Plastic Pollution in the Ocean

Plastic Pollution

Plastics are a big problem for ocean life. It is thought that over eight million **tonnes** of plastic finds its way into the ocean every year. It can be anything from plastic bags to food wrappers and even glitter.



How Does It Get into the Ocean?

Plastic which is dropped on the ground can get blown into rivers and streams, which carry it to the sea. If plastic is thrown away properly but is not recyclable, it ends up on a **landfill**. From here, it can be blown into rivers, too. Worst of all, if plastic is flushed away down drains, it goes straight into the water.



Did You Know...?

- Plastic is very strong. It can take up to one thousand years for plastic to break down in the water.
- Plastic in the oceans can be mistaken for food by different creatures. Floating in the ocean, a plastic carrier bag can look a lot like a jellyfish, which is food for a leatherback turtle.





How Can We Help?

There is good news about what is being done and what you can do to help.

- Say 'no' to plastic bags – reuse old bags or carry a backpack.
- Refill and reuse – instead of buying bottled drinks, fill up your own bottles at home.
- Sort your rubbish – use recycling bins, don't put plastic down drains and never leave litter on the ground.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Although plastic is a threat to our world, there are good things happening. It's important to think, reuse and recycle.



Glossary

landfill: A place where non-recyclable rubbish is piled up and buried.

tonnes: A measurement that is about the mass of a small car.

To find out more about ocean pollution, read the eBook 'A Place for Plastic' here!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Questions

1. Which of the following are types of plastic pollution? Tick **two.**

   - ○ food wrappers
   - ○ tin foil
   - ○ glitter
   - ○ cereal boxes

2. How long can plastic take to break down in the water? Tick one.

   - ○ up to one thousand hours
   - ○ up to one thousand days
   - ○ up to one thousand months
   - ○ up to one thousand years

3. Number the sections from 1-4 to show the order that they appear in the text.

   - ☐ Did You Know...?
   - ☐ How Does It Get into the Ocean?
   - ☐ Plastic Pollution
   - ☐ How Can We Help?

4. Find and copy a word from the text which means 'animals'.

   _____

5. Fill in the missing words.

   Floating in the ocean, a plastic _____ _____ can look a lot like a , which is food for a leatherback _____.

6. Draw 3 lines to complete the sentences.

Instead of putting plastic down the sink...	... reuse old bags.
Instead of using new plastic bags...	... refill your own bottle at home.
Instead of buying bottled drinks...	... recycle it properly.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

7. How do you think people's attitudes to plastic may change in the future?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Answers

1. Which of the following are types of plastic pollution? Tick **two.**

   - ✓ **food wrappers**
   - ○ tin foil
   - ✓ **glitter**
   - ○ cereal boxes

2. How long can plastic take to break down in the water? Tick one.

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   - [3] Did You Know...?
   - [2] How Does It Get into the Ocean?
   - [1] Plastic Pollution
   - [4] How Can We Help?

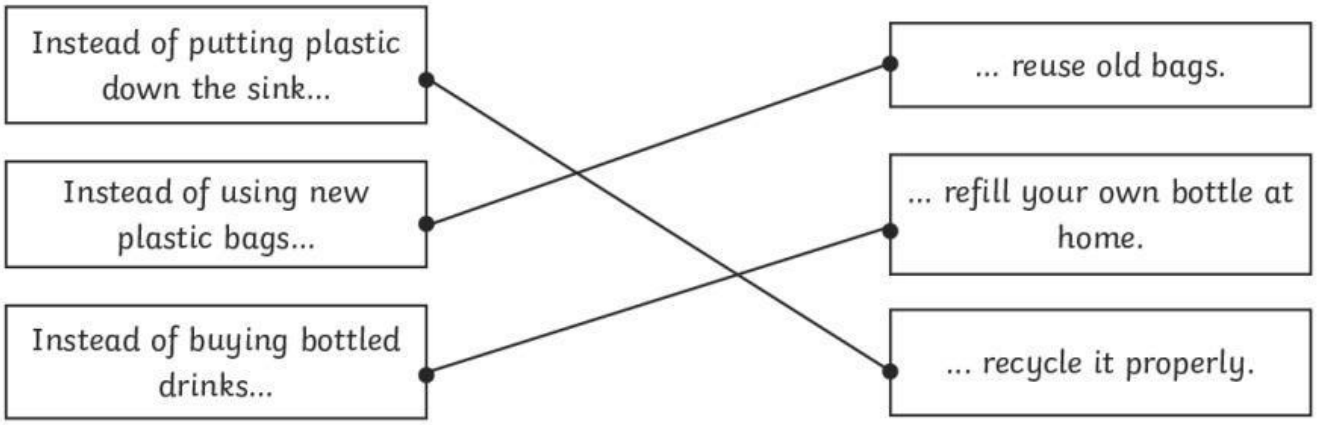
4. Find and copy a word from the text which means 'animals'.

   creatures

5. Fill in the missing words.

   Floating in the ocean, a plastic **carrier bag** can look a lot like a **jellyfish**, which is food for a leatherback **turtle**.

