

# Cutting Class Trash

## Goal

To have children realize that the reuse and recycling of materials isn't the main solution to the solid waste problem. A key step is to cut down on the use of materials that end up in our landfills and recycling centers. Collect your trash for up to a week

Recycling isn't perfect and creates pollution too! By recycling plastic, that means melting it down to recreate it into something else. The melted chemicals are released into the air & breathe in by people and animals. Recycling is also sent by ships or trucks to different states & countries which means oil is needed to fuel them.

## Subjects

Home economics, social studies, mathematics, science, environmental education. Grades: 5-12

## Procedure

1. Document your trash for up to a week, how many chip bags, juice boxes etc. You may consider the entire trash produced in the house or just lunch and snack time trash!
2. Write suggestions in a journal on how to reduce your amount of trash.  
Note, "cutting down" by throwing things out into trash cans is not the same! Cutting down on trash starts by not buying those things in the first place. Talk about how stores can be seen as neatly stacked landfills.
3. The following week, begin your alternatives to cut down on your trash! Instead of individually package juice boxes, take turns making a juice/water for the whole family to enjoy.
4. At the end of those 2 weeks, see how much trash you created and how much you saved from a landfill. Did you throw out less trash when you tried to cut down? Was it difficult or easy? Why? How?