



Challenges

Age: Grades 2-6

Lesson Plan Two: Forever Plastic

Objective: To determine ways to reduce the use of plastics in the classroom.

Background: Plastics are a problem because they can get into our food chain, most of them can't be recycled and of the ones that can be, they never break down – plastic is forever. That's why it's so important to refuse plastic whenever possible. Each of them have either a caution, avoid, single use only or appears to be safe descriptor that should make us think twice about letting plastics near our food and drinks.

Activity: In your second week of this lesson, ask students to bring not just litterless lunches to school but plastic free lunches. Let them educate their families about the plastic numbering system and the dangers of plastic. Design a bin or box to contain the recyclable lunch leftovers that do make it into student lunches and aim to not go beyond the brim of that bin or box in order to reduce the amount of plastic recycling kids produce.

Next, research how to make a worm compost for your classroom for food leftovers. Determine ahead of time what can and can't go into a worm compost. What kind of container will work best and where can you go to get the worms needed for the bin? Make signs to indicate what can go into the compost and a schedule for who will be in charge of rotating the contents every couple of days. What are some ideas for how to use the worm castings your compost produces.

Challenge: Challenge another class to see who can create the least amount of garbage. See if either class can leave no garbage for a week except for compost materials like banana peels and apple cores. Reuse glass containers for drinks; reuse paper sandwich bags; reuse containers that are safe. (adapted from Environment Canada's publication *From the Mountains to the Sea: A Journey in Environmental Citizenship*).

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