6. Draw 3 lines to complete the sentences.



LIVEWORKSHEETS

7. How do you think people's attitudes to plastic may change in the future?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that people will use less plastic and more recyclable materials.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Plastic Pollution in the Ocean

Plastic Pollution

Plastics are a big problem for ocean life. It is thought that over eight million **tonnes** of plastic finds its way into the ocean every year. It can be anything from plastic bags to food wrappers and even glitter. Across the world, coastal and deep-sea areas are being affected.

Researchers have found plastic appearing in the most remote parts of the world, such as:

- in the Arctic near the North Pole;
- on the Great Barrier Reef, located off the coast of Australia;
- in the Mariana Trench (the deepest area of the Pacific Ocean).

The deepest recorded piece of plastic pollution ever found was a shopping bag nearly seven miles below the surface.



How Does It Get into the Ocean?

Plastic finds its way into the ocean in many different ways. Humans are mostly responsible for not disposing of plastic correctly.

Plastic which is dropped on the ground eventually gets blown into rivers and streams, which carry it to the sea. If plastic is thrown away properly but is not recyclable, it ends up on a **landfill**. From here, it can be blown into rivers, too. Worst of all, if plastic is flushed away down drains, it goes straight into the water.





Did You Know...?

- Plastic is a very strong and **durable** material. It can take up to one thousand years for plastic to **decompose** in the water.
- Plastic in the oceans can be mistaken for food by different sea creatures. Floating in the ocean, a plastic carrier bag can look a lot like a jellyfish, which is food for a leatherback turtle.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

How Can We Help?

More people than ever are aware of the damage that plastic is doing to the environment. There is good news about what is being done and what you can do to help.

- Say 'no' to plastic bags – reuse old bags or carry a backpack.
- Refill and reuse – instead of buying bottled drinks, fill up your own bottles at home.
- Sort your rubbish – use recycling bins, don't put plastic down drains and never leave litter on the ground.

Although plastic is a threat to our world and oceans, there are good things happening. It's important to think, reuse and recycle.



Glossary

decompose: Break down and disappear naturally over time.
durable: Long-lasting and strong.
landfill: A place where non-recyclable rubbish is piled up and buried.
tonnes: A measurement that is about the mass of a small car.

To find out more about ocean pollution, read the eBook 'A Place for Plastic' here!



LIVEWORKSHEETS

Questions

1. Which of the following are types of plastic pollution? Tick **two.**

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2. How long can plastic take to break down in the water? Tick one.

   - ○ up to one thousand hours
   - ○ up to one thousand days
   - ○ up to one thousand months
   - ○ up to one thousand years

3. What is the meaning of the word 'durable'?

   _____

4. Draw three lines to match the location to its region.

Great Barrier Reef	**Pacific Ocean**
Mariana Trench	**Arctic**
North Pole	**Australia**

5. Find and copy a caption from the text.

   _____

   _____

6. Fill in the missing words.

   Floating in the ocean, a plastic _____ _____ can look a lot like a , which is food for a leather back _____.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

7. How is plastic pollution affecting ocean life?

8. What three things can people do to reduce their plastic usage?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Answers

