



Wastebusters

School Recycling Games

Recycling Game: Beat the Clock (Elementary & Middle School)

Students learn principles of recycling in a game that involves physical activity and quick decision-making. The class can be divided into two teams, each team standing in a line. One student or the teacher holds a timer. Arrayed at the front of the class are several “bins” – one for paper recycling, one for container recycling, one for compost, one for reuse, one for hazardous waste and one for garbage. Any type of container can be used as a bin. ([Answer Key](#))

The other props necessary for the game are objects or cards representing various refuse items, such as a newspaper, Coke bottle, cup, can, leaf, computer monitor, etc. Having plastic representations of these items would be ideal. However, the game could also be played using cards with graphics of the items (see [sample cards](#) provided).

The game begins when the first in line for Team 1 is given one minute on the clock to pick up a card, then -- based on which object is illustrated on the card -- runs across the room to the appropriate bin, drops the card there, then runs back to pick up the next card from the top of the deck. When the one minute “buzzer” sounds, Team 1 is awarded one point for each item placed in a correct bin. Then it’s the turn of Team 2, and the process repeats. The game continues until each child has had a chance to play. At the end, total points are tallied.

Bin Rummy! (Middle & High School)

The game will teach principles of solid waste recycling using a deck of cards that, instead of the usual Queen of diamonds etc., will be played this way:

Instead of suits (clubs, spades, diamonds, hearts), cards would belong to one of four new “suits” or categories: Paper, Plastic, Metal, Compost.

Cards in each suit are marked with a numerical value and also carry an illustration of a particular waste item. For example, in the “paper” suit, cards have illustrations of a newspaper, a cup, a magazine, note paper, etc. In the compost “suit,” there are cards representing a banana peel, apple core, etc.

The whole deck is dealt to the players. Then, for each hand, a player will flip over the top card on his or her deck and lay it down. The “high” card (card with highest numerical value) will take all the other cards. In case of tie, the players with cards of identical value will each flip over another card (until the stalemate is broken).

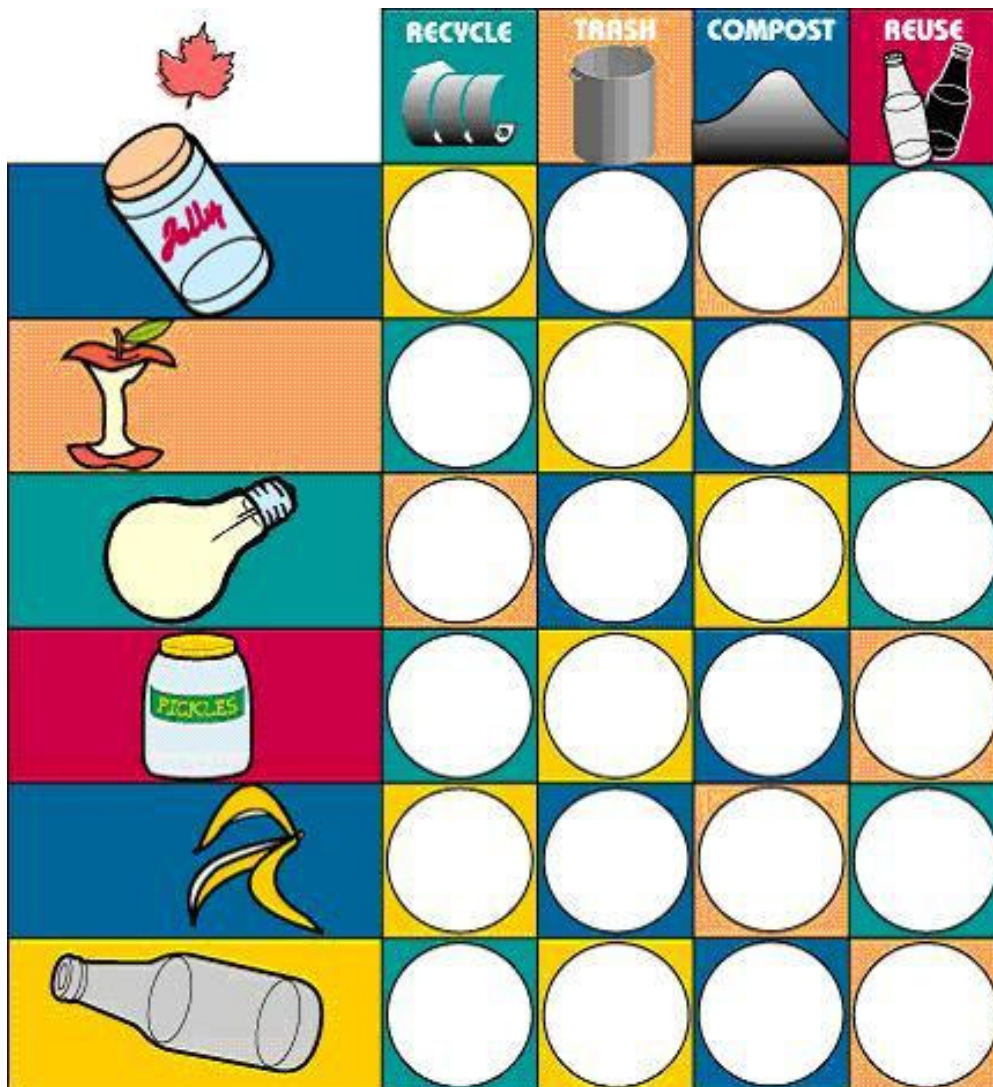
There are two possible approaches to creating the “object” of the game. Option 1: The card deck can be designed so that each suit is divisible by four. In a 48-card deck, that would mean that each suit has 12 cards. The object of each player would then be to collect a group of four cards in the same suit – such as four cards with various “compost” items – and then discard the four cards. The game would include four plastic “bins” which could be placed at the center of a table. When a player discards four matched cards in the “paper” suit, he or she discards the group in the paper bin. When discarding “plastic” matches, the cards are placed in the bin for plastic items. In this way, the players learn not only which items should be recycled, but also how and where they should be recycled.

