

THE WASTE HIERARCHY- teachers notes

REFUSE/REDUCE

Refuse/reduce means to use less in the first place. It means being waste conscious in what you buy and how you use it. This means that you end up with less packaging and other materials that you have to get rid of later on. By 'refusing' or 'reducing' you also save valuable resources and money.

Examples of refusing/reducing:

- Don't impulse buy, plan ahead.
- Store things carefully to reduce wastage, eg. keep perishables cool
- When shopping buy items that will lead to less waste:
 - Will last a long time
 - Made with the least amount of material
 - Made with the most recycled content
 - Can be recycled
 - Can be repaired
 - With waste conscious packaging
- Use paper, food and other materials carefully so that you don't waste them.
- Maintain and repair things to extend their useful life.
- Say no to unnecessary items such as plastic shopping bags
- Always print and photocopy double sided

REUSE

Reusing means to use the same item more than once, preferably many times, rather than disposing of it. This saves energy, raw materials and money and means less material ends up in landfill.

Examples of reusing:

- Hire, share or borrow items that you don't use very often (such as movies, books, magazines).
- By reusable items rather than disposable ones (such as rechargeable batteries, drink bottles, or re-inkable white board markers)
- Reuse scrap paper and used envelopes.
- Reuse old containers for storage, craft and gardening (milk cartons make great plant pots and pencil holders)
- Use reusable shopping bags
- Give unwanted items another life (like donating old clothes to the Opp Shop)
- Have reusable class sets of materials



RECYCLE

Recycling means to send a used product to a factory where it is remade into either the same product or something different. This can save energy and raw materials and means less material goes to landfill.

Items that can be put in the recycling bin in include:

- Aluminium cans and foil
- Glass bottles and jars
- Steel Cans
- Plastic containers numbers 1-7 (but not polystyrene, plastic bags, or glad wrap)
- Milk and juice cartons
- Paper and cardboard
- Newspapers and magazines.

Other items that can be recycled (but not in the wheelie bin)

- Printer and toner cartridges
- Old computers
- Mobile phones

Have you thought of making recycled paper in class?

COMPOST

Composting means that fungi, bacteria, worms and other tiny organisms turn food scraps and garden waste into a rich, soil-like material called compost.

What can be added to a compost heap:

Vegetable and fruit scraps.
Fallen leaves (in layers)
Tea bags and tea leaves
Coffee grounds
Vacuum cleaner dust
Soft Stems
Dead Flowers
Used vegetable cooking oil
Egg shells
Old newspapers (shredded)
Grass clippings (in layers)
Sawdust (not from treated timber)
Wood ash

What not to add to a compost heap:

Meat and dairy products
Diseased plants
Metals, plastics and glass
Fat
Magazines
Large branches
Weeds that have seeds
Bread or cake (may attract mice)
Bones
Sawdust from treated timber

What you can do with the compost:

Grow vegetables and sell them to your school community
Mix into the garden beds to add nutrients and organic matter



CLOSE THE LOOP

Close the loop means buying green products and materials that are made from recycled material such as:

- Recycled paper, toilet paper, tissues
- Recycled plastic rulers, pens, outdoor furniture

To make recycling really work we need to ensure that we buy the products that materials are recycled into, this makes our consuming is sustainable.