1. Which of the following are types of plastic pollution? Tick **two.**

   - ⊘ **food wrappers**
   - ○ tin foil
   - ⊘ **glitter**
   - ○ cereal boxes

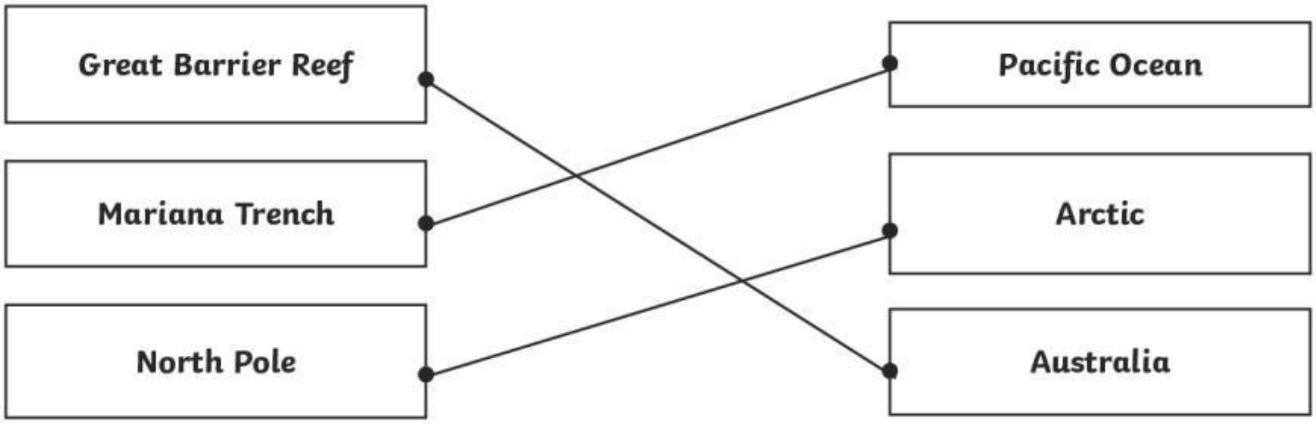
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   - ○ up to one thousand days
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   - ⊘ up to one thousand years

3. What is the meaning of the word 'durable'?

   long-lasting and strong

4. Draw three lines to match the location to its region.



5. Find and copy a caption from the text.

   'Plastic can look a lot like a jellyfish and could be eaten.'

6. Fill in the missing words.

   Floating in the ocean, a plastic **carrier bag** can look a lot like a **jellyfish**, which is food for a leather back **turtle**.

7. How is plastic pollution affecting ocean life?

   Pupils' own responses, such as: Plastic can be mistaken for food and eaten by sea creatures.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

8. What three things can people do to reduce their plastic usage?

Pupils' own responses referring to:

- **reusing old carrier bags or backpacks;**
- **refilling their water bottles at home;**
- **disposing of/sorting rubbish properly.**

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Plastic Pollution in the Ocean

Plastic Pollution

Plastics, and especially single-use plastics, are a big problem for **marine** life. It is thought that over eight million tonnes of plastic finds its way into the ocean every year. This can be anything from plastic bags to food wrappers and even glitter. Across the world, coastal and deep-sea areas are being affected.

Scientific researchers have found plastic appearing in the most remote parts of the world. In the Arctic, near the North Pole, **microplastics** have been discovered on beaches, within sea ice and floating on the surface waters. The Great Barrier Reef, located off the coast of Australia, suffers from **coral bleaching** partly caused by pollution.

The Mariana Trench, near Japan, is the deepest area of the Pacific Ocean. Recently, a plastic bag (like the kind you would find in a supermarket) was found here, nearly seven miles below the surface. It is thought to be the deepest ever recorded piece of plastic pollution.



How Does It Get into the Ocean?

Plastic which is **discarded** on the ground eventually gets blown into rivers and streams, which carry it to the sea. If plastic is disposed of properly but is not recyclable, it ends up on a landfill and, from there, it can be blown away by the wind. Worst of all, if plastic is flushed away down drains, it goes straight into the water.

Plastics are cheap to make and are common in everyday life. As such, humans are mostly responsible for the impact of plastic upon our oceans.





LIVEWORKSHEETS



Did You Know...?

- Plastic is a very strong and **durable** material. It can take up to one thousand years for plastic to **decompose** in the water.
- Plastic in the oceans can be mistaken for food by different sea creatures. Floating in the ocean, a plastic carrier bag can look a lot like a jellyfish, which is food for a leatherback turtle.

How Can We Help?

More people than ever are aware of the damage that plastic is doing to the environment. There is good news about what is being done and what you can do to help.

- Say 'no' to plastic bags – reuse old bags or carry a backpack.
- Refill and reuse – instead of buying bottled drinks, fill up your own bottles at home.
- Sort your rubbish – use recycling bins, don't put plastic down drains and never leave litter on the ground.



Although plastic is a threat to our world and oceans, there are good things happening. Environmental groups around the United Kingdom and beyond are organising beach clean-ups and **campaigning** for changes in how and why plastics are used.

When faced with single-use plastic, remember: think, reuse and recycle.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Glossary

campaigning: Work hard, in an organised way, to make a large change happen.

coral bleaching: A sign that coral is unhealthy due to rising sea temperatures.

decompose: Break down and disappear naturally over time.

discarded: Dropped or left behind on purpose.

durable: Long-lasting and strong.

marine: Living in the ocean.

microplastics: Tiny pieces of plastic that are smaller than 5mm.

To find out more about ocean pollution, read the eBook 'A Place for Plastic' here!



LIVEWORKSHEETS