

Lesson Plan

What is the problem with food waste?

Year Group: 3-6

National Curriculum links: Geography - trade links and distribution of natural resources; Design technology - understand the origins of food and seasonality; Science - understand how the environment can change and the impacts it has.

Summary: In this lesson, students will learn about the environmental impact of food waste. They will consider how far food travels and the resources required to produce food. They will also begin to discuss why food waste happens.

Prior knowledge required:

Students need to have secure understanding of the continents and oceans. They also need to understand the different climates and the impact this may have on plant growth.

Lesson objective: To understand and explain how food waste impacts the environment

Success criteria:

- I can explain what food waste is.
- I can explain the impact food waste has on the environment.
- I can explain why food is often wasted.

Prepare before the lesson:

- Atlas or world maps (optional)
- Print food fact files (1 set per group of 4)
- Whiteboards or scrap paper

Lesson outline

Slide 3: Explain the key vocabulary with students to ensure understanding.

Slide 4: Either on whiteboards or as partner talk, ask students to consider how much food was thrown away in the UK in 2021.

Slide 5: Explain this is the same weight as more than 2 million elephants. Most of the food waste originates from homes.

Slide 6: Allow students time to discuss what the impact may be on the environment.

Slide 7-9: Explore the reasons on each slide. Note that food decomposing produces methane.

Slide 10: Introduce task. Students are to work in pairs using the food fact files to answer questions on their whiteboards or scrap paper. Allow 7 minutes and then feedback as a class.

Slide 11: As a class, ask which item of food would have travelled the furthest (banana). Discuss which item is the most wasted in the UK according to WRAP. Answers in order of most wasted: bread, milk, lettuce and banana. Around 1 million bananas, 2.7 million glasses of milk, 170,000 whole lettuces and 25 million slices of bread are wasted. Ask, why might people throw away lots of food?

Slide 12: Discuss reasons why on slide.

Slide 13: Summary slide - ask students to discuss which statement is incorrect (answer B).

Follow-up activities:

- Write a letter to the government to tell them why and how food waste can be reduced.
- Create a food storage experiment to test the best ways to store food.
- Compare food miles using the [BBC's climate change food calculator](#). (NLWA do not own the rights to this source and are not responsible for the content)