

GRADE 4 LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Waste Management: Past and Present

Summary

Students will learn how attitudes and behaviors around waste have changed during recent generations, and learn about the traditional Mi'kmaw view that all resources are to be respected, and not wasted. 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 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!

MAIN LEARNING OUTCOME

GRADE:

4

SUBJECT:

Social Studies



Learners will investigate the relationships between humans and the physical environment.

SKILLS

Investigate

Ask and revise questions; Locate several relevant details to support an answer; organize and compare details; identify relationships and communicate findings.

Question

Generate broad questions that arise from simple to more complex problems and issues; narrow and begin to revise questions, to create a question to investigate.

CROSS-CURRICULAR LINKS

English Language Arts



Learners will communicate effectively and clearly respecting cultural contexts.

MATERIALS

Whiteboard and markers

DURATION

10 mins

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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.

OPTION Ask students to document their experience at different stations, through writing.

MATERIALS

Whiteboard and markers

An item made from 100% recycled material

DURATION

25 min

DURATION

10 min

Activity

ELDER INTERVIEWEES

DIRECTIONS

PLANNING THE INTERVIEW

Ask your class the definition of "interview," and its purpose. Tell your students you will be inviting a special guest to class—someone approx 60 years or older—to be interviewed about how waste was dealt with in the past, before there were recycling and composting programs.

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!

- From all the questions generated, have the class choose six to eight
- Have the class brainstorm potential interviewees — a grandparent or guardian who might be interested in being interviewed / a member in the community who the class could contact?

OPTION Students carry out a mock interview amongst themselves in class, for practice

MATERIALS

Whiteboard and markers

Appendix 1
Sample Interview Questions

DURATION

20 min

FOR A LOOK AT MI'KMAW HISTORY

Have the class read a sample of a transcribed interview:

Elder Caroline Brooks recounts her memories of daily life as far back as 1910.

www.mikmaweydebert.ca/home/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Pg1.25_Interviews_Brooks-Mrs.-Caroline.pdf

Note The term "Indian" is used in the interview. This was a term used in history. Now, we say Indigenous or First Nations, or in this case, a Mi'kmaq person.

Resources To learn more about inviting an elder to your classroom:
www.mikmaweydebert.ca/home/ (See "Education and Outreach")
www.integrativescience.ca/People/Elders/

divertNS.ca



ELDER INTERVIEWEES (cont'd)

DIRECTIONS

SPECIAL GUEST INTERVIEW

When you arrange your interview, tell the guest that the students will ask them 6 to 8 questions (approx 30 min) about waste reduction—how they remember reducing waste and dealing with garbage when they were school-aged. How are things different or similar today compared to when and where they grew up?

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).

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. (Remember to recycle your paper!)

OPTIONS Students can draw posters showing how people dealt with waste in the past. Have your class give a presentation at a school assembly or Heritage Fair with your special guest.

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.

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

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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?

Growing up, how did you store your food?

Do you remember a time you had to throw something out?

How did people in your community try to have less waste?

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?