

## Lesson Topics: Reducing, Reusing, Recycling & Rethinking

### State Standards:

Grade 3: 3.2.5 – Explain the importance of being a responsible citizen of your community, the state, and the nation. Identify people in your community and the state who exhibit the characteristics of good citizenship.

Grade 4: 3-5.E.2 – Construct and compare multiple plausible solutions to a problem based on how well each is likely to meet the criteria and constraints of the problem.

Grade 5: 3-5.E.2 – Construct and compare multiple plausible solutions to a problem based on how well each is likely to meet the criteria and constraints of the problem.

Objectives: Students will discuss litter and taking care of our communities. Students will explore materials from every day life and discuss the various ways items can be disposed. Students will discuss the rethinking, reusing, reducing and recycling of materials and discuss how the utilization of each can work towards solving the problem of litter in communities.

Materials Needed: single serve packaging, plastic shopping bags, soda can, cardboard food packaging, multiple serving packaging, reusable plastic shopping bags, gift bag or similar reusable material, reusable water bottle, plastic water bottle

### Procedure:

Teacher tosses packaging, water bottle, soda bottle onto floor after mimicking consuming the products. Pose the question of what would happen if everyone in the class did this with these materials. Allow students to discuss. Examples: The floor would get messy, the room would get crowded, it would be smelly, etc.

Ask students what other solutions might be available for this problem. Allow discussion then bring up the ideas of rethinking, reducing, reusing and recycling. Return to the materials that were discarded on the floor at the beginning of the lesson. Have students look at each item and discuss the concepts of rethinking, reducing, reusing and recycling. Questions to pose: Could this item be reused? Could a different choice have been made before creating the waste? Is it recyclable? Is there a way to use less of the item? Allow students to categorize materials. Items may fit in more than one area. Why is it important to look for alternative ways to handle things we no longer want? Why is it important for each of us to do our part?

Closure Activities: Have students think of other items in their home that could be reused or reduced, explore the idea of rethinking: packing a refillable water bottle vs purchasing a plastic one, explore the consequences of not limiting the waste that we create.

### Bonus Activity: Recycle City Challenge

- Visit <https://www3.epa.gov/recyclecity/challenge/index.html>

