

# All About Ocean Plastics

## What Is Plastic?

Plastic is a material made by humans. It cannot be found in the natural world. Lots of everyday items that humans use are made from plastic.

bags



bottles



cutlery



toys



toothbrushes



food packets



## Good Things About Plastic

Plastic can be a very useful material. There are many reasons that humans use it to make so many products.

- It's strong.
- It is very durable so plastic items last a very long time.
- It can be moulded into almost any shape.
- It can be made waterproof.
- It can be made in different colours.
- Plastic food packaging stops air from getting inside, which helps to keep food fresh for longer.
- It is much easier to clean than other materials, like fabric or wood.



## **The Problem with Plastic**

Lots of plastic pollution is getting into the oceans. Plastic does not break down like natural materials, such as apples or wood. Because it is so durable, the plastics that humans have made can exist for hundreds of years!

Plastic can harm animals living in the water and on the beach. The animals can get tangled up in plastic bags, fishing nets or strings. If animals eat pieces of plastic, there is no room in their bellies for real food. This is also a problem for humans! When we ingest fish or seafood, we might be eating tiny bits of ocean plastic.

### **What Can Humans Do?**



#### **Reduce**

Try to use less plastic in your daily life. You could use a bamboo toothbrush instead of a plastic one. Eat your meals with metal cutlery. What else could you swap?



#### **Reuse**

Take your own bags to the shops so you can avoid getting a new plastic one. Try buying your plastic toys from a charity shop so that fewer new plastic toys need to be made. What else could you reuse?



#### **Recycle**

Sort your rubbish so that the plastic can be recycled. It will be used to make new plastic products so that less fresh plastic is created. How much could you sort each week?



#### **Keep It Clean!**

If you visit the beach, make sure all of your litter goes into the bin. With a grown-up, could you do a beach clean-up?



# Questions

1. Which of these can be made from plastic? **Tick one.**

- ☐ animals
- ☐ people
- ☐ bottles

2. Which of these sentences is true? **Tick one.**

- ☐ Plastic is food.
- ☐ Plastic lasts a long time.
- ☐ Plastic is hard to clean.

3. What does plastic do to sea animals? **Tick one.**

- ☐ It helps them.
- ☐ It heals them.
- ☐ It harms them.

4. What can humans do to help? **Tick one.**

- ☐ Use less plastic.
- ☐ Use more plastic.
- ☐ Only ever use plastic.

5. What should humans do with litter? **Tick one.**

- ☐ Leave it on the floor.
- ☐ Put it in the bin.
- ☐ Put it in the ocean.

1. Why can plastic be very useful to humans? **Tick one.**

- ☐ It can be used to make food.
- ☐ It lasts a long time.
- ☐ It is a natural material.

2. Fill in the missing word.

Lots of plastic litter is getting into the\_\_\_\_\_.

3. How does plastic harm animals? **Tick two.**

- ☐ The animals can get tangled up in plastic bags.
- ☐ The animals might eat the plastic.
- ☐ The plastic breaks down the animals.

4. Which word means 'use again'?

- ☐ reduce
- ☐ reuse
- ☐ recycle

1. Name something that can be made from plastic.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Which of these words can be used to describe plastic? **Tick one.**

- ☐ durable
- ☐ natural
- ☐ fresh

3. Fill in the missing word.

Lots of plastic \_\_\_\_\_ is getting into the oceans.

4. Find and copy the word that means 'eat'.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Draw **three** lines and match each word to its meaning.

|         |   |   |                                                                       |
|---------|---|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Reduce  | ▶ | ◀ | use again                                                             |
| Reuse   | ▶ | ◀ | break down an item so the materials can be used to make something new |
| Recycle | ▶ | ◀ | use or do less of                                                     |

