



PLAN A

WASTE FREE LUNCH

Grade level

1-6

Subjects

Health, social studies

Teaching Time

One hour

Skills

Critical thinking, analyzing, problem solving, presenting.

Materials

A “Plan Your Waste Free Lunch Menu” sheet (back side of page), and items from students’ lunches including: items packaged in durable storage containers and individually packaged snacks.

OBJECTIVES

Students will understand that they contribute to the solid waste problems and they can help solve them by changing their buying patterns and reducing waste. Students will observe the types of waste they produce in their lunch packaging. They will plan a lunch that yields less waste.

PROCEDURE

1. Place a small durable storage container with a snack item next to an individually packaged snack item. Discuss:
 - What is the difference between the two?
 - Which packaging/container will be used over and over and not thrown away?
 - Which adds to the garbage problem?
2. Have students save some food packages and containers from their lunch or the cafeteria. Discuss:
 - What happens to the package once the food is gone?
 - How does the packaging add to the waste problem?
3. List some reasons for packaging (i.e. convenience, sanitation, advertising, storage, transportation).
4. List some drawbacks of packaging (i.e. wrong sizes, creates waste, etc.).
Ask: Why do we have the packaging system we have today?
5. Based on this discussion, have the students plan a lunch or a picnic where there is no garbage. Have them fill out the “Plan Your Lunch” sheet. This activity can be done individually or in groups.
6. Share student plans with the class: discuss natural packaging, reusable containers, recyclable containers. Ask:
 - Do the same foods come in different types of packages?
 - Do some foods create less waste than others?
 - How can we get the general public to change?
 - What would it take to change your family’s lunch habits? Have them try their ideas out at home.
7. Have the class come up with a list of waste reducing lunch or picnic supplies and display their “Plan Your Lunch” sheets on a bulletin board.
8. Periodically, have class updates on any change or lack of change in the students’ lunch packaging habits.

PLAN YOUR WASTE FREE LUNCH MENU

| | LUNCH ITEM | RECYCLABLE? | REUSABLE? |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| <i>example:</i> | <i>apple juice</i> | <i>aluminum can</i> | <i>thermos</i> |
| drink | | | |
| main dish | | | |
| snack | | | |
| dessert | | | |
| container | | | |

Directions

Write down on the Menu what you like to eat for lunch. Then figure out how to have that lunch with the least amount of waste as possible. Write down the recyclable way to have your lunch and the reusable way to have your lunch. One example is provided for you!

Pre and Post Discussion Questions

- How can you pack the lunch you like that creates the least amount of waste?
- What non-recyclable items can you do without for lunch?
- Can you find the item you want in a different kind of package?
- Which products should you buy, and which products should you not buy to reduce the amount of waste you create?