

## GRADE 4 & 5 LEARNING EXPERIENCE

# Sorting Skits

### Summary

In this engaging lesson, students use theatre and role playing to teach classmates about recycling. Learners work in groups to create skits that demonstrate the importance of sorting waste.

### Objective

Students will learn how proper sorting diverts waste from landfills.  
Students will teach proper waste sorting habits through improvisation.

### Pre-Activity

## GROUP DISCUSSION

#### DIRECTIONS

### WHY SORT WASTE?

Break students into small groups and have them discuss the following questions:

1. How does sorting waste divert material from landfills?
2. How do landfills impact the environment?

*Landfills are harmful to the environment because they produce landfill gas: rotting material releases methane and carbon dioxide into the atmosphere contributing to climate change. Landfill runoff, if not properly managed, can pollute nearby waterways and contaminate nearby soils and wildlife habitat*

3. What are some reasons that people do not sort their waste?

#### MATERIALS

n/a

#### DURATION

10 mins

#### MAIN LEARNING OUTCOME

GRADE:

4

5

SUBJECTS:

**Social Studies**



**Grade 4 / Outcome 4**

Students will examine the relationship between humans and the physical environment.

**Indicators**

- Question the impact that humans have on the environment.

#### CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

**English Language Arts**



**Grade 4 & 5 / Outcome 1  
Listening and Speaking**

Students will communicate effectively and clearly and respond personally and critically, respecting cultural contexts.

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#NothingWasted

## GROUP DISCUSSION (cont'd)

### DIRECTIONS

#### WHAT IS A SKIT?

Have a class discussion about why it is important to teach others about recycling, and how skits can be a fun way to do that.

Explain a typical skit and discuss how skits can be a fun way to learn.

- *A skit is a short performance (usually five minutes or less) that usually involves humour. Two or more people act out a scene through role playing (i.e. pretending to be somebody else). Note that skits do not usually have scripts, but rather characters follow a plot line through improvisation.*

Watch the recycling skit video “**Recycling News**” to show students an example of a skit.

**LINK TO VIDEO:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cPiT6Zy5J4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cPiT6Zy5J4)  
(03:30 / Source: YouTube, Mellissa Stagner)

### MATERIALS

Internet and projector

**On-line Video:**  
Recycling News  
(3.5 min)

### DURATION

15 mins

## Activity

### SORTING SKITS

#### DIRECTIONS

#### PLANNING

Divide your class into groups of four students. (*Note: Groups of five or six are possible if you add more characters to the scenes. Or the same scene can be acted out by multiple groups.*)

Hand out one **Sorting Skit Scene** to each group and have them read the storyline. Revise storyline and characters as needed.

Assign roles from the **Sorting Skit Scene** to group members (i.e. school principal, garbage man, news anchor, etc). Each group can find a space in the classroom or hallway to work on their skit.

#### PERFORMANCE

Have groups take turns performing their skit for their class. Groups can bring props and/or costumes from home to use during their skit.

**OPTION:** Have groups volunteer to have their skit videoed to share on your school’s website.

**OPTION:** Have groups volunteer to perform their skits at a school assembly.

### MATERIALS

**Appendix 2:**  
Sorting Skit  
Scenes

### DURATION

30 min

### MATERIALS

Props or costumes  
(optional)

### DURATION

30 min

## Post-Activity

### STUDENT SURVEY

#### DIRECTIONS

Remind the class that the purpose of creating the skits was to educate their viewers about the importance of sorting waste.

Hand out the “**Sorting Skit**” Survey Sheet (Appendix 3) to each student. Instruct students to fill in what they learned from the skits (i.e. What messages were the skits trying to get across?)

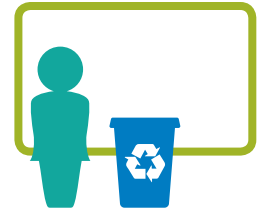
**OPTION:** Have students fill out the “**Sorting Skit**” Survey Sheet after each skit or after all the skits have been performed.

