



Litter Detectives

Objectives:

Students will develop a positive attitude against littering and develop solutions to help reduce littering.

Subjects:

Map reading, environmental education, social studies, science.

Materials:

- chalkboard
- a map of the school building and grounds
- litter collection bags, gloves

Procedure:

1. Ask the class what "littering" is. Ask the class whether any of the members have littered. What was littered? Why? Do the students know of any areas in or around the school where litter can be found?
2. Divide the class into small groups. Using student suggestions, select a destination for each group to search for litter. The locations can be indoors or outdoors and must be as specific as possible. Identify the locations on the map. The goal of the exercise is to collect and analyze all litter located within the selected area. Allow 15 - 30 minutes for the litter collection.
3. After the litter collection, have each group examine the collected materials. Each group should categorize the litter and determine the most frequent litter components. Record the data on the chalkboard. Have each group relate its experience to the class. Each group should identify its litter search area on the map.
4. After the group presentations, discuss:
 - Which locations yielded the most litter and why?
 - Can any of the littered items be recycled or used in some other way?
 - By examining the types of litter, can it be determined which age group may be most responsible for the problem?
 - Does the school or community have rules or laws against littering? If so, are the rules or laws enforced? What penalties are involved?
 - Does the school provide refuse containers near the litter locations?
 - How can the amount of littering be reduced?
5. Follow-up activity: Repeat the exercise after a week or month has passed and compare findings.

Adapted from: Pennsylvania State Department of Environmental Protection (lesson plans prepared Carl Hursh by the Bureau of Land Recycling and Waste Management):

http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/enved/Rec_lessons/litter.htm