



WHAT IS WASTE? GRADE BAND: 2-5

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ADAPTED FROM RETHINK WASTE



Standards and Topics Connections

One Planet Topic	NGSS	<u>Environmental Principle and Concepts (EP&Cs)</u>
<p>Waste and Consumption</p> 	<p>K-ESS3-3. Communicate solutions that will reduce the impact of humans on the land, water, air, and/or other living things in the local environment.</p> <p>K-2-ETS1-1 Engineering Design. Ask questions, make observations, and gather information about a situation people want to change to define a simple problem that can be solved through the development of a new or improved object or tool.</p>	 <p>Principle I – People Depend on Natural Systems Principle II – People Influence Natural Systems Principle V – Decisions Affecting Resources and Natural Systems are Complex and Involve Many Factors</p>

Purpose and Learning Objectives:

Every student will...

- Understand the properties of what makes a material waste and the three different disposal methods (landfill, recycle and compost).
- Understand how humans create systems to manage waste products
- Be able to critically assess the life cycle of consumable materials
- Communicate what students want to learn more about in the waste process and how they feel about waste

Driving Question for This Lesson:

- Primary: What is waste?
- Secondary: When you throw something away, where does it go?

Vocabulary:

- Waste
- Garbage
- Compost
- Recycle
- Rot
- Environment
- Raw materials
- Resource
- Renewable resource
- Nonrenewable resource

Materials:

- Worksheet with video embedded (see end of file)
- Students will need internet access to watch the video before completing the reflection worksheet
- Adult facilitation is helpful for this activity

Agenda of Activities: *Please note that this activity works best as an “engage” activity for students in the 5E model*

“What is Waste?” Student Worksheet

20 minutes	Engage
Directions for Activity:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Instruct students that they will be filling out the worksheet below. The questions in the worksheet are meant to challenge what they know about waste.2. Optional: Have students break up into small groups to fill out the worksheet.3. Optional: Provide this as a homework assignment for students to work on prior to the introduction of a 4R’s unit.
10-15 minutes	
After Completion of the Activity:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Students can share out to a small group or whole class about the results of their worksheet.2. Optional: Students create an infographic or poster to demonstrate what goes into which bin for their family, community or school.

What is Waste?

Student Worksheet - Printable Version

Watch the [“What is Waste?” video](#) by our friends at Rethink Waste.

There are lots of names for waste like trash, garbage and junk. But not all of our waste is trash, garbage or junk! Some of our waste can be recycled or composted to be re-made over and over again. When we put the right items in the green compost or blue recycling container, that waste becomes like a treasure we can keep and use for ourselves instead of burying it in the landfill.

1. Write as many of the waste items that go in the blue recycling cart as you can.
2. Write as many of the waste items that go in the green composting cart as you can.
3. Why is it important for people to know that not all waste is garbage or trash?
4. When we find waste in the streets, in parks or in nature, we call it litter. Why does litter not belong in streets, parks or nature?
5. The green and blue waste sorting bins give us the power to make less trash and litter. When you care about waste, you are actually caring about our planet and that makes your waste sorting actions powerful everyday! Can you think of other ways to “save our waste” so we can make less trash?