

Waste Audit

A hands-on workshop to look at how much waste the school produces in a day and to begin to put systems in place to reduce it. Suitable for KS2/3.

Objectives

- To learn what happens to waste when it is thrown away.
- To understand reducing, reusing and recycling.
- To devise ways of reducing the amount of waste thrown away by the school.

Lesson Outline

Discussion:	Discuss what happens to rubbish when it goes in the bin. Introduce the 3 Rs. Explain that we are going to measure the amount of waste produced in a day at school.
Activity:	Split the children into groups. Record on the worksheet the names of the group and which bag they are weighing.
	Ensure all children have gloves on before touching the waste and are aware of the health and safety rules (you may wish to complete a risk assessment).
	Weigh the bag (use spring balance) and record its weight. Tip the waste slowly onto the centre of a plastic sheet. Separate the waste into different materials. Weigh each material separately and record. When all waste is weighed and recorded put back in original bag.
	When all bags have been weighed and recorded children will wash hands with gloves on and then with gloves off.
Discussion:	Ask children what they noticed about the waste they sorted. What was there most of? What could be done about this? Children to devise an action plan.

Follow up/extension activities:

Children could produce a graph/pie chart from the data.

Perform a waste audit assembly to the rest of the school.

Complete a second waste audit when recycling systems are in place to monitor the progress.

Make a timeline to show how long different materials take to break down in landfill.

Resources you will need:

- Waste in labelled bags from the day before.
- Hand washing facilities.
- Paper and pencils.
- Landfill poster.
- Record sheet.
- Gloves.
- Plastic sheets.
- Spring balances (weighing scales).
- Plastic bags.

