

Recycling & the 3 Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle)

Name: _____ Date: _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

The student will design and build a functional household recycling sorting system informed by local recycling rules.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- 3-4 boxes or bins (cardboard boxes work)
- markers
- paper
- tape
- scissors
- recyclable items from around the house for testing

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

1. Research (using a device or by checking a bin/pamphlet) what materials your local recycling program actually accepts.
2. Label 3-4 boxes or bins clearly with categories that match your local rules (e.g., paper, plastic #1-2, glass, landfill).
3. Decorate each bin with a simple icon or color code using markers so sorting is easy at a glance.
4. Test your system by correctly sorting 15 real household items (clean recyclables and trash) into the right bins.
5. Write a short one-paragraph 'house rule' sign to post near the bins explaining how to use the new system.

QUESTIONS

1. What categories does your local recycling program accept, based on your research?
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2. Out of the 15 items you tested, how many did you sort correctly on your first try, and which ones were tricky?
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3. Give one example each of 'reduce,' 'reuse,' and 'recycle' from your own household.

4. Why does 'reduce' generally have a bigger environmental benefit than 'recycle'?
