

## GRADE P-1 LEARNING EXPERIENCE

# Waste Relay Race

### Summary

Students participate in an exciting relay race to learn how to sort waste properly. Students will also learn why waste materials are sorted based on what they are made of.

### Objective

This lesson will provide students with the knowledge and skills to properly sort materials in everyday routines.

### Pre-Activity

## CLASS DISCUSSION

#### DIRECTIONS

Ask students to point out the different bins in the classroom:

**PAPER RECYCLABLES REFUNDABLES ORGANICS GARBAGE**

Break students into five groups and assign each group a specific waste category.

- In each group, ask students to list the types of materials that belong in their waste category.
- What are the materials in their category made of?
- Ask them to brainstorm why each material belongs there?
- How long does it take for their materials to break down?
- Are the materials in their category reusable?

Have each group report back to the class on their discussion.

Review the **How Long Does it Last chart (Appendix 1)** with students. To verify “what goes where,” refer to the **Divert NS Sorting Guide for Schools:**

[divertns.ca/resources/brochures-guides](http://divertns.ca/resources/brochures-guides)

- Use examples from around the classroom to review what belongs where.

#### MATERIALS

Whiteboard and markers

Bins for the five waste categories

Classroom waste items (e.g. paper, can, plastic bag, banana peel)

**Appendix 1:**  
How Long Does it Last? chart

**DURATION**  
15 mins

#### MAIN LEARNING OUTCOME

**GRADE:**



**SUBJECTS:**

**Social Studies**



**Grade 1/ Outcome 2**

Students will take age-appropriate action to practise responsible behaviour in caring for the environment.

**Indicators**

- ask questions to gain information about the need to protect the environment
- discuss responsible behaviour and caring for the environment [Teacher note: Be mindful of Mi'kmaw beliefs and practices in relation to the environment.]
- create positive images and/or short phrases (both print and digital) to convey understandings/ideas/perceptions/learnings of actions to practise responsible behaviour in caring for the environment
- engage in a practice(s) that can help to solve problems and promote environmental sustainability in their community

#### CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

**Science**



**Gr P/ Outcome 3**

Students will explore materials.

**Gr 1/ Outcome 3**

Students will explore materials and their properties.

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#NothingWasted

## Activity

### RELAY RACE

#### DIRECTIONS

#### PREP

Divide students into three (or more) equal groups. Encourage groups to make recycle-themed team names (e.g. Team Green)

Gather clean waste materials that represent at least one or two items from each waste category (garbage, paper, organics, recyclables, refundables). Ensure you have multiples of each material (for each of the teams) to ensure each group's basket is equal.

**OPTION:** To add a level of difficulty, include items that need to be sorted into two or more waste bins (e.g. pop bottles with tops, juice packs with straws, etc.)

Set up waste bins at one end of the classroom or gym. At the opposite end create a starting line (using tape if needed). Put the three baskets of waste materials on the line to indicate where the groups will line up.

#### RACE TIME!

Students in each group line up behind each other at the starting line.

On GO, the first student in each group chooses an item from their waste basket, runs to the end of the race area, and puts it in the correct bin. The teacher will ensure each item is put in the correct bin.

- *If a student correctly sorts an item, they can run back to their team, tag the next team member in line, and go to the back of their group.*
- *If a student is incorrect, they must do five jumping jacks on the spot, before they are told which bin is correct. Then, they go back to tag the next team member. (The teacher should make note of any incorrect items, to be discussed later).*

The team that correctly sorts all their waste first wins!

#### AFTER THE RACE

After the race, discuss the items that were frequently sorted incorrectly, or any items that seemed to be confusing or tricky for students.

#### MATERIALS

5-10 clean waste materials x the number of groups

3 (or more) baskets for clean waste materials  
(1 basket per group)

5 waste bins  
(1 per waste category)

#### DURATION

25 min



#### ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS

There are many great opportunities throughout the year to highlight the 3Rs in the classroom. Check out these annual events:

<b>Waste Reduction Week</b>	October (3 <sup>rd</sup> week)
<b>Earth Day</b>	April 22
<b>Compost Awareness Week</b>	May (1 <sup>st</sup> full week)
<b>Environment Week</b>	June (1 <sup>st</sup> full week)

## Post-Activity

# SORTING ACTIVITY SHEET

### DIRECTIONS

Students will complete the **Sorting Activity sheet (Appendix C)**.

Students cut out the waste items and glue them into the correct sections on the activity sheet.

### MATERIALS

Appendix 2:  
Sorting Activity sheet  
Scissors, Glue

### DURATION

25 min

## Assessment

### FORMATIVE

Ongoing observation of student responses during class discussion, relay race, and daily recycling choices.

### SUMMATIVE (OPTIONAL)

The sorting activity sheet serves as a summative form of assessment.

Divert NS provides free waste sorting signage. Contact Divert NS, or download the signs at [divertNS.ca](http://divertNS.ca)



## WASTE REDUCTION EDUCATORS

Divert NS provides funding to municipalities to deliver waste reduction education to schools across the province.

Your local waste reduction educator(s) provides the following services, and more, free of charge!

- classroom presentations
- green team set up
- advice on bins and signage
- tours of local waste facilities
- school waste audits

To find out more, visit [divertns.ca](http://divertns.ca)

## ABOUT DIVERT NS

Divert NS is a not-for-profit organization championing recycling in Nova Scotia. For over 20 years we've helped build a culture of recycling through environmental stewardship, education, and innovation. Divert NS operates the **Beverage Container Deposit-Refund Program** and the **Used Tire Management Program**. In addition, we work in collaboration with government,

industry, and academia to divert waste-resources from landfill. Divert NS, in partnership with municipalities, delivers education and awareness programs to schools, businesses, and community groups. Divert NS also works to develop stewardship agreements and funds innovative research and development initiatives.

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APPENDIX 1  
WASTE RELAY RACE

# How Long Does it Last?

ITEM	HOW LONG DOES IT LAST ?
1. Banana Peels	3 - 4 weeks
2. Cardboard	2 months
3. Aluminum Pop Can	200 - 500 years
4. Disposable Diapers	500 years
5. Plastic Bags	1000 years
6. Styrofoam	1+ million years
7. Cigarette Butt	1 - 12 years
8. Tin Foil	Never/unknown
9. Plastic Water Bottles	Never/unknown
10. Milk Cartons	1 - 5 years



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# Sorting Activity

Cut out the waste items below, and glue each into its correct bin.

## ANSWER KEY

Recyclables	Garbage	Organics	Paper
			
			
			

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Recyclables	Garbage	Organics	Paper
			

			
			