

Recycling Investigation

Grade 6-8 Lesson Plan

Purpose

This lesson is intended to stimulate the learner's thinking about recycling; who does it, what do they do, and why do they do it? The learners will investigate motivations for recycling that go beyond the economics of the practice and explore other thoughts and ideas that motivate some people to be stewards for the common good.

Duration

Two 55-minute class periods

Student Objectives

- Explore the characteristics and motivations of those who recycle.
- Explore the economics of recycling.
- Conduct a survey to determine awareness and involvement in recycling endeavors of individuals of different ages.
- Write a convincing argument for why recycling/stewardship of natural resources is worth the time and effort.

Service Experience

Although this lesson contains a service project example, decisions about service plans and implementation should be made by students, as age appropriate.

The learners will conduct a survey to determine the extent of individuals' knowledge of some of the benefits of recycling of the Earth's natural resources and

use this information to determine a target audience for a recycling service learning project.

Instructional Procedures

Before beginning, assign for homework the night before for students to find two facts and two myths about recycling. Instruct them to identify which are the facts and which are the myths. Warn them of how their homework will be used, so ask them to make their facts/myths unique and make five copies.

Ask for a show of hands of the learners who know at least one person who recycles. Tell them that you're not interested in names, but you would like to know a little more about these recyclers.

Ask those who raised their hand to share the approximate age of the person they know who recycle something and record these approximate ages randomly on the display board. Then ask what these individuals recycle and randomly list these items on the board. Finally ask the learners why they think that these people recycle what they do, and note their responses with a word or phrase randomly placed on the display board.

Encourage the learners to look over the display board and determine if any patterns can be found from what is listed there and why it might be considered a pattern.

Following this discussion, tell the learners that you are interested in knowing what they already know about recycling and to do that they are being asked to respond to a true/false survey.

Ask students to take out their homework. Instruct student to exchange their homework with another student. Remind students that it should not be clear to their partner which ones are the facts and which ones are the myths. Students are to determine/guess which ones are correct and which ones are false.

When the survey is completed pair the learners up to compare their answers and encourage them to discuss and change, if necessary, any of their responses.

Encourage any reflection on the part of the learners about the statements and check to see if there were any statements that really surprised them in terms of new learning.

Ask the learners how well they think that younger learners or their peers would do if given this test? How about their family members? Senior Citizens?

Tell each learner that they will be administer four blank surveys with which to conduct an experiment in which they will be required to administer this survey to four different individuals; one of these individuals must be an elementary or middle school student, one must be a high school student peer, one must be an adult twenty-one to fifty-five years old, and one must be someone who is fifty to sixty years old or older. The only identification to be placed on the survey sheet is the age span of the person filling out the form. This survey will be assigned as homework.

Have the learners share their predictions as to which age group they think will do the

better job on the survey and their reasons for their predictions. If possible determine a consensus of opinion.

Share with the learners that individuals who recycle are often referred to as “stewards of the Earth’s natural resources.” Have them reflect on what this phrase might mean by first identifying some of the Earth’s natural resources (i.e. water, air, plants/trees, minerals/oil, etc.), and secondly by defining “stewardship” (Definition: The conducting, supervising, or managing of something; especially: the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care.)

Remind the learners of the impact recycling has on the environment based on the results of their fact/myth surveys that clearly showed that economically, recycling/stewardship of natural resources makes good sense.

Ask the learners to find other reasons for recycling to better be able to respond to that person who says, “If it all boils down to economics, I have more money than time. It’s just too inconvenient for me recycle.”

Give the learners an opportunity to begin a web search of recycling rationale and benefits beginning with the www.greeningforward.org website and search engine.

Based on the readings of the various web searches, have the learners write a 75-100 word point-of-view persuasive response to the person’s comment about not having time and the inconvenience of recycling.

Conclude this lesson by having the learners orally share their 75-100 word

point-of-view persuasive response with the rest of the class and allow time for questions and reflective interaction.

Assessment

The assessment for this lesson is based on the learners' participation in the class discussions, the depth of thought and insights shared, the completion of the out-of-class surveys, and the production of a written rebuttal of the expressed concern for the amount of time and inconvenience recycling requires of an individual based a teacher's individual rubric.

School/Home Connection

Have students complete this interactive parent/student homework:

The learners are required to administer the survey to a minimum of four individuals; one of those individuals must be an elementary or middle school student, one must be a high school student peer, one must be an adult twenty to fifty-five years old, and one must be someone who is fifty-sixty years old or older. The only identification to be placed on the survey sheet is the age span of the person filling out the form.

References

- See Recommended Web Sites (Attachment Two) for a comprehensive listing.
- For Additional Related Units/Lessons: www.learningtogive.org.

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Common Core Standard Suggestions

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.8
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.8

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