#### MATERIALS

**Appendix 3:**  
“**Sorting Skit**”  
Survey Sheet  
(Print one for  
each student)

#### DURATION

20 min



#### 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)

## Assessment

**FORMATIVE** Observe students throughout the educational activities to evaluate learning.

**SUMMATIVE (OPTIONAL)** Observe students throughout the educational activities to evaluate learning.



#### ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS

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

**Waste Reduction Week** October (3<sup>rd</sup> week)

**Earth Day** April 22

**Compost Awareness Week** May (1<sup>st</sup> full week)

**Environment Week** June (1<sup>st</sup> full week)

## 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  
SORTING SKITS

# Sorting Skit Scenes

Attached are five scenes to divide amongst the class. Recommended group size is four students, although larger groups can be used if needed. More than one group can do the same scene, as each group will put their own spin on it.



## SCENE 1

### LANDFILL (GARBAGE DELIVERY)

<b>Characters:</b>		<b>Student Names:</b>	
1 garbage truck driver		_____	
2 landfill employees		_____	
1 animal		_____	
<b>Suggested Props:</b>	<b>Plot:</b>		
recyclable items from the recycling bin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The landfill employees stand next to a pile of garbage, pointing out items that shouldn't be there (e.g. plastic water bottle, tin can, etc).</li><li>The employees are making comments about how sad it is that people don't sort their waste properly.</li><li>An animal then pops out and tries to eat a piece of waste, mistaking it for a food item. Employees shoo the animal away, while making comments about how animals can get sick when they mistake garbage for food.</li><li>A garbage truck driver then pulls up in his/her truck. The truck driver explains that he/she has a delivery of garbage, but that a lot of it shouldn't have ended up in the landfill. The landfill employees agree, and point out other things that shouldn't be there. The truck driver then dumps his/her load of garbage (Note to actors: Get creative with this part!).</li><li>The truck driver and employees then discuss ways that people can better sort their waste, and how important it is to remember to recycle and compost.</li></ul>		
hats and button-up shirts for the landfill employees and truck driver			

## SCENE 2

### CAFETERIA (STUDENTS THROW RECYCLABLES AND ORGANICS INTO GARBAGE)

<b>Characters:</b>  1 cafeteria worker  2 students    1 school principal	<b>Student Names:</b> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<b>Suggested Props:</b>  recyclable items from the recycling bin  apron or hat for cafeteria worker  button up shirt or blazer for principal  garbage and recycling bins for the cafeteria	<b>Plot:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The two students buy their lunch from the cafeteria worker, ordering items that come in recyclable packaging, such as milk, juice box, etc. The cafeteria worker reminds the students to recycle their containers when they're done.</li><li>• The students walk away, pretending to eat their lunch while talking about how they learned in class that garbage is becoming a global problem. They then say how it's too bad, but there's nothing they can do about it. The two students then throw their recyclable items into a garbage can.</li><li>• The school principal walks by and sees the students throw the recyclable items into the garbage. The principal looks angry, and asks them why they didn't recycle their waste?</li><li>• The students respond that landfill waste is a global problem and it is not like their tiny amount of lunchtime waste will make THAT much of a difference.</li><li>• The principal then gives the students a motivational "pep-talk" about how if everyone thought that way, then the problem of landfill waste would be even worse, and how every little action can make a difference.</li><li>• The students then feel happy and inspired and take their waste items out of the garbage and put them into the recycling bin. The students and the principal then give each other a big "high five"!</li></ul>

## SCENE 3

### OUTDOOR NEWS REPORT (A REPORTER INTERVIEWS PEOPLE)

<b>Characters:</b>  1 news reporter  2 interviewees picking up litter  1 person littering	<b>Student Names:</b>  _____  _____  _____
<b>Suggested Props:</b>  recyclable items from the recycling bin  button up shirt, blazer or hat for news reporter  pretend microphone  two garbage bags	<b>Plot:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The reporter faces the audience and welcomes them to (outdoor location of your choice). He/she explains that there has been a big problem lately with litter in (your chosen location) and that it has been affecting tourism and has been polluting the water, etc.</li><li>• The reporter then sees two people picking up litter and sorting it into recycling and garbage. The reporter says how great it is to see people picking up litter and walks up to the two people.</li><li>• The two people picking up litter look surprised to see the reporter! The reporter asks them why they're picking up litter. One person says he/she lives close by and had litter blow into his/her garden! The other person says how he/she overheard a tourist saying that it was a dirty community. So they want to help the environment by cleaning the litter and they want to show pride in their community by making it look beautiful again!</li><li>• Another person then walks by and throws his/her coffee cup (or other litter) on the ground in front of the reporter and the two people picking up litter.</li><li>• One of the interviewees then confronts the person who threw their litter on the ground, saying how they are there picking up garbage because there is too much litter in their community.</li><li>• The person who littered then apologizes, picks up the litter and places it in one of the garbage bags.</li><li>• The reporter then turns back to the camera and explains that it's been an interesting day in (location of choice) and that if even one person has learned something new about not littering, it was all worthwhile. The reporter then signs off.</li></ul>

