

Rubbish in the Environment

Discussion Questions:

- 1) How much rubbish is produced by communities?
- 2) How is this rubbish disposed of?
- 3) Why do people litter and dump rubbish illegally?
- 4) What effects does rubbish have on the environment?
- 5) How can we bring about change?

Consumerism is a driving force in the developed world. We buy more than we need and we have become accustomed to living in a 'throw away' society. But what impact is this lifestyle having upon the environment in which we live?



Our rubbish ends up at designated dumping grounds where it is compacted and buried as *landfill*. People have realised that there is limited space for landfill so we must reduce the volume of rubbish we produce.



In 1960...



The population was 179.979 million people in the USA.

The average person produced about 2.68 million tons of waste.

94% of this waste went to landfill at the dump.

In 2012...



The population was 313.914 million people in the USA.

The average person produced about 4.38 million tons of waste.

54% of this waste went to landfill at the dump.

Littering and illegal dumping accounts for a great percentage of the amount of rubbish that ends up on our streets. Unfortunately much of this rubbish ends up being washed into waterways, polluting our rivers, lakes and oceans. Plastics and industrial contaminants pose the greatest problems for aquatic wildlife.





Illegal dumping of potentially dangerous materials such as asbestos poses a health risk for the community.

Why do you think some people dump their rubbish by the sides of roads and in forests instead of taking it to waste management centres?

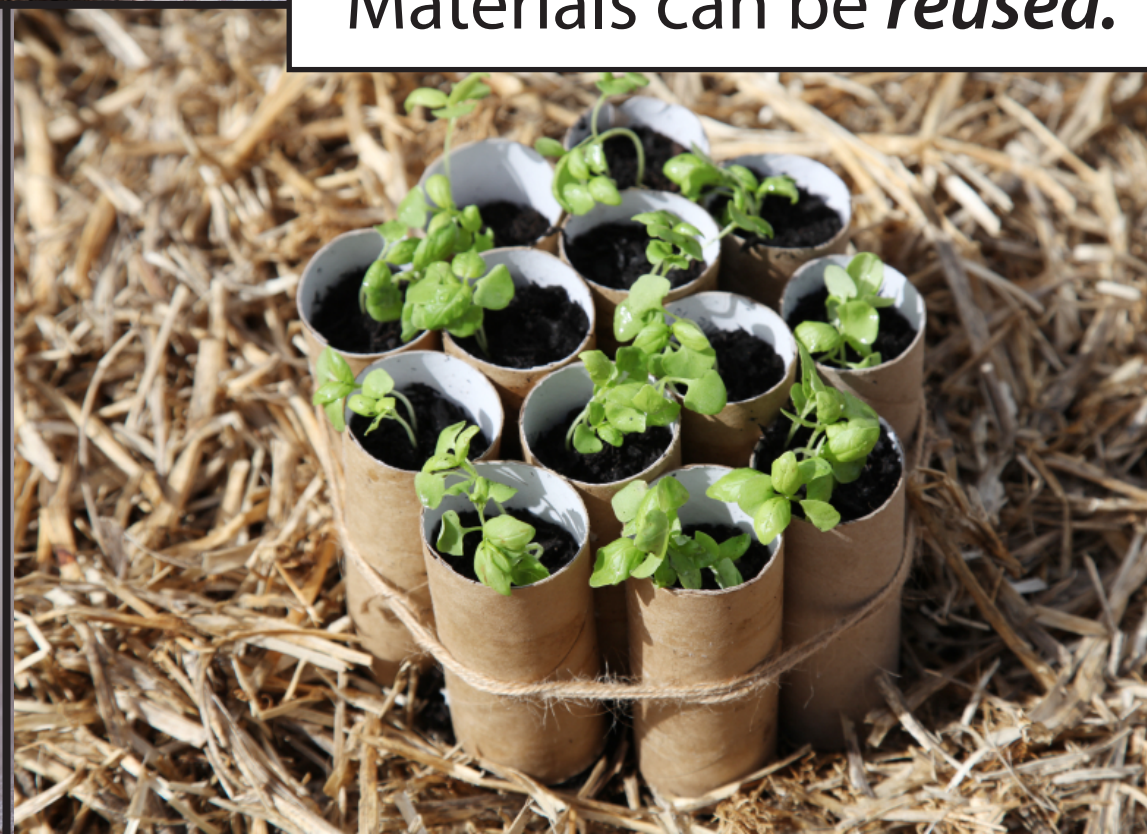


Our rubbish can be *recycled*.





Materials can be *reused*.



Rubbish can be *reduced* by making conscious decisions about:

- * what we buy
- * how much we buy
- * choosing recyclable materials
- * avoiding unnecessary packaging
- * Avoiding plastic products
- * Avoiding throw away containers
- * considering the environmental implications of a product's disposal.



How much rubbish do you make each day?

