

Waste Hierarchy Activities

These lessons involve sequentially watching the 4 videos on the Waste Hierarchy and completing the outlined activities associated with each video. The activities are broadly aimed to primary school students. The level of complexity can be managed through the discussion points.

There are two activity options the teacher can choose from – a low preparation activity sheet, or hands on activities that require more planning.

The low preparation option involves using the activity sheet on page 2. The teacher would play video 1, and then get the students to complete the activities associated with video 1 (there are teacher notes for discussion on page 3). The same process is then followed for videos 2, 3 and 4.

The suggested hands-on activities require more preparation however could be more engaging for the students. These can be found on page 4. These activities involve group work, role plays, games, and crafts. The activities would require the teacher/students to source some materials. This option also requires you to play each video before completing the relevant activity.

Video Links:

Video 1 - [The Waste Hierarchy](#)

Video 2 - [Refuse](#)

Video 3 - [Reuse or Repurpose](#)

Video 4 - [Recycle](#)

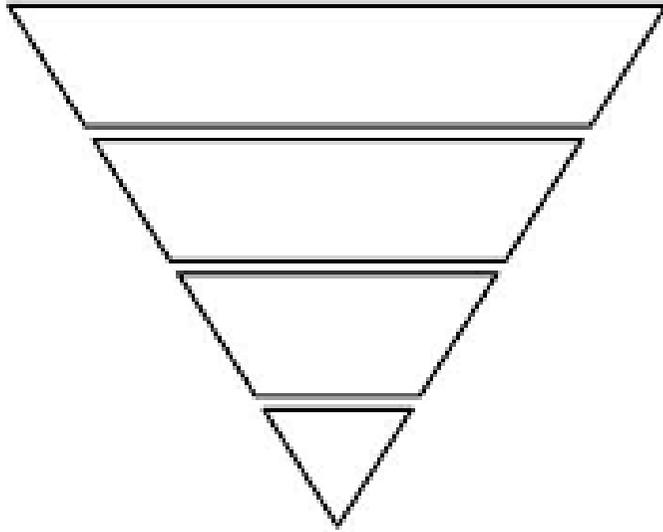


AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENTAL
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The Waste Hierarchy

Label the Waste Hierarchy



REFUSE

Circle the items you think you could refuse because of their single-use packaging



REUSE OR REPURPOSE

What could you reuse these items for? Write your answer/s next to the picture.



empty glass jar



empty bread bag



old towel with holes

RECYCLE

Which bin will you put these items in? Write your answer under each image.



apple core



paper used both sides



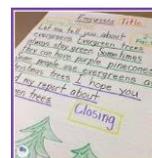
juice box



chip packet



yogurt tub



This is a piece of paper that has only been used on one side. Where could this one go?

Teacher notes and discussion points for activity sheet (Note: If possible, activity sheet could be printed on scrap paper and/or students could work in groups to use less paper)

<p style="text-align: center;">1st - The Waste Hierarchy</p> <p>Discussion What are the four sections of the waste hierarchy? Why are some parts of the pyramid larger than other parts? What do you think the different colours mean?</p> <p>Task Teacher writes the words 'refuse', 'reuse', 'recycle' and 'landfill' on the board in any order. Ask students to label the waste hierarchy pyramid and colour it in.</p> <p>Discussion Why is refuse the top priority? Answer – because waste is never created when we refuse</p> <p>Why is reuse (or repurpose) second best? Answer – because you extend the life of something, delaying the time it becomes waste. This also reduces new items from being made which will also eventually become waste. However as it will eventually become waste this option is not as good as refusing in the first place.</p> <p>Why is recycle better than landfill? Answer - Because the waste will be transformed into something else, whereas if it goes to landfill it will slowly release harmful chemicals into the earth.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2nd - REFUSE</p> <p>Discussion What does refuse mean? What sort of things should we be refusing? Possible Answers - packaging that will become waste is the focus of the video however other options include clothes you don't need (fast fashion), promotional giveaways such as plastic clappers at sporting events, and bags offered to you when shopping.</p> <p>What have you refused before when at the shops, a café or somewhere else?</p> <p>Task Ask students to circle the items they could refuse because of their single-use packaging.</p> <p>Answers <i>cucumber in plastic – cucumbers can be bought without plastic</i> <i>carrots in plastic – same reason</i> <i>pasta in plastic – package free pasta exists in bulk food stores</i> <i>zip lock bag – they could use a tupperware container or beeswax instead</i> <i>plastic straw – straws are not a necessity</i></p> <p>Discussion Discuss each item one at a time. Ask students what they will try and refuse from now on.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3rd - REUSE or REPURPOSE</p> <p>Discussion What does reuse mean? Using an item again in the same capacity (eg using a bag again as a bag) What does repurpose mean? Using an item again in a different capacity (eg cutting up the bag and using its pieces in arts and crafts)</p> <p>Task Ask students to write down ideas of how they could reuse certain items. (bread bag, glass jar, old towel)</p> <p>Some possible answers <i>Bread bag – storage for tomatoes, carrots, broccoli etc, sandwich storage, rubbish bags</i> <i>Glass jar – vase for flowers, pantry sorting (spices, seeds, grains), toothbrush holder</i> <i>Old towel – pet blankets, cleaning rags, bath mat</i></p> <p>Discussion Why is reusing things good for the environment? Answer – because you extend the life of something, delaying the time it becomes waste. This also reduces new items from being made which will also eventually become waste.</p> <p>Can you think of other items that should be reused or repurposed? Possible answers - Giving clothes or toys to other people, egg cartons for growing seedlings, scrap paper for crafts</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">4th - RECYCLE</p> <p>Discussion What does recycling mean? <i>Processing the materials of an item and turning them into something else</i> What items do we recycle at school? What items do you recycle at home?</p> <p>Task Teacher writes down the bin options available in the school classrooms or in the school's council area. Examples are: paper/cardboard, soft plastics, compost, recycling or landfill. Students look at the images on their sheet and write down which bin they think they belong in.</p> <p>Discussion Recycling is important and better than sending things to landfill but it has its downsides. What do you think the downsides of recycling are? Answer – fossil fuels are burnt to produce the energy used in the recycling process, contamination is common and therefore a lot of things in recycling bins end up in landfill anyway, plastic can only be recycled a few times before it has to go to landfill Do you know of any items that are made from recycled material?</p> <p>Now that you've seen all of the waste hierarchy videos, what is the most important action you can take in your life to reduce waste? Answer – refuse anything that you will likely end up throwing away. The key here is to remind students that refusing is the most preferred option as they will not end up with potential waste.</p>



