

TRACK YOUR WASTE



STUDENT ACTIVITY

GOAL: Track Your Waste is an interactive and fun way to understand how much of your trash could actually be recycled. This will help make people be more conscious of what they are throwing away. Tossing recyclable items in the trash unintentionally happens all the time. This activity will show us how we can be better recyclers.

MATERIALS: Recycling Bins, Trash Bags, Trash/Recycling Acceptables Poster, Gloves, Pen and Paper

RATIONALE: For a multi-classroom competition it is important to begin by educating the students on what recycling is, why it is important to reduce our waste, and what common classroom items can be recycled.

Q: What is recycling?

A: The process of converting waste into a different, reusable resource.

Q: Why is recycling important?

A: Recycling reduces waste, saves energy and conserves our natural resources.

Q: What is contaminate?

A: A trash item that cannot be recycled and therefore does not belong in a recycling bin.

Q: What can you do to make positive change?

A: Be aware of what you are throwing in the trash vs. recycling bin at home and at school!

ACTIVITY SET UP

This project is designed as a multi-classroom competition but can be completed by one student group or classroom.

PRE-SET UP

- Review recycling acceptables list.
- Print contaminant tracking chart.
- Collect your classroom recycling bin or multiple bins to compare classroom contamination.
- Designate sorters, data collectors and clean up crew.

ACTIVITY

- Begin by dumping out a classroom recycling.
- Sorters will begin to remove trash items that do not belong in the recycling bin and throw away the trash items.
- Use the tracking chart to record each individual trash contaminate.
- Complete this activity 3-5 times to evaluate if your classroom is improving their recycling habits.

Guide reference: Casella's K-12 education kit

