

Student worksheet: The three Rs

The three Rs of the environment

People everywhere in the world produce a lot of rubbish but there is not enough space, and landfills are filling up quickly. If we want to save our planet, then the so-called three Rs are essential for learning how to deal with the waste we produce. The three Rs are reduce, reuse, and recycle. Here are a number of tips on what you can do to save the environment.

Reduce

A good place to start is by buying things that don't have a lot of packaging. Then there are items you may not use very often, so you might as well borrow them from someone instead of buying them. Nowadays, newspapers can be read online so buying the paper edition is not necessary. The same goes for emails and hence it is usually not necessary to print them out. Generally, the use of electricity can be greatly reduced by, for example, turning off lights that are not used.

Reuse

When you go shopping, refuse plastic bags and bring a bag with you instead. If you're not buying a lot, a bag is not necessary to begin with. Reusable bags should be heavier and more durable. If you prepare your lunch at home, put it in a plastic lunch box. I always keep shoe boxes as they are great to store stuff. Many cities have collection points for used clothes. If you have clothes that are still in good shape, you can bring them to the collection points rather than throwing them away.

Recycle

Recycling is a process that makes it possible to create new products out of old ones. Paper, aluminium, glass and plastic can often be recycled.

Glass has been used for thousands of years and is relatively easy to recycle. Aluminium can be repeatedly recycled quickly and easily. Paper is recyclable but it cannot be recycled forever. The small fibres in paper eventually become very weak so that they can't be recycled into good paper anymore. Also, not every type of paper is recyclable as some high-quality paper is too expensive to recycle.

A. Read the text quickly. What are the three Rs of the environment?

B. Read the text again. Are the statements True, False or Not Given?

Statements	True, False or Not Given?
1. The author suggests borrowing certain items rather than buying them.	
2. According to the author, shoe boxes can be very useful to store things.	
3. Used clothes can be donated.	
4. It's not possible to recycle aluminum over and over again.	
5. Empty plastic bottles are relatively easy to recycle.	

C. Complete the sentences with information from the text.

- _____ are almost to full capacity.
- If possible, try to buy items with little or no _____.
- Bring your own bag but make sure it is _____ and _____.
- It's a waste of paper if you print your _____.
- Many cities have _____ where people can take used garments that are then redistributed to people in need.
- There is a limit to how many times paper can be recycled because it is made of _____.