

NO WASTE LUNCH DAY

- Grade Level: K-3
- Subjects: Science, Social Studies
- Suggested Time: about 2 hours, as two sessions



Pack a no waste lunch for school (for the day or week).

Materials

Students' lunches, chalk/whiteboard, trash bags or cans, paper or posters, crayons, movie clip from WALL-E with television and DVD or VCR-player (optional), recycling and compost bins (optional), computers with internet access for optional extension activity.

National Standards

Social Studies:

- Scarcity.
- Environment and society.

Science:

- Organisms and their environments.
- Properties of earth materials.
- Changes in environments.
- Science and technology in local challenges.

Ohio 2010 Standards

Social Studies:

- Individuals have shared responsibilities toward the achievement of common goals in homes, schools and communities. (K)
- Families interact with the physical environment differently in different times and places. (1)
- Human activities alter the physical environment, both positively and negatively. (2)
- Evidence of human modification of the environment can be observed in the local community. (3)
- Individuals make the community a better place by solving problems in a way that promotes the common good. (3)

Science:

- Objects and materials can be sorted and described by their properties. (K)
- Properties of objects and materials change. (1)
- Living things cause changes on Earth. (2)
- Some of Earth's resources are limited. (3)

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Explain what happens to trash after it is thrown out.
- Identify waste and no waste lunch items.
- Pack a no waste lunch.

Introduction

- At lunch, meet the students in the lunchroom or have them eat lunch in the classroom. Ask them to keep all their trash on their desk or table after eating.
- Point out how much waste was produced by one class in one day at lunch.
- Reading the following passage to the students: Every day you throw away something. So do your friends, neighbors, and almost every person on earth. Right now the world population is 6.5 billion people, and the U.S. population is 300 million. That's so many people throwing away lots of trash! So much trash is a big problem and raises some serious questions. Where will all the trash go? How does it affect our planet? What happens to the trash once it leaves a house? Are there solutions to this problem? This trash problem may not seem important now, but the problem will only get worse as you grow up and live in a world with more people and more trash hurting the earth. Today we will learn where trash goes and how to make less trash. We will also have a no waste lunch where everyone will pack a lunch that does not create trash.

Activities

- With students' lunch trash still in front of them, ask them how they could pack a similar lunch without making trash. Have students write ideas on the board.
- Instruct students to throw away all the trash in the same bag(s) or can (except recycling) so they can see the cumulative waste of the class lunch. Ask students where trash goes after it is thrown out. (Landfill, dump, compost, or recycling.) For basic information on landfills & dumps see <http://science.howstuffworks.com/environmental/green-science/landfill3.htm>
 - You may wish to show a clip from the beginning of the movie WALL-E, which depicts the earth covered and destroyed by trash.
 - Ask students why composting and recycling are better options than sending trash to landfills.
- Show students items or pictures of lunch or snack items. Some should be no waste while others have waste. (Individually pre-packaged or bagged in disposable items vs. packed in reusable containers.) Ask students to identify which make waste and which do not.

- Don't forget about napkins and utensils. Provide cloth napkins that day or encourage students to pack them. They should also bring reusable utensils.
- Plan a no waste lunch day for later in the week. Students can make signs and pictures about the no waste day.
- You may wish to allow for compost (organic materials like fruit peels & cores) and recyclable materials.
- Hold the No Waste Lunch Day. Eat lunch together as a class and separate compost & recycling into appropriate containers.

Extensions

- Students may plan and advertise a No Waste Lunch Day for the whole school.
- Students may further research landfills, composting, and recycling.
- Students may visit the following web sites to play games dealing with waste, recycling, and the environment:
 - <http://www.recycleworks.org/kids/games.html>
 - <http://www.epa.gov/recyclecity>
 - <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/education/kids/planetprotectors/index.htm#games>

Closing

After reviewing the lesson, ask students how they can make less trash at home.