



Lesson Plan: Recycle, Grade 3 Social Studies

Activity

What new items can be made from the materials you place in your blue box?

Introduction

Recycle is the fourth “R” after Rethink, Reduce and Reuse. Recycling is an important step in the waste hierarchy but should be considered only after applying other alternatives. It is the last attempt to keep items out of the garbage bag and should be done after the other Rs have been used. In this lesson, students will explore the use of recycling to keep materials out of the garbage, increase the lifespan of natural resources, and reduce the amount of new natural resources required to make new items.

Curriculum Connections

Social Studies, 2018 (revised)

Grade 3

- Strand B: People and Environments: Living and Working in Ontario

Learning Objectives

1. Define and explain natural resources (including renewable resources and non-renewable resources), mineral resources, circular economy, and recycling
2. Work as a team to research what items can go into each blue box
3. Examine and explain what happens to blue box materials once they leave the curb

Resources Provided

- Worksheet 1: Know Before You Throw
- Worksheet 2: What new items can be made from the materials you place in your blue box?
- Video: Durham Region’s five “Rs”

Materials Required

- Worksheets
- Access to the Internet

Activity Instructions

1. As a class, discuss the term **natural resource** including **renewable** and **non-renewable** resources.
2. Using paper as an example, explain that the items in the room around them are made from natural resources.

The Regional Municipality of Durham - Waste Management Services

If this document is required in an accessible format, please contact schoolprograms@durham.ca

The paper we use to do our schoolwork and in the books that we read are made from trees that have been taken from a forest.

3. Ask students to think about what negative environmental impacts might result from cutting down forests.

The extraction of these resources can cause negative impacts on the environment. This might include air, land, and water pollution. **Pollution** is the introduction of harmful materials into the environment.

Resource extraction can also cause disruption or destruction of **habitat** (where a plant, animal, or other organism makes its home) and a decrease in **biodiversity** (all the different kinds of life you find in one area).

4. Introduce the five Rs (rethink, reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover) by watching the video Durham Region's five "Rs".

The five Rs are used to decrease the amount of new natural resources we extract from the earth to make new items. Using the five Rs helps protect the environment.

5. Introduce today's focus - the fourth "R" – Recycle.

Recycle is the fourth "R" after Rethink, Reduce and Reuse. Recycle is important but should be considered only after rethinking, reducing, and reusing. It is the last attempt to keep items out of the garbage bag.

6. By showing a raise of hands, ask students who can explain recycling and select students to share their thoughts.

Recycling is collecting items that would otherwise be disposed of as garbage, processing them, and turning them into new items. Recycling keeps items out of the garbage, increases the lifespan of these resources, and reduces the amount of new natural resources required to make new items.

7. In small groups, have students research what items can go into the blue box by exploring Durham Region's waste website (durham.ca/waste) Hint – look under **curbside collection**. They will also include examples of unacceptable materials. Students will use the provided worksheet (worksheet 1) to record their findings. Did any of their findings surprise them?
8. Now that we have sorted our recycling and placed it in our blue boxes, students will research what new items can be made from blue box materials and complete the provided worksheet (worksheet 2).
9. From their findings, have each group share with the class one new item that can be made in each category.

Summary

Recycling is part of the circular economy, a closed looped system that aims to retain and recover as much value as possible from resources by rethinking, reducing, reusing, and recycling products and materials. Recycling helps to retain value associated with the material for a longer period, reduces the amount of new natural resources required to make new materials, and supports a circular economy.

Expanded Curriculum Connections

Grade 3, Social Studies, 2018 (revised)

B: People and Environments: Living and Working in Ontario

B2. Inquiry: The Impact of Land and Resource Use

- B2.2 gather and organize a variety of data and information on the environmental effects of different land and/or resource use and measures taken to reduce the negative impact of that use
- B2.4 interpret and analyse information and data relevant to their investigations, using a variety of tool