

The 3 Rs – Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle

Age Group: 1st-3rd Grade

Approximate Time: 30 minutes

Materials Needed: recyclable items, trash items, boxes labeled reuse, recycle, and trash

Discussion:

- The 3 Rs are Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- If you follow the 3 Rs you can help the Earth!
- Has anyone heard these words before?
 - Reduce means to use less of something.
 - Reducing is important because it means we make less trash
 - Do any of you bring your lunch in a lunchbox instead of a paper or plastic bag?
 - Reuse means to use something over and over again.
 - Using a lunchbox also fits under reuse
 - Recycle means to make something into something new.
 - Do you recycle?
 - What do you recycle?
 - In Helena you can recycle paper, cardboard, glass, plastic, aluminum, and tin cans
- Where does garbage go if it isn't reused or recycled?
 - Has anyone been to the dump before?
 - It is a large hole in the ground where all of the garbage is put.
 - This is bad because it will never go away.
 - Would you want one of these near your house?
- Why is it important to reduce, reuse, and recycle?
 - Keeps garbage out of the dump, which helps keep the Earth clean

Recycling Relay Activity:

- Break the class up into groups of 4
- Each group has a pile of items that might be in the trash
- Sort the items into Reuse, Recycle, or Garbage
- Explain why items were placed where they were
- Activity Reflection Questions:
 - Are there any items that you were surprised you could/couldn't recycle?
 - How did reusing and recycling items impact the size of your trash pile?

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