



Plastic Scavenger Hunt

STUDENT ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

Materials Needed:

- Pencil or pen
- Paper, notebook, and/or note-taking device
- Internet capable device (laptop, computer, tablet)
- Objects made of plastic (further explained in instructions)
- Object from home or classroom made of #6 plastic (further explained in instructions)

Introduction (Read before doing the activity)

After watching the videos in the lesson, you likely now know that plastics and their production have been a problem for decades, and the more scientists learn about plastic pollution, the more serious the problems are shown to be for the environment and the health of all living things. In this activity you will take a plastic pollution quiz to find out where the gaps in your knowledge are and identify the different types of plastic around you and the average time it takes each to breakdown (if it does at all).

Activity Instructions:

1. Pre-Quiz! Go to this website (<https://www.earthday.org/plastic-pollution-quiz/>) to take a Plastic Pollution Quiz by earthday.org to find out where your gaps in knowledge are about plastic pollution.
 - a. Make a note of which questions you got wrong and anything you found surprising in your notes.
2. Scavenger Hunt! Find an object made of plastic from each of the following areas: kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, and your backpack.
3. Use this website to answer the questions below: <https://epe.global/2019/04/29/the-six-types-of-plastic-and-what-to-do-with-them/>
 - a. Identify the types of plastic each of your objects is made of.
 - b. Research the average time it takes for the type of plastic your object is made of to break down (if at all).
4. Find an object in your home or classroom that is made of the #6 plastic - Polystyrene. What alternative sustainable objects can replace this object? Answer in your notes.
5. What about the other objects you collected for the scavenger hunt - are there any alternatives for these items? Answer in your notes.

Conclusion

Today there are about 380 million tons of plastic produced each year, a similar weight to all the people on earth. At the same time, it is estimated that only 60% of that production gets landfilled, burned, or recycled. The rest of the plastic production ends up somewhere in the environment. This is a huge issue, and the blame does not fall on any single individual or company. To solve the plastic pollution crisis, it will require the cooperation of multiple entities to change how we produce, consume, and package products.

