



Trash Timeline!

Program Type: Field/Classroom **Target Grade Level:** M.S. **Program Length:** 30 min-1.5 Hours

Theme: Understanding how long trash lasts can help us make the world a cleaner place.

Objectives

- Students will be introduced to the problem of litter and trash.
- Students will investigate how long different types of litter last
- Students will take part in a litter cleanup

Activity :

Intro: Introduce students to the idea of litter and trash. Ask them, “Who has ever littered anything before.” Ask them, “Why did they litter?” Ask them, “Why do you think other people litter?” Ask them, “Who cares if people litter? (5 minutes).

Show the students pictures of trash and litter, and the damage it does. Explain to them how careless littering can affect animals, the ocean, and their own health (5 minutes). Explain that dropping litter isn’t just a momentary thing, as some trash can last for a very long time.

Next, show students the various cards depicting types of trash. Explain to them that their job is to guess which decomposes the fastest, and which stays around the longest. Break students into groups, and have them put the trash cards in order. Note: there are a variety of ways to do this. The simplest is to have the cards lying on a table, and have them organize them from there. However, to encourage more movement, we recommend that you tape the pictures to the top of a bucket or other object, and space them apart. This will allow the students to physically pick up an object and move it over a bigger distance.

Give the students some time to organize the items, and then talk them through the order. Give the team that gets the order closest a prize, if possible. Ask the students, “Where should you always put your garbage (20-30 minutes)?

This is a good activity to do before a litter clean up. If desired, have the participants complete a trash clean up afterwards.

Resources & Materials

- Laminated pictures of trash, facts of trash
- Laminated cards with individual types of trash
- Cones/Dowels to hold up pictures
- Teacher trash answer key pictures.

- (if conducting clean up also) Trash Bags, Gloves

Vocabulary

- Decomposes
- Litter