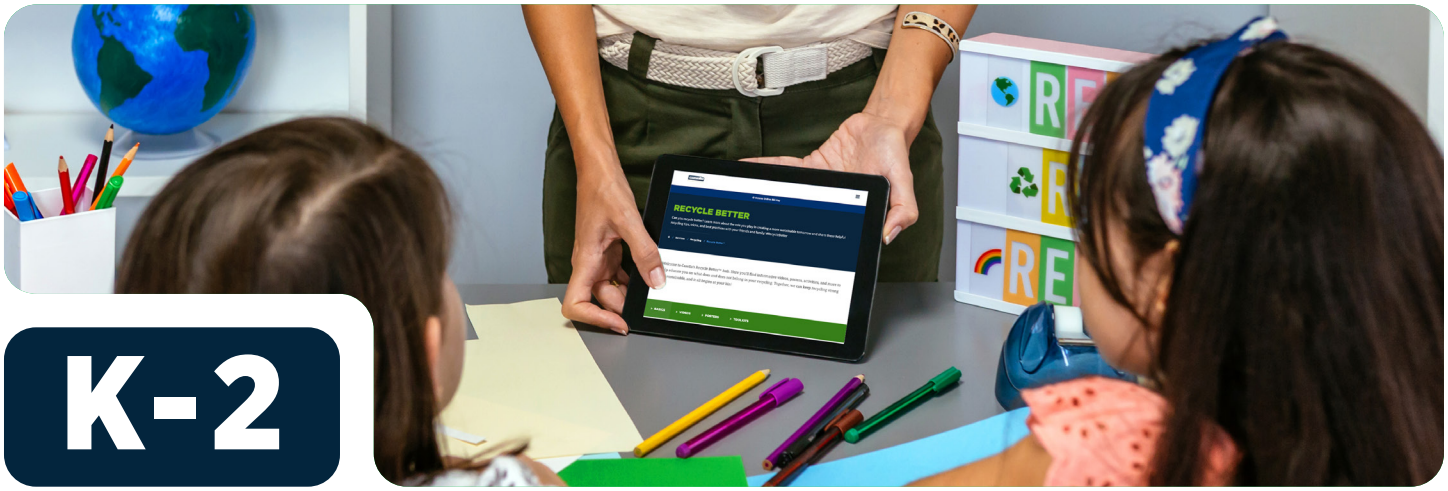


K-2

INTRODUCTION TO RECYCLING

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the difference between trash, recycling, and food waste.
- Recognize common recyclable materials using Casella's guidelines.
- Learn how recycling helps protect the Earth.
- Build empathy and responsibility for caring for the environment.
- Practice sorting and decision-making skills.

LESSON DURATION

30-45 MINUTES



MATERIALS NEEDED

- Printable worksheets (Color & Sort, Recycling Maze)
- Clean recyclables (bottle caps, cardboard, paper, etc.)
- Three bins or boxes labeled Trash, Recycling and Food Waste
- Crayons or markers
- Projector or screen for video/slideshow
- Optional: Printed item cards for Casella Sorting Challenge
- Flashcards or word wall cards for vocabulary
- Poster board for "We Recycle Better with Casella" pledge
- Optional: Music player or speakers for song

OVERVIEW & WORKSHEETS

Casella K–2: Introduction to Recycling

VOCABULARY BUILDER

Introduce and display key words. Use visuals like these or real items to reinforce each word.



Things we throw away.



Turning old things into new things.



Using something again.



Food & plant waste that turns into soil.



Food & yard waste that can be composted.



Where trash goes that can't be recycled.

LESSON OVERVIEW

Introduce students to the concept of waste and recycling using storytelling, visuals, and interactive games. Emphasize how small actions—like sorting waste—can help keep the Earth clean and healthy.

TEACHER TALKING POINTS:

1. "Casella helps communities recycle and manage waste responsibly."
2. "When we recycle, we save energy and protect natural resources."
3. "Recycling means turning old things into new things."
4. "Some things go in the trash, but others can be recycled and used again."
5. "We recycle to help animals, plants, and people by keeping our Earth clean."
6. "Even small kids can be big helpers for the Earth!"
7. "Nature recycles and we can too."

