



Protector of the Planet

Find What You Need..

- Paper and pencil
- Garbage



Can you follow the three R's and Reduce, Reuse and Recycle?

People make a lot of trash and trash causes a lot of problems. More than half our garbage is made up of packaging. A lot of that packaging is more than you need to protect the products you buy. Some of that packaging garbage ends up recycled which is better for the environment than throwing it away in landfills. But it's even better not to make the garbage in the first place. To make less garbage, you can start by not buying products that come with lots of extra packaging. Another way to make less garbage is to use what you have more than once. Bring your lunch to school in a reusable lunch bag instead of a paper bag that you throw away. Drink water out of a reusable water bottle instead of buying

new plastic water bottles every day. Follow the 3R's. By recycling and reusing, you will start to reduce. And then you are on your way to becoming...A Protector of the Planet.

Brain Buster :

Which "R" are you? Are you a reducer; a reuser; a recycler; or all three?
Now is your chance to find out about, and improve, your own garbage habits.
Start by looking into your Earth-friendly garbage mirror. You'll find it at the bottom of your very own trash bin.

Activity Instructions

1. You'll be sorting and counting the trash you make every day. Try to use only the garbage bin in your bedroom and not the other garbage bins in your house.
2. Make a list of the types of garbage you find. If you have a scale, weigh the garbage. If you don't have a scale, then count the number of items in the trash. Try to keep track of the number and the type. You can do that by making a simple bar graph like the one shown here.
3. Fill out this information for three days, writing down either the weight or the number of items of trash in your room.
4. At the end of the three days, add the number of garbage items together, and divide by 3. Do this for the weight as well. This will give you an average garbage count for each day.
5. Spend the next three days thinking about what you buy and what you throw away. Try to use less and reuse what you have. Try to recycle as much as you can.
6. Then count your garbage again for three days. Weigh the garbage in your bedroom and count the number of items you have.
7. Do a three-day average. Fill in a new bar graph and compare results.
8. Did your garbage use go down during the week? If so, congratulations. You have become a Protector of the Planet!

Conclusions

Reducing the garbage you make is one important step you can take towards protecting the planet. Too much garbage leads to overcrowded landfills, litter, and pollution. It's good to recycle but it's better not to make all that garbage in the first place. The next time you go with your parents to a store, be an Earth-friendly shopper. Don't buy products that are over-packaged. Not buying is the best way to tell a company that you don't like what they're doing.

Wrap Rap:

**In 2006, Americans bought nearly
31 billion bottles of water.
Americans use 1,500 plastic water
bottles every second!**

