

Teaching the 3 Three R's - Reduce, Reuse and Recycle What's in My Garbage?

1. What does **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle** mean? (Look in the dictionary, ask someone, check on-line or in reference books)

Brainstorm ways to reduce, reuse and recycle ---Write down every suggestion you can think of. Do not reject any ideas yet, think **BIG**. Now, go through the list and decide what you could realistically do and make a very short list to try. As you see what works, add to your list and try to make it a habit.

Here are some suggestions if you are stuck.

- Start or expand a recycling at home or school. Think how much energy is saved by melting down cans and bottles rather than producing more and more metal and glass, plus the landfills won't fill up so quickly.
- Save and reuse grocery bags and try buying food in bulk. Extra packaging just means more garbage. (By the way, where does all that garbage go?? That's a good research question!)
- Try to use everything twice. It takes some thinking but you can come up with something. Junk mail and old envelopes make great scrap paper for notes or craft projects. If you can't donate it to charity, could you cut it up, take it apart, use it for a planter, toy, costume or gift box?
- Have a challenge to see who is the most creative.

Activity: Have your students track what they throw each day by using the following chart. Be sure to analyze and discuss, and even tally the material - This is a great learning experience!

NAME _____

CHART FOR "WHAT IS IN MY GARBAGE"

Have student bring the chart home, carefully observe what is being tossed in to the garbage (no need to sift through) and mark appropriate boxes. It is meant to be a learning experience and provoke discussion and awareness on the alternatives. Find out alternative disposal options in your community (recycling, composting, donation centers, hazards waste, etc.) and discuss.

Item	Describe the Waste Product (Y/N)					Is the package/product necessary?	Is there an alternative? What?	If reusable, list an idea for reuse.
	Organic	Compostable	Reusable	Recyclable	Hazardous			

- Organic** - Living or once living material (apple cores, banana peel, lettuce, grapes, etc.)
- Compostable** - Organic matter used in a compost pile (can be placed in the yard or garden to break apart naturally)
- Reduce** - Not to create waste in the first place. Buy in bulk, shop smarter, avoid single serving containers and disposables, etc.
- Reuse** - To extend the life of an item by using it again, as is or repairing, modifying, or by creating new uses for it.
- Recycle** - The collection and reprocessing of manufactured materials for reuse in the same form or as part of a different product.
- Hazardous Waste** - Chemical or dangerous waste products found in the home