

Household Waste Audit

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

The student will conduct a real waste audit of household trash, categorizing and measuring material types to identify reduction opportunities.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- gloves
- a household trash bag (one day's worth, or one full bin)
- a scale or kitchen scale (optional)
- paper
- pencil
- old newspaper or trash bag liner to protect work surface

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

1. Put on gloves and, on a protected surface, sort one day's (or one bin's) worth of household trash into categories: food waste, paper, plastic, glass/metal, and other.
2. Weigh each category using a kitchen scale if available, or estimate relative size/count if no scale is available, recording results in a table.
3. Calculate the percentage of total waste that each category represents.
4. Create a labeled pie chart or bar graph by hand showing the percentage breakdown of your waste categories.
5. Identify which 2 categories were the largest and brainstorm one specific reduction strategy for each.

QUESTIONS

1. **What were the weights or estimated amounts for each waste category, and what percentage of the total did each represent?**

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2. **Which category made up the largest percentage of your household waste?**

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3. **Propose one specific, realistic strategy to reduce your largest waste category.**
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- 4. How might your waste audit results differ if you repeated this on a holiday or weekend versus a regular weekday? Explain your reasoning.**
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