

Lesson Plan

Lesson 4: How can we reduce and reuse our plastic?

Year Group: 3-6

National Curriculum links:

Science

Recognise that environments can change and that this can sometimes pose dangers to living things.

Geography

Explain what sustainability means and identify choices that help protect the planet.

Summary: In this lesson, children will learn how plastic affects our planet and explore three types of economies—take-make-throw (linear), recycling, and reuse (circular). They'll discover how each model impacts the environment, especially with plastic waste, and think of fun, creative ways to reuse plastic at home or school. By the end, they'll feel empowered to make small changes that help protect nature and reduce waste.

Prior knowledge required:

- What plastic is and where we use it every day (e.g. bottles, bags, toys).
- Why plastic can be a problem when we throw it away and it ends up in nature.
- What recycling means – turning old things into new things.
- That they can help by making small changes like reusing and using less plastic.

Learning objective: To know how plastic affects our planet and how we can help by using less plastic and finding ways to reuse it.

Success criteria:

- Explain the difference between a linear economy, a recycling economy, and a circular economy using simple examples.
- Describe which economy is most and least preferable.
- Identify at least three creative ways they can reuse plastic items in their daily lives.
- Design or suggest a reuse project or idea that helps reduce plastic waste in their school or home.

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 terms.

Slides 8–16: Types of economy

Use the slides to teach what a linear, recycling and circular economy are. Teach children about the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Slide 17-18: Examples of circular economies

Show children examples of a circular economy. Discuss how children can make everyday changes to reduce plastic waste.

Slide 19: Class pledge

As a class, discuss how each individual will reduce their plastic waste, both in school and outside of school.

Slide 20: Discussion Points

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

Slides 21-23: Optional Extension Activities

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