

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rethink

This activity is divided into four parts that highlights one of the four Rs. The total time should be approximately 45 minutes.

Materials: Posters, paper for part 2 and 4, pens, pencils, or markers for parts 2 and 4

Part 1: Reduce ~ 15 minutes

- Put students into groups and give each group one of the six REDUCE posters.
- Have each group discuss the three questions briefly with each other.
- Have each group share their poster and the answers with the class.
- If desired, show the class the reduced packaging examples and discuss how the real examples compared to the group answers.

Part 2: Reuse ~ 15 minutes

- Give each group a copy of the REUSE page.
- Give students 3-4 minutes to write down as many alternative uses for each product as possible. Allow them to write on this page or provide a separate place to record answers.
- Trade posters between groups and have the students accept or reject the uses (the uses should be possible, believably functional, etc.) and total the accepted answers. Also have students pick the most creative on each page.
- Share which group had the most uses for each category.

Part 3: Recycle ~ 10 minutes

- Post the Fact and Fiction posters on opposite sides of the room.
- Have participants start in the middle of the room (remind them not to run, be careful, etc.)
- Read the statement from the Recycling Fact and Fiction table and have each student move to the location they think is correct.
- Tell participants if they were correct or not and elaborate if needed.

Part 4: Rethink ~ 5 minutes

- Ask participants what they can change in their lives to reduce waste.
- If desired, have participants sign a pledge on a poster. A pledge is included in the poster file, but you may want to consider having students come up with their own class-specific pledge.



Part 3: Recycling Fact or Fiction

Statement	Fact or Fiction
Recycling is hard.	Fiction– cans, bottles, and paper can all go in the same container.
You can pack a waste-free lunch by reusing containers and recycling .	Fact
You can recycle old electronics at the Harford Waste Disposal Center, Best Buy, and other stores.	Fact
80% of your trash can be recycled or composted.	Fact
Recycling is the solution to all our waste problems.	Fiction– reducing waste, recusing items, and rethinking our behavior help play a role in solving our waste problems.
I don't make that much trash.	Fiction– the average American generates 4.5 lbs. of trash every day.
Recycling saves money.	Fact. Trash is expensive to landfill. Recycling also saves energy and requires fewer resources.
Plastic bottles can be recycled into carpet, jeans, and t-shirts.	Fact– polyester is often made of recycled plastic.
Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run your TV for 3 hours.	Fact
You can make a difference through Reducing, Reusing, Recycling and Rethinking.	Fact

