



WHAT BELONGS IN THE RECYCLING?

In this hands-on activity, students learn how to recycle right, then create Recycling Helper posters with tips to teach others. Not only do they build recycling habits, but they also help the whole school do it better!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Identify what belongs in their curbside recycling
- Identify recycling as a way to care for the environment
- Explain how collective action leads to greater positive impact

DURING THIS ACTIVITY, STUDENTS WILL:

- Review what recycling is and why it is important
- Practice sorting items as recyclable and non-recyclable
- Create posters to share recycling tips

MATERIALS:

- Cards of common materials that can and can't be recycled curbside (or clean props)
- A box or a bin to put the cards or items in
- Art materials to make Recycling Helper posters

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Ask students what they know about recycling. Ask them if they know what can happen if the wrong things get mixed in with the recyclables, for example, if you put a plastic jar that still has peanut butter in it in the recycling, it can make clean paper and plastic too messy to recycle.
2. Tell students that they're going to be Recycling Detectives and that their mission is to investigate what should and what shouldn't be recycled at home.
3. Gather around the box filled with the cards or props. One item at a time, pull out a card (or prop) and ask:
 - What is this?
 - Should it go in the recycling?
 - Why or why not?
 - Does it need to be cleaned or emptied first?

Separate the cards or items into two piles: items that can be recycled at home or items that can't be recycled at home.

GRADE LEVEL K-3

Recycling explained to kids

When we recycle, things we use, like paper, plastic or metal, are turned into new things instead of throwing them away.

For example, when you put an empty cereal box in the recycling, it can be turned into a new one!

REFLECT & SHARE

4. When all of the items have been sorted, ask:
 - What was the biggest surprise for you?
 - How can we make recycling work better? (i.e., make sure items are clean)
 - Why is it important for everyone to recycle? (i.e., it helps the environment, we can help more when we all do it)
5. Create Recycling Helper posters. Have students suggest tips and rules based on their audit and write them down, for example, "Rinse your containers", "No food", "No tissues". Have the students illustrate the tips and hang the poster near the recycling container in the class or in the school.

RESOURCES

Ready. Recycle. Repeat.

Recycling guidelines for residents of Alberta, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and the Yukon can be found by visiting: circularmaterials.ca/recycle

For other provinces and territories

[Newfoundland and Labrador](#) (Rethink Waste NL)

[Prince Edward Island](#) (IMWC)

[Québec](#) (Eco Entreprises Québec)

Nunavut - Check with local community

[Manitoba](#) (MMSM)

[Saskatchewan](#) (SK Recycles)

[British Columbia](#) (Recycle BC)

[Northwest Territories](#) (Government of Northwest Territories)

Info sheet for educators: *Why Recycle* (Earth Rangers)

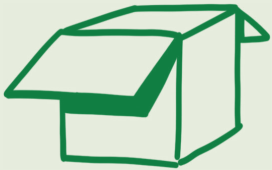


Below is a list of items that can generally be recycled curbside and generally not be recycled curbside.

Always double check with your local recycling rules.

ITEMS THAT CAN BE RECYCLED

Cardboard



Paper



Plastic yogurt Containers
(rinsed)



Paper bags



Paper towel roll



Shampoo Bottle (rinsed)



Berry containers



Aluminum pie plate



Envelopes



Soup cans (rinsed)

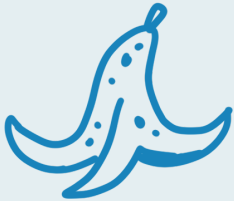


Cereal boxes



ITEMS THAT CAN'T BE RECYCLED

**Banana peels
or any
food waste**



**Greasy pizza
boxes**



Pencils



**Paper
towels**



Tissues



Books



**Action
figures**



Socks



Crayons



**Clothes
hangers**



**Reusable
water bottles**

