

Activity name: Pre-cycle, then recycle!

This activity is meant to provide a real-world application of the ATEEC Recommended Core Curriculum's math, science, technical, communications, or critical thinking knowledge and skill concepts, which have been identified by the ATEEC Fellows as necessary preparation for environmental technology occupations.

Appropriate for which course(s)? Technology Studies or high school science

Concept/skill learned (i.e. from K/S Tables): Principles of recycling, waste stream reduction

Approximate time to complete activity: 2 hours class time, 1 hour field trip activity

Source of idea or activity (for published source, please include author, title, publisher, date): Brainstorming session with other teachers at school and recycling coordinator

Materials/resources needed (equipment, print media, electronic media, videos, supplies, etc.):

- grocery store willing to allow students to create display for one week
- table and table cloth
- poster paper and supplies to make posters
- examples of efficient and wasteful packaging from around the store
- scales (optional)

Description of activity:

The purpose of this activity is to create a display in local grocery stores to show people how to reduce the amount of trash their family will generate. Local recycling coordinators are usually more than willing to supply information about this topic, but most of it is simply common sense. Establish a contact at the grocery store and ask permission to set up a small display showing efficient packaging that will reduce trash. We have referred to this as our "Pre-cycle, then Recycle" campaign. Most stores have been very willing to do this for a short period of time, usually around Earth Day is a good time.

Have your students create posters with information about responsible shopping and pre-cycling before you go to the store. At the store have the students divide up into pairs and find good examples of efficient packaging and wasteful packaging. If time allows, the students can actually weigh the total package and subtract the product weight to find the weight of the packaging. Display this information in an attractive manner on the table

along with the posters and signs. One selling point is that the store brands usually have a more efficient packaging as well as a lower cost, this display will provide good advertising at no cost to them. At the end of the agreed display period be sure your students go back to take down the display.

Extension activities could include:

- our stores have asked us to leave the posters up long after we take down the displays
- students can write to the stores to ask permission to set up the display, good way to integrate with a language arts teacher
- students can contact representatives from various companies to get samples and information about efficient packaging
- students can take the information gained and create a small flyer or brochure to be distributed
- although this works best at a grocery store it can also be done at a hardware store or department store
- this activity can also lead into design projects to create more efficient and attractive packaging for products that are the biggest violators of packaging efficiency (work with drafting or commercial art teachers on this)
- this is a great activity to be covered by the local media, the stores love the free advertising

Activity submitted by: Ray Wishart

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