



# RECYCLING RELAY RACE

Grades K-4

## Utah Core Objectives

Grade 2 Obj 2 a-d Examine important aspects of community

Grade 3 Std 1 Obj 2 Identify personal responsibility

## Learning Objectives

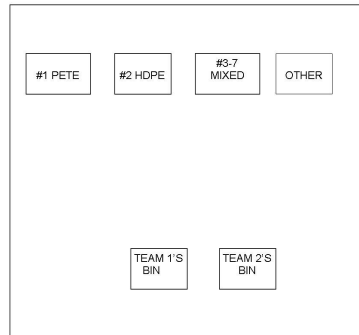
By the end of this activity students will be acquainted with:

- the importance of recycling
- plastics sorting categories
- how to identify different types of plastics

## Materials Needed

- 6 large bins (15" x 23" will work although any large boxes will do)
- In two of the bins, fill to the brim with recyclable plastics:
  - α. An assortment of #1 PETE items like water bottles, clear green soda bottles, and clear ketchup or syrup bottles. Some of these items should clearly show the #1 in the recycle triangle. Others should not. Make sure to include colored plastic items with #1 on them, so that the children learn to look for the number and not make assumption that #1 items must be clear.
  - β. An assortment of #2 HDPE plastic also called "foggy" including gallon milk bottles, 2-gallon water
  - γ. An assortment of #3-7 plastics, often called colored or opaque plastics
  - δ. A assortment of other things that should be recycled including CDs, CD cases, cell phones, and batteries.

## Preparation



1. Set out the bins as shown in the diagram. The team bins should be 8-15 feet away from the recycle bins, depending on the size and age of the children.
2. Make sure the team bins have a fairly even number of all four kinds of recyclables in them.

## Running the Race

1. Line up children into two teams behind their full, unsorted recycling bins.
2. Conduct a brief introduction to the topic of plastics recycling. Ask questions like: How many of you recycle at home? What do you recycle how? Do you sort plastics? Make these learning points:
3. This is not trash. Plastics are recyclable.
4. Plastics must be sorted before they can be turned into something useful.
5. Explain how to sort the plastics by holding up an example. Tell children how to identify #1 : "Usually clear plastic, clear green. Look for the #1 on the bottom, but be careful, it's not always there."
6. Select a volunteer from one team. This student will stand by the #1 bin. If the wrong plastic is dropped in that bin, that student is responsible to return it to the team's bin.
7. Continue to explain how to identify and sort each type of recyclable, and select a volunteer to monitor each bin.

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## RECYCLING RELAY RACE

- Continued -

8. Remind the students of relay race rules: The teams must stay behind their bins, and each runner must touch the next runner before that child can go.
9. Signal the race to begin.
10. During the race, stand by the “monitors” to help them identify the correct plastics. Things will get pretty hectic, but that’s part of the fun. It doesn’t matter if the monitor returns an item to the wrong team’s bin. The idea is to have the kids learn to look for the numbers on the bottom and not make assumptions.
11. The first team to empty their recycle bin correctly is the winner, but call time if it’s taking too long.
12. Debrief the activity by having the students cluster around each bin to view their successful sorting.

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