

Class Activity
WE ARE ALL PART OF SOLUTION

Recycling begins at home, and we must be mindful that beyond our personal space Earth is our home. An individual can make a significant difference, and an individual who is an effective member of a group can make an even more significant difference. Today we will meet in small task groups to develop strategies for recycling specific resources. We will also explore ways to reduce consumption of these resources and thus reduce the volume of necessary recycling. Our third task will be to develop strategies that encourage individual and institutional compliance with recycling initiatives.

Sample Case Study: Prior to the Miami-Dade College recycling program for plastic beverage containers millions of plastic bottles were going into the waste stream and ultimately local landfills. Clearly marked recycling bins were placed at convenient locations around each campus. These bins were placed next to garbage receptacles to lessen the chance of random trash going into the recycling bins. Some green wise students complained that the bins weren't logically placed, and students often threw empty bottles into classroom waste baskets. What to do? Students were reminded that we are all part of the solution. Students were encouraged to ask the instructor to remind the class that food and beverages are not allowed in classrooms and to explain the very logical and practical reasons for this policy. Students were encouraged to ask for a moment of class time to remind classmates of the importance of recycling plastic. For dramatic effect it was suggested that students go to the waste basket, remove a plastic bottle and indicate that they were going to take it to the nearest recycling bin. Students would be informed of the locations of the bins. They would also be reminded of the ethical and economic issues associated with Earth citizenship.

Task Groups:

1. Paper and cardboard recycling and measures to reduce consumption of this resource should be examined.
2. Plastic beverage container and plastic bag recycling as well as reduced consumption of those materials should be explored.
Refillable containers as a way to save money and help save the planet should be discussed.
3. Recycling aluminum cans and other metals will be examined.
4. Reduced water use and options for water reuse shall be addressed.
5. Reducing power use specific to lighting, heating/air conditioning and electronic devices needs to be explored. Alternative energy sources can be discussed.

The strategies developed by the task groups will be discussed with the entire class and additional solutions will be solicited. Students will be encouraged to become proactive members of the campus "Green Team".