

Planet Plastic - Environmental Worksheet A



We all use plastic, and it's very useful. Can you think of some items we use on a daily, weekly or yearly basis that are made from plastic? Draw and label them below.

Also think of different items to those pictured, small and large, including things that contain plastic.



Enviro Chat

How much plastic does your country throw away every day/week/year?

How about your own household? Could you reduce it (buy/use less plastic, or fewer items with plastic in them), or recycle more? Why/why not?

Lots of types of plastic are recyclable (this means they can be melted down and made into other plastic or things, then reused). But lots of plastic, and products made of lots of different materials, aren't recycled. Can you think of some items that would be difficult to recycle? Why aren't they being recycled? Can you think of some solutions to this?

Why does it matter that plastic pollution is everywhere? What are some of the effects/consequences of this?



Enviro Splat

8 million metric tons of plastic end up in the oceans every year. That's enough to put five bags of plastic on every foot of coastline everywhere on Earth!

Find out more about plastic pollution from this factsheet:

<https://www.earthday.org/2018/03/07/fact-sheet-end-plastic-pollution/>

What is micro-

plastic? How does it get like that? Where does it end up? What are the problems with micro-plastics?



Check out: <http://oceanrusaders.org/plastic->

[crusades/plastic-statistics/](http://oceanrusaders.org/plastic-) and <https://www.mcsuk.org/clean-seas/microplastics>

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Find out more. Do some research about **PET (polyethylene**

Google/Search Engine Tips:

Google, like any other media source, will often 'dish up' search results/news from larger corporations and official governmental or group websites first. While this may sometimes be useful, corporations and government departments usually portray themselves in a good light. It's called PR (Public Relations).

So they might claim lots of good things they're doing to reduce plastic and help the natural environment and planet. Without telling you the bad stuff. But if they're still making, selling or using products or packaging from only partly-recyclable or non-recyclable materials, do they really care, or are their profits more important? What do you think?

terephthalate) plastics.

Consider the following issues:

1. What is PET? How is it made? Why is it used as packaging?
2. Can it be recycled? Why are there so many drinks/product bottles thrown away, which end up polluting land, rivers and seas?
3. What are drinks/household product manufacturers doing to reduce plastic packaging, if anything? Are there any examples of innovation with reduction / recycling / reuse?



4. What about consumers? What solutions are there to motivate/force us to use less plastic, recycle more, or dispose of it responsibly? Why don't more ordinary people care - what's your opinion on this?

Here are some websites to get you started:

http://www.bpf.co.uk/Sustainability/pet_plastic_bottles_facts_not_myths.aspx

<https://www.thebalancesmb.com/recycling-polyethylene-terephthalate-pet-2877869>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jun/28/a-million-a-minute-worlds-plastic-bottle-binge-as-dangerous-as-climate-change>



The good news!

Some people are inventing things to recycle or reuse plastics better. Like building houses or roads with plastic waste.

Find out more about plastic or waste innovations.

Start here: <http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/blog/10-fantastic-innovations-war-plastic>

Which is your favourite idea?

Do you have any ideas of your own to combat plastic pollution?

Word Zap

What do these words/phrases mean?

Sustainable
Renewable
Biodegradable
Toxic
Ocean gyre garbage patch

