

The Good 'Sort' of Recycling

This activity gives students the basic understanding of recycling using items brought from home, or collected from a recycling clean-up of the schoolyard. After introducing the concept of recycling to students, schedule a schoolyard/neighbourhood clean-up, or have students bring in items from home. Create two separate areas for both garbage (garbage bag) and recyclables (blue bin) in the classroom and have each child place their item in the pile they think it belongs to. Use this activity to explain why each item is or is not recyclable. Have students demonstrate their learnings on the downloadable sorting worksheet.

Early Years Grades 2-4

Thinking Concepts and Skills

- What is recycling?
- Sorting garbage and recycling
- Understanding and identifying differences
- Being aware of the environment (playgrounds, parks)
- Sharing ideas and asking questions

Students' Tasks to Demonstrate Learning

Activate:

1. Discuss recycling. What do you already know about recycling? What is it? Why is it important?
2. Learn about the different recycling categories – paper, aluminum, plastic, glass, cardboard and steel.
 - a. Use the MMSM's [Tale of Recycling](#) to learn about the categories and where your recyclables go.
3. Look at specific examples of recyclables around the classroom and home.

Acquire:

1. Have students bring in recyclables and garbage from home, or from the schoolyard clean-up activity. *To reduce contamination rates, we always want to make sure our recyclables are empty.*
2. As a class, in groups or individually, have students place their items in the Garbage or Recycling pile, explaining why their item belongs in that pile.
3. Once activity is complete, review findings – why or why not items are recyclable.

Apply:

1. Distribute worksheet and have students colour and cut out all of the items on the bottom half of the sheet. Have students place items in the Garbage or Recycling section of the chart. Keep physical garbage and recycling piles in your classroom so students can check to see where the items go.

Additional Resources

- <http://simplyrecycleschools.ca> – MMSM's A tale of Recycling Interactive Story
- MMSM's recycling journal

