

Lesson Plan

Lesson 2: How does plastic affect our environment?

Year Group: 3-6

National Curriculum links:

Science – Living Things and Their Habitats

Identify how environments can change and that this can pose dangers to living things.

Geography – Human and physical geography

Describe and understand key aspects of climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts.

PSHE – Living in the Wider World

Understand the impact of human activity on the environment.

Summary: Children will learn about the impact of plastic waste on animals and their habitats. They are introduced to key vocabulary, including the terms biodegradable and non-biodegradable, and explore the differences between them. Through examples of plastic pollution, pupils discover how plastic harms wildlife and the environment. The lesson ends with a discussion on how we can reduce plastic pollution, encouraging children to think about positive actions they can take.

Prior knowledge required:

- Know what plastic is and where it comes from
- Be aware that animals live in different habitats
- Know that some materials break down over time
- Have heard of recycling or reducing waste
- Understand that humans can harm or help the environment

Learning objective: To understand how plastic waste affects animals and their habitats, and explore ways to reduce its impact.

Success criteria:

- I can explain what biodegradable and non-biodegradable mean
- I can give examples of plastic pollution
- I can describe how plastic harms animals and their habitats
- I can suggest ways to reduce plastic pollution

Prepare before the lesson:

Mini whiteboards and whiteboard pens.

Resources for optional extension activities (see PPT).

Lesson outline**Slide 4: Vocabulary**

Explicitly teach children the vocabulary words using the definitions provided in the PPT notes.

Slides 5–6: Vocabulary Task

Give children 1 minute per slide to write the missing vocabulary words. This will test their understanding of the new words.

Slides 8–11: Introduction to biodegradable and non-biodegradable materials

Use the slides to teach children the difference between these two types of materials.

Slides 12–13: Examples of plastic pollution

Teach children the five ways that our environment can be affected by plastic pollution.

Slides 14–16: Case studies of plastic pollution

Read the 'real life examples' of how one action can lead to plastic pollution. This is to help children be aware that their actions can have a consequence.

Slides 18–21: How to reduce our plastic pollution

Teach children examples of how they can reduce their plastic pollution in everyday life.

Slide 22: Discussion Points

Use the notes in the PPT to guide a class discussion.

Slides 23–25: Optional Extension Activities

These slides offer extra activities to deepen learning—check the notes for instructions and adapt as needed.