WORKSHEETS:

Color & Sort: Students color pictures of items (e.g., banana peel, soda can, plastic bottle, paper) and cut/paste or draw them into Trash, Recycling, or Food Waste bins.
Recycling Maze: Help a recycling truck find its way to the Casella recycling facility while avoiding trash piles.
Circle the Recyclables: Worksheet with mixed items; students circle the ones that can be recycled.

ACTIVITIES & ASSESSMENT

Casella K–2: Introduction to Recycling

HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

Casella Sorting Challenge (10–15 min)

- Set up three bins: Trash, Recycling, and Food Waste
- Use real or printed items from Casella's accepted recyclables list.
- Students race to place items in the correct bin.

Recyclable Art (15–20 min)

- Use clean recyclables to create art (e.g., robots, animals, collages).
- Encourage creativity and reuse.

Classroom Pledge Poster (5–10 min)

- Create a poster: "We Recycle Better with Casella!"
- Each student signs or adds a drawing of something they'll do to Recycle Better.

SEL CONNECTION

- Ask: "How do you feel when you help the Earth?"
- Ask: "What can we do together to keep our school clean?"
- Encourage sharing and listening to classmates' ideas.

VIDEO SUGGESTIONS

- Kids' recycling facility tour: youtu.be/L-5lrFn6dEM

ASSESSMENT & REFLECTION

- Draw & Share: "Draw one thing you can recycle at home."
- Circle the Recyclables: Worksheet with mixed items to identify recyclables.
- Exit Ticket: "Tell one way you can help the Earth."

OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

- Nature Walk: Look for litter and recyclables around the school.
- Home Recycling Challenge: Bring in one clean recyclable item from home to share.

TOP 6

BOOKS ON RECYCLING & CARING FOR THE EARTH

The Wheels on the Garbage Truck
by Jeffrey Burton and Alison Brown

Trash Truck
by Max Keane

Construction Site: Garbage Crew to the Rescue!
by Sherri Duskey Rinker

Peep Inside: How a Recycling Truck Works
by Lara Bryan

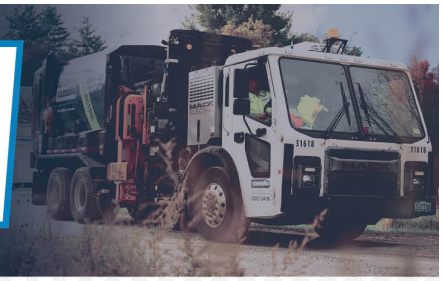
We're Better Together
by Sophie Beer

Nature Recycles, How About You?
by Michelle Lord





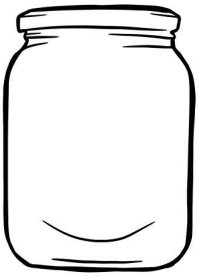
RECYCLE BETTER:
COLOR & SORT THE STUFF!



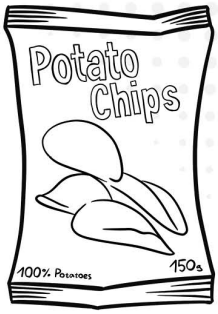
Instructions: Color the items, then connect each one to the bin where it belongs: **TRASH, RECYCLING, or FOOD WASTE.**



