

Recycle races

Learning Objectives

- Understand the recycling process, the benefits of recycling and which materials can be recycled.
- Develop good sorting behaviour to reduce contamination (putting unsuitable materials into recycle bins).

Curriculum Links

Science, Geography, Citizenship, PE

Sustainable Schools Doorways

Doorway 4 Purchasing and Waste



Materials:

Two bags (with one item for each pupil) of clean recyclable, non recyclable and organic waste items (or use pictures of food waste items instead), two sets of coloured stickers (e.g. one red set, one blue set) to attach to the waste items in each bag, three containers clearly labelled 'recycle', 'compost' and 'rubbish', a space suitable for pupils to move around.

A. How to play

1. Discuss the properties of items that can be recycled and composted. Discuss what problems arise if the wrong materials are put in the wrong bin (contamination).
2. Divide the group or class into two teams and ask each team to form a straight line.
3. Place the three clearly labelled containers at the front of the room, one for general rubbish, one for recyclables and one for compost.
4. Place a bag containing a mixture of waste items at the front of each line. Ensure there are the same number of items as there are number of pupils in each team.
5. When the race starts, the first team member takes a waste item from the bag at the front and passes it through their legs to the next person, who passes it on overhead. This continues all the way down the line.
6. When it reaches the last person, they hold the item up in the air and the team shouts out 'recycle', 'compost' or 'rubbish', depending on what bin it should go into.
7. The team member then goes to the front of the line and picks the next item from the bag, starting the process again.
8. When the bag is empty, the team should sit down to show that they have finished. The winning team is the team that sorts the rubbish correctly, not who finishes first, unless there is a tie.
9. Go through each team's answers with the class to reinforce which items should be recycled, and which bin the rubbish should have been put into.

Extension ideas

- Investigate what's in your class's waste bin. Brainstorm ways to reduce your waste.
- Research the benefits of recycling and research and discuss the recycling process e.g. what happens to paper when it gets recycled? (visit the 'Facts' section on www.recyclenow.com or the section on 'Environmental benefits' in this Action Pack).

Top tip

This activity is ideal to run in a hall, a gym, or a playground to allow pupils space to run around.