Incinerators
Aluminium