

Your Recycling Journal

The Recycling Journal gets the students active and involved in recycling both at home and at school. Use the Recycling Journal as its own lesson or partner the journal with other recycling lesson plans as a way to document questions, learnings, recycling records, etc.

Have students document their prior knowledge, findings and track their recycling activity in daily journals over a period of time. Set daily, weekly objectives, for example:

- Record how many plastic containers your family recycles every week, record how many items were thrown in the bin that don't belong, explain what you'll do to help recycle more, etc.

The goal is for students to take an active approach and learn more about how they and their families can recycle more.

Early Years

Grade 2-4

Thinking Concepts and Skills

- Questioning, writing, log keeping, daily tasks, drawing/colouring
- Which items go in the recycling bin?
- Learning which garbage items shouldn't be recycled

Students' Tasks to Demonstrate Learning

Activate:

1. Open the discussion by asking students what they know about recycling.
 - a. What is recycling? What does it mean to recycle? Who recycles? Why do you recycle?

2. Make a list on the board of items students believe are recyclable. Make sure to ask the student why they believe these items to be recyclable.
3. Have students go back to their desk and write down what they already know about recycling using the information you've just discussed and what they still want to find out about recycling.
 - a. What do I know about recycling? Do I know anyone who recycles? Do I recycle? What items do I think are recyclable? Why do I think they're recyclable?

Acquire:

1. With the recyclable items on the board, draw parallels based on common elements. Discover the categories of recyclables (plastic, paper, cardboard, steel and aluminum)



2. Use the MMSM's Tale of Recycling to provide an intro to recycling, to learn about the recycling categories you've identified and show where your recyclables go once the recycling truck picks them up.
 - a. After, see if any of the questions the students had were answered. If questions still exist, try to work through them with the students based on the information learned from the Tale of Recycling.
 3. Have an open discussion with the class about some things they learned from the Tale of Recycling.
 - a. What do they now know that they didn't before? Were any of their questions answered?
 4. Have an open discussion with the class about recycling contamination (items that don't belong in the recycling bin).
 - a. What is contamination? How does it impact recycling? How can you help to improve the contamination rates?
 5. Have students log their findings from the Tale of Recycling and the open discussion in their Recycling Journal.
 - a. If questions still exist, have students document their questions in their Journal.
- b. Have students indicate if the recycled item needed to be emptied and why.
 - i. If they didn't have any recyclables, have them explain why not. I.e. "we use Tupperware", "my sandwich was wrapped in foil and foil isn't recyclable", "I couldn't get the container clean", etc. and what they can do to improve their recycling log.
2. Have students log their at-home recyclables daily, with a short description and sketch of what it is (colour, size etc.).
 3. Set other objectives/goals for students to complete at home.
 4. Have students describe how they will recycle more at home and at school.
 5. The goal is for students to continue recycling and being aware of recycling after the journal assignment is over.

Additional Resources

- <http://simplyrecycleschools.ca> – MMSM's A tale of Recycling Interactive Story

Apply:

1. Assign students the task of documenting their recycling activity at home and school.
 - a. Schedule entries after lunch and have students write the date at the top of the page and record the item they recycled from their lunch with a short description and sketch of what it is (colour, size etc.).