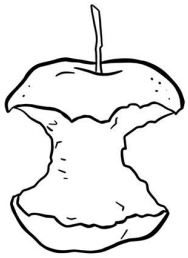
SODA CAN



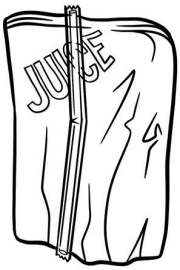
GLASS JAR



CHIP BAG



APPLE CORE



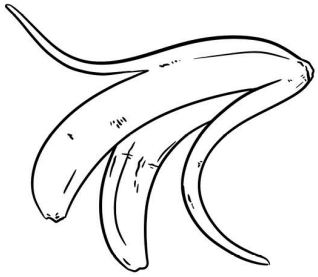
JUICE POUCH



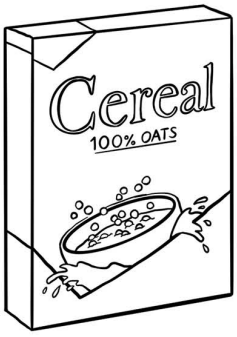
MAGAZINE



PLASTIC BOTTLE



BANANA PEEL



CEREAL BOX





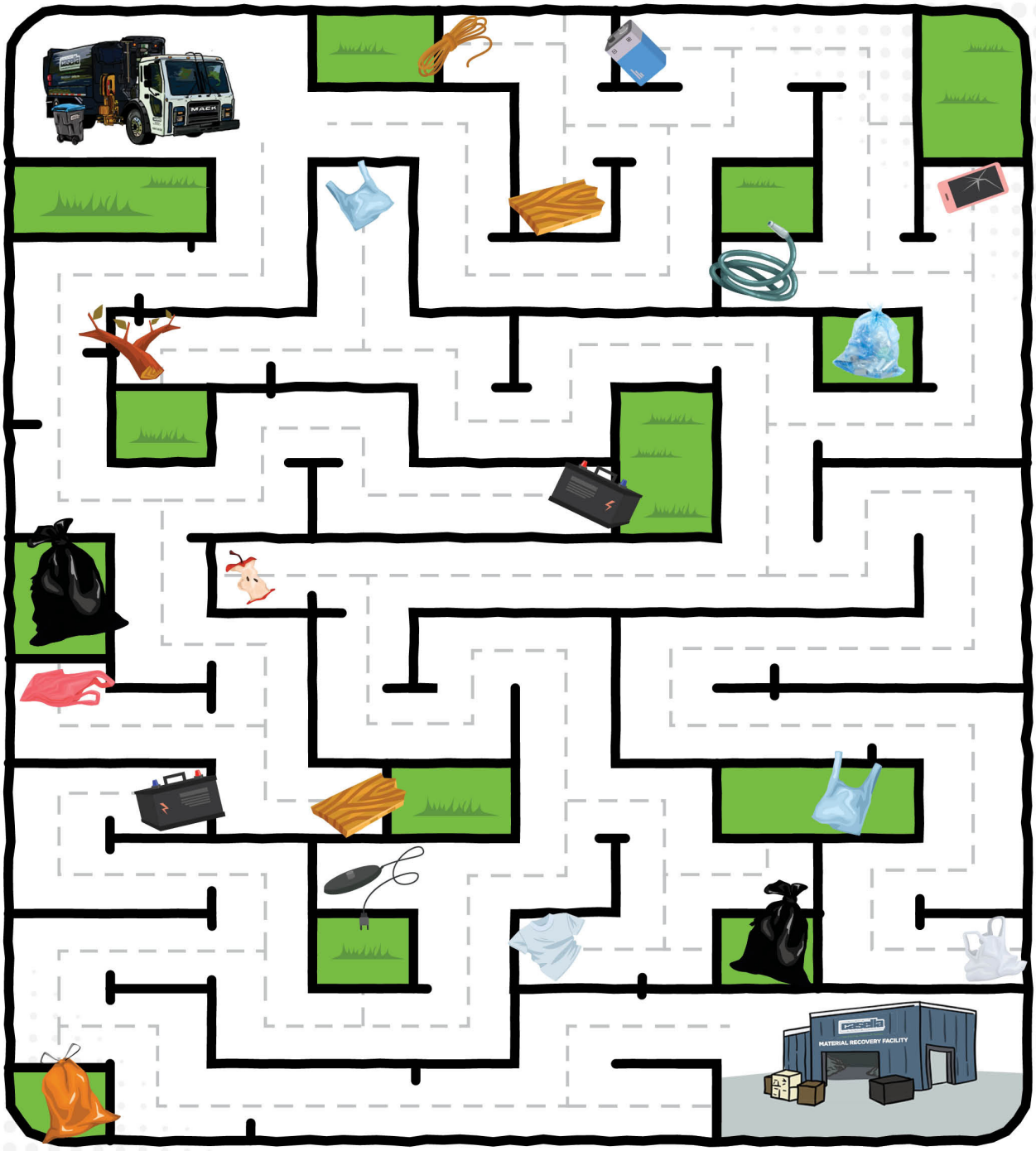


For recycling tips and resources, visit **casella.com/RecycleBetter**

casella
ESTABLISHED 1975

RECYCLE BETTER:
MAZE TO THE RECYCLING FACILITY!