## SCENE 4

### AT HOME (A FAMILY TALKS ABOUT RECYCLING)

**Characters:**

1 parent

2 children

1 grandparent

**Student Names:**

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**Suggested Props:**

recyclable items —  
juice box or bottle  
old t-shirt  
garbage can

1 cane or  
walking stick  
for the grandparent

**Plot:**

- Two children arrive home after school; one is drinking from a juice box/bottle. The children are discussing how at school they learned that waste is a global problem, and that properly sorting waste at home can help reduce waste that goes to a landfill.
- One of the children finishes drinking his/her juice and notes that there is no recycling can in the home, so throws the recyclable item in the garbage.
- A parent enters holding an old T-shirt. Before the parent can speak, the children ask him/her why there is no recycling bin in the home? The parent says there wasn't a recycling bin at home when he/she was a child, so it never occurred to them.
- The children explain that at school they learned that landfill waste is a global problem, and that recycling can divert waste from landfills so that it doesn't contaminate the soil and water.
- The parent says he/she didn't know that, and thanks the children for telling them about properly sorting waste! The parent says he/she will get a recycling bin as soon as possible!
- The parent then holds up the T-shirt and asks if the children still want it. The children say that it doesn't fit anymore, so the parent says it will get thrown away.
- A grandparent walks into the room and says how when he/she was a child, old clothes weren't thrown away! Instead, old clothes were sewn into quilts, blankets or dish cloths! The grandparent then explains that not only does this decrease household waste, but it also saves the family money!
- The children then agree, and say how they'll start turning all their old clothes into dishcloths or other useful items. Then, they all "high five" each other!

## SCENE 5

### THE BEACH (FRIENDS SAVE A TURTLE FROM EATING A PLASTIC BAG)

<b>Characters:</b>  1 parent  2 friends    1 turtle	<b>Student Names:</b>  _____  _____  _____  _____
<b>Suggested Props:</b>  4 plastic bags  T-shirts/shorts  hats to wear at the beach, beach towel  "turtle costume" (e.g. a green sheet/blanket for the turtle's back)	<b>Plot:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Two friends are walking along the beach, noting how much garbage there is along the coastline. They see three of the plastic bags scattered along the beach.</li><li>• A turtle appears crawling along the beach, moving towards a fourth plastic bag with its mouth open!</li><li>• One of the friends points to the turtle and reminds the other friend how they learned in science class that turtles eat jellyfish. The other friend then notes that plastic bags look a lot like jellyfish!</li><li>• The two friends then look at each other and exclaim that the turtle must think that the plastic bag is a jellyfish, and that is why the turtle is walking towards the plastic bag with its mouth open!</li><li>• The students then try to shoo the turtle away from the bag.</li><li>• A parent walks over and asks "What is happening?"</li><li>• The friends explain that they're saving a turtle from eating a plastic bag! The parent says he/she didn't realize that turtles sometimes mistake plastic bags for jellyfish, and praises the children for their knowledge and for helping to save wildlife.</li><li>• The students then pick up the plastic bags so other animals won't mistake them for food and eat them.</li><li>• The parent then asks the children: "Did you know that a plastic bag can last up to 500 YEARS?" So instead of letting it sit around the ocean for 500 years, they will recycle the bag so it can be turned into something new!</li><li>• The children, parent (and even the turtle) "high five" each other.</li></ul>



APPENDIX 2  
SORTING SKITS

# “Sorting Skit” Survey Sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. What issue did the skit/skits address? What was **one** of the take-away messages?

2. What did you like about the skit?

3. Do you think skits are a good way to get a message across? **Why or why not?**