Design Option 2 would allow use of a standard 52-card deck. In this case, each suit would have 13 cards. The object would not be to collect cards of the same suit, but rather to collect cards of the same numerical value. When a player collects four cards of the same value, he or she would discard the cards. However, in this case each card would need to be discarded into a separate bin. For example, if all cards carried a numerical value of “5,” the “5 of paper,” the “5 of plastic,” the “5 of metal” and “5 of compost” would each individually – one card at a time – be placed into its matching bin.

The winner is the player who is able to discard all cards first.

Where Does It Go? (Elementary School)

What should be done with the items below? Should you recycle it, put it in the trash, put it in the compost pile or reuse it again? Print out game and put an X in the correct column(s). (There may be more than one answer).



jelly jar -	recycle & reuse
apple core -	compost
light bulb -	trash
pickle jar -	recycle & reuse
banana peel -	compost
soda bottle -	recycle & reuse
window pane -	trash

Tic Tac Toe (Elementary, Middle & High Schools)

On a chalk or white board, draw nine (or more) large squares in equal rows on top of one another. Divide a classroom into two groups and have the two teams compete to put their X's and O's in the squares by determining whether the players have answered their question correctly. Determine questions about recycling based on age group. CCCSWA can assist.

Take the Four R's Pledge

Conduct a class discussion about the Four R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle & Rot). Ask each student to pledge three things he or she can do to reduce waste. Pledges can be anything from bringing reusable containers for lunch to collecting litter to using both sides of their paper for homework.

The Four R's Project

Students must develop and submit their class, club or school project, which will be evaluated by CCCSWA. Project requirements are listed below:

1. Identify a waste, reuse, recycling or compost challenge to target at your school. (CCCSWA can assist)
2. Develop an action plan.
3. Carry out the action plan.
4. Evaluate the project and record results.
5. Assemble the results.
6. Send results to CCCSWA.

Example: An elementary school decided lunch waste was an issue at their school and started a composting program. They weighed and charted the amount of compostable waste, non-compostable waste and they counted the number of lunch trays used over a three week period. Then they presented their findings, complete with graphs, about lunch recycling to students and faculty. From there, students could make recommendations on cutting down the amount of lunch waste, etc.