

GRADE 4 LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The Sorting Story

Summary

During this interactive lesson, the teacher will share a sorting story and students will listen for important cues. Students will draw a mural to illustrate the story's concepts.

Objective

This lesson will teach students about the impacts that humans can have on the environment through waste habits.

Pre-Activity

WHY SORT?

DIRECTIONS

CLASS DISCUSSION

Lead a class discussion about how waste is sorted at school. Review the five waste categories: refundables, recyclables, paper, organics and garbage.

Ask students why sorting waste is important.

Some reasons may be:

- Saves landfill space.
- Recycling turns waste into something useful.
- Saves greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change.
- Nova Scotia has an advanced waste management system.

Explain that if waste is not sorted properly, it ends up in a landfill.

Ask the students how long they think a plastic bag will take to break down in a landfill, and write their guesses on the whiteboard.

- Answer: up to 1000 years!

MATERIALS

Whiteboard and marker

DURATION

10 mins

MAIN LEARNING OUTCOME

GRADE:

4

SUBJECTS:

Social Studies



Outcome 4

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

Indicators

- Gather information on how humans interact with the physical environment
- Question the impact that humans have on the environment.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

English Language Arts



Outcome 1

Listening and Speaking

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

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#NothingWasted

Activity

STORYTELLING

DIRECTIONS

Divide class into groups of four to six, and have each group form a circle.

One student from each group will be given a marker. When the story is read, anytime the word “LEFT” is spoken, the marker is passed to the person on their **left**. Anytime the word “RIGHT” is spoken, the marker is passed to the person on the **right**.

Explain that the student holding the marker when the story is over will be magically transformed into an artist!

Read the **Sorting Story (Appendix 1)** to the class or ask for a student or students to volunteer.

At the end of the story, have the students holding the whiteboard markers draw a scene on the whiteboard representing a part of the story. If the artist is reluctant, he/she could choose a volunteer from the group to draw with him/her.

OPTIONS: Instead of drawing a picture, ask the student holding the marker to write a sentence about why **Ms. LEFT** and **Mr. RIGHTman** say recycling is so important.

MATERIALS

Appendix 1:
The Sorting Story

Whiteboard
and markers

DURATION

15 mins

Post-Activity

\$2 SUMMARY

DIRECTIONS

Ask the student to write a “\$2 summary” about what they learned from the Sorting Story.

Each word they write is worth 10 cents and they must write enough words to equal \$2. Students must include the words **PLASTIC**, **GARBAGE**, and **RECYCLE** in their summaries.

MATERIALS

Writing paper or
notebooks,
or tablets

DURATION

10 min

Assessment

FORMATIVE Assess student understanding by observing their work at different stages throughout the lesson.

SUMMATIVE (OPTIONAL) Option to evaluate the \$2 Summary



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. As part of its mission, Divert NS works in partnership with municipalities to deliver education and awareness programs to schools, businesses, and community groups. We welcome feedback from students and teachers on these lesson plans and resources. Please send your feedback to:

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APPENDIX 1

THE SORTING STORY

Read Aloud Sorting Story

My friend **Ms. LEFT** called to invite me to a Recycling party. Before I **LEFT** my house, I drank a bottle of water and threw the empty bottle into the garbage. I thought to myself: "Recycling doesn't matter, **RIGHT**?" But, **Ms. LEFT** was my friend, so I thought I should at least make an appearance at her party. **Ms. LEFT** met me **RIGHT** at the door, so I went **RIGHT** on in.

I was still a little thirsty, so I decided to go **RIGHT** to the refreshments. As I looked to the **RIGHT** and to the **LEFT**, I saw that **Ms. LEFT** had labeled the containers that could be recycled: aluminum, glass and plastic. I went **RIGHT** for a drink in an aluminum can, took a sip, and realized **RIGHT** away it was tomato juice! Yuck! So I threw it in the garbage can **RIGHT** under the table.

Then **Ms. LEFT** came rushing **RIGHT** over. She picked the can out of the trash and put it in the recycling bin to the **LEFT**. **Ms. LEFT** told me that pop cans and bottles can be recycled to make new cans. **RIGHT** away I realized that recycling helps conserve the Earth's natural resources.

RIGHT then I remembered the plastic bottle I had **LEFT** in the garbage at home. But one bottle doesn't matter, **RIGHT**? Hmmmm.

Ms LEFT then offered me one of her **RIGHTeous** cupcakes. They even had a recycling logo **RIGHT** on top of the icing.

RIGHT around the time I **LEFT** the drinks table, **Ms LEFT's** neighbour, **Mr. RIGHTman**, arrived at the party. **Ms. LEFT** asked him why he was late for the party, since he lives **RIGHT** across the street. **Mr. RIGHTman** said he came from his job at a recycling facility. **Mr. RIGHTman** also said if anybody needed a job, he could get them one **RIGHT** away, since recycling programs have created thousands of jobs in Nova Scotia in the last 20 years!

Since **Ms. LEFT** told me I could recycle aluminum cans, I wondered what else I could recycle that I usually **LEFT** in the garbage. I asked **Mr. RIGHTman**, and he said: "Well, **RIGHT** now you can recycle newspaper, glass, plastic bottles, cardboard, car batteries, and even old car tires!"

Ms LEFT told **Mr. RIGHTman** that she usually **LEFT** her old tires at the landfill across town on the **RIGHT**. **RIGHT** away **Mr. RIGHTman** said: "Used tires can be recycled into many different things, like floor mats, mulch and garden hoses. Even the soles of both your **LEFT** and **RIGHT** shoes can be made from old car tires!"

"**RIGHT** on!" said **Ms. LEFT**.

RIGHT about then I started to get curious. I asked **Mr. RIGHTman**: "What are old plastic bottles turned into?" **Mr. RIGHTman** handed me a card from his **RIGHT** shirt pocket. "You can read about it **RIGHT** here," he said. The card said: "Plastic pop bottles and milk jugs can be turned into new bottles, carpet, clothes and other things."

RIGHT away I knew what I needed to do. I said goodbye to **Mr. RIGHTman** and thank you to **Ms LEFT**. As I **LEFT** the party, **Ms. LEFT** yelled: "Wait! Don't you want some **LEFTovers**?"

As I rushed back to my house, I dodged things **RIGHT** and **LEFT**, wondering if they were also made from recycled materials. When I got to my house, I burst **RIGHT** through the door, ran **RIGHT** around the corner, to where I **LEFT** the plastic bottle in the garbage **RIGHT** before the party. **RIGHT** away I put the bottle in the recycling bin in my closet.

Since **Ms. LEFT's** party, I haven't thrown a single recyclable product in the garbage. After all, recycling is the **RIGHT** thing to do. . . **RIGHT**?