

Finding Pollution Solutions!

Objective: Students should learn the impact of trash on the environment, and how long the trash takes to degrade. Students should come to understand that they can help prevent trash from entering the environment.

Materials: Poster board (1 for each group of students), Labeling markers, Crayons/markers for coloring, Kite string, Trash or debris (collected by students), Hole-punchers

Vocabulary: Litter, Pollution, Decomposition, Environment, Habitat, Recycle, Reusable.

Activity:

1. A week or a few days before this activity, students should be instructed to collect the trash that they make (wrappers, napkins, soda cans, etc.). They can also keep a list of the trash they have collected.
2. Ask students to bring in only CLEAN trash that they have collected on the day of the activity.
3. Divide students into groups (4-6) and give each group a poster board. Have the students color and decorate them like a habitat of their choice (mountains, bosque, desert, sub-tropical, gulf coast). These are their pollution boards.
4. Have the students tie their trash to the board (punch holes in the board with the hole-puncher and use the string to tie the trash through the holes).
5. Have the students label the amount of time it takes each piece of trash to decompose (use reference sheet on the back)
6. Discuss with students the long-term effects of litter and pollution on our environment and in animal habitats. Discuss decomposition rates, the trash could be there a lot longer than one might think! Have a brainstorm discussion about ways in which we can decrease our trash production (reusable items, recycling, etc -encourage creative solutions!)
7. Display boards in the classroom or around the school to help teach others about keeping the environment clean.

