

Name _____

Date _____



Is It Recyclable? *Family Page*



Question: What is recyclable?

What's Happening in Class?

Students bring to school five objects from home that they would normally throw away and five objects that they would normally recycle. Collected objects are used to help students to understand what is recyclable and what is not. Discussion focuses on factors which make an item recyclable and on waste reduction through reducing, reusing, precycling, and recycling of natural resources. For more specific information on this lesson, visit the *Science for Ohio* website at www.environmentaleducationohio.org and click on the *Is It Recyclable?* inquiry.

What Can We Do at Home?

1) **Discuss the following terms with your child:**

waste reduction--the process of reducing the amount of wasted natural resources.

reduce--to use less

reuse--to use again

precycle--to purchase items that are made from recycled goods and/or items that can be recycled; to purchase items with minimal packaging

recycle--to use the materials in an existing product in order to make a new product

2) **Discuss as a family ways in which you can reduce waste.** Make a family waste reduction plan to display on your refrigerator. Follow this plan for one month, then re-evaluate. Make it your family's goal to limit household waste to one trash can or less per week.

3) **Where to start...a few suggestions that pay for themselves while reducing waste.**

--**30% to 40% of landfill waste is paper.** Find out the nearest location that collects paper waste. Place a plastic tub marked Paper Waste near the main trash can in your house. Flatten boxes and other containers as you add them to reduce wasted space. When the tub is full, move it to an out-of-the-way location such as a garage or basement and start a new tub. When you have enough tubs to fill your car or van (every three to six months), make a trip to the collection center.

--**10% to 20% of landfill waste is yard waste.** Make a family compost pile. This will prevent leaves, grass clippings, and food waste from going to your landfill. For more information, visit the *Science for Ohio Composting Virtual Tour* in the Related Resources section of the "Leaf" It in Your Yard inquiry.

--**Home utilities consume a significant percentage of our available natural resources.**

Purchase an automatic thermostat to maximize heating and cooling efficiency in your home. Install aerators on faucets that are 1.5 gallons per minute or less. Replace incandescent bulbs with fluorescent bulbs in high use areas. Install a water shut-off valve on your shower head so users can turn off water while sudsing and shampooing.

4) **Visit *Recycle City***, an Environmental Protection Agency animated interactive site at www.epa.gov/recyclecity for other ideas to conserve energy and resources.

5) **Most importantly...re-think!** Continually look for ways to improve the use of natural resources.