



## Grade 3 Sample Lesson Plan: The 3 Rs (Reducing, Reusing, and Recycling) and the Environment

### Materials

- Computer with internet access
- Videos
- White board.
- Trash bin filled with trash (e.g., scrap paper, tin can, toilet paper rolls, empty kleenex boxes, empty milk cartons, empty pop bottles, tinfoil)
- Newspaper

### Steps

- Engage students in the recycling section of the interactive PBS Kids EekoWorld Website on the Environment <http://pbskids.org/eeoworld/> or have them visit <http://kidshealth.org/en/kids/go-green.html> , read the Kids Health article “How to Be A Green Kid,” and take the 3 R quiz on the site
- Implement the Lesson Plan outlined below so that students can better understand the 3 Rs (Reduce (less garbage), Reuse (use an item more than once), Recycle (use an item more than once))

## Lesson Plan Adapted from

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle (before we run out of space at the dump!)

<http://www.kidzone.ws/plans/view.asp?i=150>

### Preparation

- Fill trash bin to overflowing with trash items and place it in the usual spot.
- Set out books on recycling, the environment, etc in the reading center.
- Prepare a make believe newspaper article from the year 2025 (see example below).

### Steps

- Ask the children if they know what happens to garbage after they put it in the garbage can. Write their thoughts on the white board.
- Explain to the children that garbage goes to a garbage dump (landfill) and that once one landfill gets full room for another one must be found. Show and discuss the PBS video , *Landfill-Human Impact on the Physical Environment*  
<http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/181216317-human-impact/birds-flying-over-landfill-human-impact-on-the-physical-environment-geography/>
- Ask the children to imagine what it would be like if the city ran out of room for garbage. Comments aren't necessary at this point... just have them imagine the scenario in their heads.
- Read them the make believe news story from the year 2025.

**MAYOR ANNOUNCES THAT THE CITY HAS RUN OUT  
OF ROOM FOR GARBAGE.  
TRASH BINS OVERFLOWING!**

In a news conference yesterday, the Mayor announced that the garbage dumps have started to overflow. Despite the mayor's efforts to find a suitable location for a new dump, the garbage crisis has not been resolved. An emergency meeting has been called for this evening to discuss final plans for dumping the city's garbage.

During the news conference, the mayor said, "Er, our best plan so far is to eliminate school playgrounds. If we dumped the garbage in the space currently occupied by all school monkey bars and fields we should be able to resolve the problem for another year or two. And hey, the kids will still have their gyms to play in... "

Parents and students began protesting the proposed action but stopped when they realized that the next best plan was to dump garbage in everyone's backyards.

- Ask the children what they can do today to keep the news story from coming true?
- Write their ideas on the board.
- Introduce the concept of the 3 Rs (REDUCE, RECYCLE AND REUSE). Classify their ideas as Reduce, Recycle or Reuse.

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REDUCE ==> make less garbage. For example, instead of buying juice boxes for lunch, buy a large container of juice and use a washable single serving container to take it to school.

REUSE ==> use an item more than once. For example, when you get a plastic bag from the grocery store put it in your car and use it again the next time you go shopping.

RECYCLE ==> turn an item into another useful item. For example, scrap paper from the classroom might be turned into newspaper or paper bags when sent to the recycling plant.

- Divide the children into groups of 2 to 4 students.
- Have each group take a few items out of the garbage can and move to their own area.
- Have them jot down some points about how they might use the 3 R's on the items they have chosen.
- On the *Reduce, Reuse and Recycle worksheet*, have them write down their ideas and which of the 3 R's they reflect..
- Return to the large group. Have the children share one of their ideas. Write them down on the board.
- Place a tin can (or a few of them) in a central location in the class. Have the children individually propose ideas for RECYCLING the tin can.
- On paper or on the computer, have the children write the directions for recycling the can. They can add diagrams/artwork if they like on the *Tin Can Recycling worksheet*.
- Tell students to go home to discuss with your parents if/how their families use the 3 R's and write down ways they can help your family do a little bit more. Try out these strategies.
- Next class time ask the students to report and discuss what they learned.

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

REDUCE: less trash.

REUSE: use trash item over again for the same purpose.

RECYCLE: turn trash item into something else that is useful.


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Tin Can Recycling

Diagram:



Description: \_\_\_\_\_



### Assessment Idea

- Evaluate student participation in discussion and activities.

### References

- EPA Games and Quizzes <https://www.epa.gov/students/games-quizzes-and-more>
- EPA Learning and Teaching About the Environment- Student Resources <https://www.epa.gov/students>
- KidsHealth.org Be a Green Kid -<http://kidshealth.org/en/kids/go-green.html>
- Kids Environment Kids Health <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/>
- PBS Kids EekoWorld – Interactive Website on the Environment <http://pbskids.org/eekoworld/>
- PBS Kids: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle K-1 [http://www-tc.pbskids.org/eekoworld/parentsteachers/pdfs/lessonk\\_1.pdf](http://www-tc.pbskids.org/eekoworld/parentsteachers/pdfs/lessonk_1.pdf)
- PBS Learning Media: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Lesson [http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/lpsc10.sci.life.lp\\_reduce/reduce-reuse-recycle/](http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/lpsc10.sci.life.lp_reduce/reduce-reuse-recycle/)
- PBS Learning Media: Environment- A Tale of Two Soup Cans <http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/msts14.ela.twosoup/environment-a-tale-of-two-soup-cans>
- PBS Learning Media: Landfill-Human Impact on the Physical Environment <http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/181216317-human-impact/birds-flying-over-landfill-human-impact-on-the-physical-environment-geography/>
- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle - <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/topics/reduce/>
- ToxTown <https://www.toxtown.nlm.nih.gov/>
- Why We Recycle? - <http://www.instructorweb.com/lesson/recycling.asp>
- Scholastic- Earth Day Every Day <https://beta.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plans/teaching-content/earth-day-every-day/>
- Scholastic - Pollution Solution <https://beta.scholastic.com/teachers/lesson-plans/teaching-content/pollution-solutions/>