

What a Waste

Contact Information:

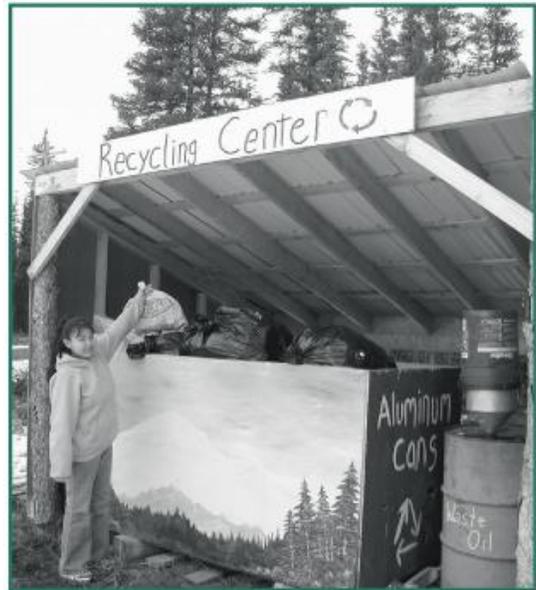
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Objectives

Students will:

1. Identify ways our lifestyles contribute to our country's massive trash problem.
2. Identify ways to revise our way of life to reduce the amount of waste we produce.
3. Define consumption and solid waste.
4. Learn ten ways to reduce the amount of trash generated at home.
5. Discover how traditional Village life produced less trash compared to our lifestyle today.

Angela Nicolai drops a bag of aluminum cans into the community bin for recycling.



Courtesy of Chantelle Pence

Lesson

GRADES K -12

Activities:

1. Food wrappings or containers contribute greatly to the Village and Alaska's trash problem. List the kinds of trash produced through the consumption of foods (cans, boxes, plastic, and glass bottles, paper products, plastic bags, and organic garbage). Students may graph and make tables, categorize, and find range, mean, median, and mode for the different kinds of trash.
2. Make a list of some of the things that you can do to reduce waste in your home, Village, or school.
3. Work with the Village Council to begin a Village-wide recycle program.
4. Organize trash clean-up days throughout the year.

Discussion Ideas:

1. How did our ancestors obtain food (e.g. hunting, gathering, fishing).
2. Why didn't our ancestors have a disposal problem? Why were trash problems then different from those now?
3. In what ways could we incorporate or modify our ancestor's methods in order to produce smaller amounts of trash?
4. In our society, we use thousands of different tools. Once they are broken or worn, we often discard these items as trash. What tools or appliances or machines have you used and thrown away in your household?
5. What tools did our ancestors use? What were those tools made of? What tools does your family use? What are those tools made of?
6. Why would our ancestors have been unlikely to throw away old clothing? (hard to obtain, was re-sewn into something else, didn't have excess clothing) What might you do to reduce clothing waste?
7. Can you think of items our ancestors did not have which contribute to our trash problems? (snow machines, metal and fiberglass boats, cars, tires, newspapers, paper of all kinds, and plastic) Why do we need these things?
8. Why do we produce more trash than our ancestors did? (we didn't make our own tools and clothing or directly obtain our own food; we use more manufactured and non-biodegradable materials).

State Standards

Government and Citizenship

A. A student should have the knowledge and skills necessary to participate effectively as an informed and responsible citizen.

B. A student should understand the impact of economic choices and participate effectively in the local, state, national, and global economics.

Geography

A. A student should understand and be able to evaluate how humans and physical environments interact.

Cultural Standards

A. Culturally-knowledgeable students are able to engage effectively in learning activities that are based on traditional ways of knowing and learning.

B. Culturally-knowledgeable students demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.