

SCHOOL WASTE AUDIT

Name: _____ Grade: _____

INTRODUCTION

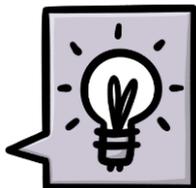
What is waste?

Waste are items that are thrown away because we no longer have need of or use them (e.g., food packaging is no longer suitable after a single use). We all play a role in the production of waste, whether we know it or not!

Why should you care?

Most of our waste ends up in landfills (the dump). Simply sending waste here is not sustainable.

- The more we throw away the more we need to replace it.
- As waste in the landfills breaks down it releases greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change.
- We are running out of space to put our landfills.
- Toxins from materials like batteries get into our water and soil.
- Land used for landfills means less land for animals and plants.
- We lose precious valuables



- **Did you know?** The Olympic medals from Tokyo 2021 were made from recycled materials recovered from laptops and smartphones.

Schools create heaps of waste, BUT they can also be a big part of the solution in reducing this impact.

What is a waste audit?

A waste audit evaluates the type and amount of waste your school produces. This information can then be used to rethink your school's waste processes, with the goal of reducing waste that is generated and consequently ends up in a landfill.



Audit Preparation Hints

- **Identify an 'average' school day** on which you will audit your school's waste (not during extraordinary events, the end of term, or when groups are out of school).
- **Do your audit in the morning**, less heat means less smell...
- **Pick a day without wind**, you don't want to inadvertently become litterbugs.
- Be aware of health and safety issues. **Gloves must be worn by everyone handling waste.**

ACTIVITY

School Waste Audits

Steps:

1. Split into groups of 3-4 learners.
2. Each group will get one bin. Bins should be selected from all around the school.
3. Lay down a large piece of plastic on the floor (this helps with cleaning up).
4. Create areas for different types of waste and label these clearly (the table below will give some ideas).
5. Collect your bins.
6. Gloves on and start sorting your rubbish.
7. Count the different items in each group. Use the tally system to keep count.
8. Fill in the table for the single location. **Please note each bin/area requires a new table.**
9. Try and calculate the waste production for the whole school using the total school waste table.
10. Discuss and reflect.
11. Commit to change and plan.

PRODUCTION, CONSUMPTION & WASTE

Grade 8 - 11 Audit

Single Location

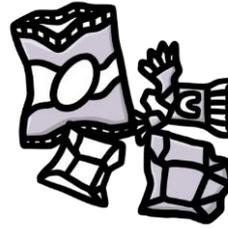
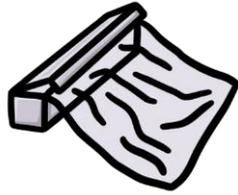
Area: *e.g. Grade 9 Smith*

Material	School Total (kg) per day	Number of Item	School Total (kg) per week (x5 days)	School Total (kg) per year (x42 weeks)	% Of total waste in bin
Paper	0.7 kg	250 sheets	3.5	140kg	15%
Cardboard					
All plastic					
Metal					
Glass					
Styrofoam					
Food waste					
Other					
Total					

Total School Waste Audit (*i.e. all bins combined*)

Material	School Total (kg) per day	Number of Item	School Total (kg) per week (x5 days)	School Total (kg) per year (x42 weeks)	School Total
Paper					
Cardboard					
All plastic					
Metal					
Glass					
Styrofoam					
Food waste					
Other					
Total					

Waste Examples



Plastic



Paper



Metal



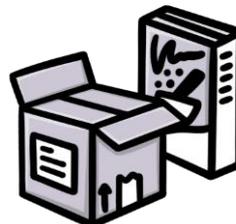
Glass



Styrofoam



Food



Cardboard

DISCUSSION

Discussion points for reflection:

- What was the most common waste product?
- What was the most surprising thing thrown away?
- Where were the waste hotspots of the school?
- Were recyclable materials being thrown away? Why?
- What is the shortcoming in weighing items (think about sweet wrappers)?
- What is the limitation in counting items (think large bulky items)?
- How do you think you contribute to waste production?

ACTION PLANNING

Take Action:

Using the information generated by your waste audit, **design an action plan to decrease the amount of waste going to the landfill.**

To help you get started:

- Define the change in behaviour you would like to see.
- How will you involve others in the school to make the change?
- What problems or barriers can you see to people changing their behaviour?
- What do you plan to do to help other learners make this change?