

## GRADE 4 LEARNING EXPERIENCE

# Waste Management: Past and Present

### Summary

Students will learn how attitudes and behaviors around waste have changed during recent generations. The class will invite an older member of the community for an interview, and will reflect on their own recycling habits.

### Objective

To teach students about the importance of recycling, and have them reflect on how recycling and composting have become important in the last few decades.

### Pre-Activity

## CLASS DISCUSSION

#### DIRECTIONS

### RECYCLING OVERVIEW

To gauge how much your students already know about recycling, ask the them to describe what recycling is using their own words.

**Basic definition:** Recycling is the process through which discarded plastic, glass or paper items are transformed into new and usable products.

### THE FIRST RECYCLING PROGRAM

Have students guess when the first “blue box” recycling program started in Canada? Have students guess in which province it started.

**Answer:** Canada's first blue box recycling program started in 1983 in Ontario (Kitchener). That means that anyone over the age of about 40 would not have had a recycling program at home or at school when they were a child!

#### MATERIALS

Whiteboard and markers

**DURATION**  
10 mins

#### MAIN LEARNING OUTCOME

**GRADE:**

4

**SUBJECT:**

**Social Studies**



#### Outcome 4

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

#### Indicators

- Explore different types of physical environments, which can include mountains, rivers, islands, and oceans.
- 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

## CLASS DISCUSSION (cont'd)

### DIRECTIONS

### STATIONS

Divide students into four groups and have the following tasks posted in four separate areas of the classroom (stations).

Each group has five minutes at each station to complete the posted task.

- STATION 1** Students search around the classroom for an item that says “Made from 100% recycled material.”
- STATION 2** Students brainstorm reasons why recycling is good for the environment.
- STATION 3** Group members hypothesize what happens to recyclables after they are collected at the curb.
- STATION 4** Students list items that can be made from recycled materials.

After each group has a turn at each station, come back together as a class and have a member from each group share something that was discussed. Have at least one student from each group share their experiences at the stations.

### MATERIALS

Whiteboard and markers

An item made from 100% recycled material

### DURATION

25 min

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### DURATION

10 min

## Activity

## ELDER INTERVIEWEES

### DIRECTIONS

### PLANNING THE INTERVIEW

Ask your class what an interview is, and what is its purpose. Write their answers on the board.

Tell your students you will be inviting a special guest to class, to be interviewed about how waste was dealt with in the past, before there were recycling and composting programs. The guest will be (approx.) 60 years old, or older.

- Have your students break into groups and ask each group to brainstorm two questions to ask the special guest. Use the **Sample Interview Questions (Appendix 1)** to help get ideas flowing!
- Ask each group to share their questions. Have the class choose a total of six to eight questions, and write the questions on the board or on your class computer.
- Have the class brainstorm potential interviewees — Does a student have a grandparent or guardian who might be interested in being interviewed? Is there a prominent member in the community who the class could contact?

**NOTE:** Tell the potential interviewee that the interview should take about 30 minutes. You can also send your special guest the interview questions a couple of days before the interview, so they have time to prepare.

### MATERIALS

Whiteboard and markers

**Appendix 1**  
Sample Interview Questions

### DURATION

20 min

## ELDER INTERVIEWEES (cont'd)

### DIRECTIONS

### SPECIAL GUEST INTERVIEW

On the day of your interview, choose three or four students to each ask two questions to the special guest.

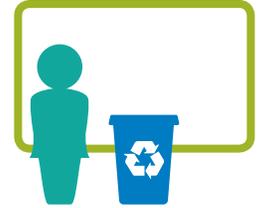
**OPTIONS:** The students could sit in a “panel” to interview your guest. You can record the interview—by taking notes, or through an audio or video recording (with permission).

### MATERIALS

Relative or community member

6 – 8 interview questions

**DURATION**  
30 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)

## Post-Activity

### SNOWBALL ACTIVITY

### DIRECTIONS

Have the students write down something they found surprising about the interview or one thing they learned from the special guest on a piece of scrap paper and bunch it up like a snowball.

Have the students form a circle. Each student throws their paper snowball into the middle of the circle. Then one by one, have each student pick up one of the “snowballs” and read it aloud.

**OPTION:** Ask students to draw posters showing how people dealt with waste in the past.

**OPTION:** Have your class give a presentation at a school assembly.

**OPTION:** Have your class give a presentation at a school board sponsored Heritage Fair with your special guest.

### MATERIALS

Scrap paper

**DURATION**  
30 min

## Assessment

**FORMATIVE** Evaluate student learning over the course of the class discussion, including level of engagement and effort.

**SUMMATIVE (OPTIONAL)** Evaluate each group member’s contribution to the class discussion, including the interview questions they provided.

## 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 MANAGEMENT: PAST AND PRESENT

# Sample Interview Questions

Use these samples to help your class brainstorm interview questions.

When and where did you grow up?

Did you live in a town, city or in the country?

When you were growing up, what did your family do with empty tin cans?  
How about paper? And what about glass bottles?

What did your family do with old clothes or toys?

When you were younger, did people litter? If so, was there more or less litter  
than what you see today?

How old were you when you began recycling or composting in your home?

When you were younger, where did you take your garbage for disposal?