Instructions: Help the recycling truck get to the Casella Recycling Facility. Follow the maze and stay away from the trash piles!



For recycling tips and resources, visit **casella.com/RecycleBetter**



RECYCLE BETTER: FIND THE RIGHT ITEMS!

Instructions: Look at the items below. Circle the ones that can be recycled in your recycling bin.



JUICE POUCH



NEWSPAPER



TIN CAN



GLASS JAR



CRAYONS



STYROFOAM PLATE



MILK CARTON



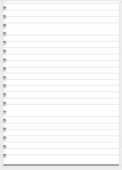
ALUMINUM CAN



CARDBOARD BOX



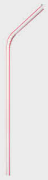
BATTERIES



NOTEBOOK



APPLE CORE



PLASTIC STRAW



OLD CLOTHES



PLASTIC BOTTLE



PLASTIC BAG



JUICE BOX



TOILET PAPER ROLL



PAPER



CHIP BAG

For recycling tips and resources, visit **casella.com/RecycleBetter**

CASELLA SORTING GAME

Duration: 10-15 minutes

OBJECTIVE:

Help students quickly identify recyclable vs. non-recyclable items through a fun, active game.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Three bins labeled Trash, Recycling, and Food Waste
- A mix of real or printed images of items (e.g., plastic bottles, banana peels, aluminum cans, apple core, chip bags, cardboard, etc.)
- Optional: Stopwatch or timer

SETUP:

1. Place the three bins at one end of the room or outdoor space.
2. Scatter the items (or cards with images) at the opposite end.
3. Divide students into teams (2–4 teams depending on group size).



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. One student from each team races to pick an item and decides whether it goes in the Trash, Recycling or Food Waste bin.
2. They place the item in the chosen bin and run back to tag the next teammate.
3. Continue until all items are sorted.
4. Review the bins together and discuss any incorrect placements.

LEARNING EXTENSION:

- After the relay, ask students to explain why certain items are recyclable or not.
- Download Casella's recycling guidelines poster from casella.com/RecycleBetter and share them with students as a resource.

RECYCLABLE ART

Duration: 15-20 minutes

OBJECTIVE:

Encourage creativity and reinforce the concept of reuse by making art from clean recyclable materials.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Clean recyclables (e.g., cardboard, paper rolls, plastic containers, aluminum foil)
- Glue, tape, scissors (child-safe), markers, paint, string, etc.
- Optional: Construction paper or poster board for collages

SETUP:

1. Arrange materials on tables or in stations.
2. Provide examples or themes (e.g., build a robot, create an animal, design a recycled city).



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Students choose materials and begin creating their artwork.
2. Encourage them to explain what they're making and what materials they're using.
3. Display finished pieces in a "Recycled Art Gallery" in the classroom or hallway.

LEARNING EXTENSION:

- Have students write a short description of their art and how it promotes sustainability.
- Connect the activity to broader environmental themes like reducing waste or protecting wildlife.

CLASSROOM PLEDGE POSTER

Duration: 5-10 minutes

OBJECTIVE:

Encourage students to make a personal pledge to recycle better by signing their name or drawing on a classroom poster. Each pledge should include **one simple action they will take to recycle better** (e.g., "I will put paper in the recycling bin" or "I will recycle my water bottle").

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Large poster paper titled "We Recycle Better with Casella!"
Markers, crayons, or pencils



SETUP:

1. Write the title **"We Recycle Better with Casella!"** at the top of the poster.
2. Leave plenty of space for students to sign their name or draw a picture.
3. Place the poster on a table or hang it on the wall where students can easily reach it.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Invite each student to **write or draw one thing they will do to recycle better.**
   Examples for K–2:
   - "Put paper in the recycling bin."
   - "Recycle my water bottle."
2. As students add their pledges, talk briefly about their ideas and celebrate their choices.
3. Display the finished poster in the classroom as a reminder of your class's Earth-friendly promises.

LEARNING EXTENSION:

- Ask students: *"How does helping the Earth make you feel?"*
- Encourage students to look for chances to keep their pledge every day.
- Revisit the poster during the year to celebrate progress and add new ideas.