



SEDONA RECYCLES

KEEPING THE RED ROCKS GREEN SINCE 1989

Reduce Reuse Recycle Race

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Overview

With such a large variety of product packaging, it's hard to remember what is currently accepted for recycling. This game has students think about what they should do with different types of everyday discards by quickly sorting through a bag of materials and setting them on the appropriate use picture. Not all recyclers accept the same material; discuss who picks up your recyclables.

Objectives

- Identify recyclable material (this is specific to location and/or service provider).
- Understand that reduce and reuse should happen before recycle.
- Explore ways to move to a near-zero waste lifestyle.
- Compare recyclable and non-recyclable items and think of alternatives for the non-recyclables.

Grade Level: 1-8

Suggested Time: 1 hour

Materials

- Toilet paper roll, empty tissue box, ad flyer, used paper, new paper, toothpaste box, glass bottle, plastic bottle, plastic fork, plastic yogurt container, plastic baggie, plastic grocery bag, coat hanger, piece of aluminum foil, egg cartons - Styrofoam and cardboard (can be cut in half to save space), Styrofoam to-go cup, juice box, Capri Sun. Duplicates of each item will be needed, dependent on the number of teams. Note: items can be substituted with any material on hand.
- Brown paper bags or reusable shopping bags, one for each team.
- Recycle Race kit available at sedonarecycles.org

Before the Lesson

- Fill each shopping bag with the recyclable/non-recyclable items, one bag for each team. Make sure every bag has the exact same mix of items in it.
- Print out the Recycle Race kit. Cut the fruit page into individual pictures. Keep the answer sheet (answers can vary).

The Lesson

Part I: How Much Do We Have to Trash?

1. How much trash does your family throw away every day? Every week? How many of our everyday items do we actually have to throw away?
2. Can everything be recycled over and over again? No. Paper can be recycled only 6 or 7 times before the fiber is gone, cardboard 3-4 times, plastic only 1-2 times into a new bottle, then it gets recycled into something more permanent like fleece clothing. Glass and metals can be recycled indefinitely.
3. Who can name the 3 R's? Can you say them any way or do they need to go in order? Because stuff can't be recycled over and over, those first two R's are VERY important!
4. People often add another R. Today's addition will be Rot for compost.
5. We're going to do a 3 R race. Each team has a picture on the floor of the different choices we have for disposing of something we aren't using any more. Each team gets a bag of things we use every day. When I say go, sort the items in the bag onto the picture of where you think they should go, for example the used paper goes on the recycling bin picture.
6. When finished sorting, have each team explain to the group why they put each thing where they did. (You can learn some creative reuse ideas this way.) Note: To make it a competitive game, whichever group finishes first wins. If they have too many mistakes, the win can be taken by a group with more items correctly placed. It could also be timed or points could be assigned to each category to make it more challenging.
7. Regroup and discuss which category had the least amount of stuff. Does the disposal from any of our homes look like this?
8. How can we get our household waste to near zero? Buy or make a compost bin, learn more about recycling, avoid items your recycler does not accept, carry reusable water bottles and reusable coffee cups for parents, etc.

Part II: Where Does Your Recycling Go?

1. Does anyone know what company takes their recycling?
2. Are all recycling companies the same? Do they all accept the same things?
3. Name local recycling companies. What materials does each accept? Use the internet to find out.
4. If there is a recycle symbol with a number in it, does that always mean you can recycle it? NO! Recyclers can't accept everything for these reasons:
 - a. There is no buyer to make something new from it.
 - b. The material isn't worth enough money to cover the cost of collecting it.
 - c. A whole truckload of a material takes too long collect.
 - d. There is no manufacturer nearby to make something new from it.

Extension (Optional)

- Have Sedona Recycles come and do a waste audit to see how much you can keep out of the trash.
- Do your own audit by dumping out a trash can and sorting it. You will need gloves and a tarp.
- Learn the Jack Johnson 3 R song:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USo_vH1Jz7E&list=RDuSM2riAEX4U&index=9

Check for Understanding

- Which is necessary, trash or recycling? Which one is optional? Explain.
- Why is it important to know who your recycler is?
- Your dollars are powerful. What would happen if we refused to buy non-recyclable items?
- What do you need to think about when disposing of something? When do you need to think? (When you buy it as well as tossing it!)