



**Title:** Recognizing Litter

**Time** 30 Minutes

**Subjects:** Science, Health, Language Arts

### Objectives

- Describe litter, explain where it comes from, and identify what the most common types of litter are.
- Make observations and draw conclusions.

### Standards

Technology Standard 3: Understand the relationship among science, technology, society and the individual.

- Benchmark # 3: Know that man-made materials, products, and systems can affect the environment adversely, yet there are things that can be done to circumvent this process (e.g., disposing of waste properly, reusing old objects in new ways).

Science Standard 10: Understand force and motion.

- Benchmark # 3: Know that the position of an object can be described by locating it relative to another object or the background.
- Benchmark # 5: Know things move in many different ways (e.g., straight line, circular motion).

Science Standard 12: Understand the nature of scientific inquiry.

- Benchmark # 1: Know learning can come from careful observation and simple experiments.

Health Standard 2: Know environmental and external factors that affect individual and community health.

- Benchmark # 1: Know the sources and causes of pollution in the community.
- Language Arts Standard 6: Use reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary text.
- Benchmark # 1: Use reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of familiar literary passages and texts (e.g., picture books, predictable books,...).
  - Benchmark # 5: Relate stories to personal experiences.

### Materials

- Copy of "Lady Lulu Liked to Litter" by Nancy Loewen
- Copies of "Before It's Litter" page provided below
- Copies of "Now It's Litter" page provided below
- Crayons
- Pencils



- Art paper

### **Description**

Litter is an environmental issue than spans the globe. A significant number of human activities produce some type of waste, and many individuals feel no sense of ownership for the trash they generate, or the places in which they leave their trash behind, so the potential for littering is considerable. Regardless of where trash is left, when it is inappropriately disposed of it becomes litter. At that point nature's forces, wind and weather, move litter from place to place. It finds its way into highways and waterways, backyards and playgrounds, just about anywhere on Earth.

**Kid's Speak:** Litter is trash that has not been properly recycled or thrown away. People sometimes throw trash on the sidewalk, street or out a car window instead of putting it into a garbage can or litterbag. Sometimes it blows out of trucks or away from construction sites. Sometimes animals rip open trash bags left out for trash collectors. When people leave trash behind, not taking responsibility for it, it becomes litter and a problem for everyone.

Litter doesn't stay where it is dropped. Wind and water move it from place to place. It can be found on the ground, in bushes and trees, and in ponds, rivers, and streams. It can be found almost anywhere on Earth. It can pollute our drinking water, harm plants, animals and their habitats, cause accidents and cost a lot of money to clean up. If everyone reduced the amount of trash they made, reused the things they could use, recycled what they couldn't use and carefully threw away what was left, then litter would not be as much of a problem.

**Eco-Fact:** 10 percent of all litter comes for food wrappers.

### **Procedures:**

#### **Before Conducting the Lesson:**

- Read the tongue twister "Lady Lulu Liked to Litter" by Nancy Loewen.
- Explain to students about litter. Litter is any trash that has been improperly dumped or thrown away. When people leave their trash unattended and do not take responsibility for it, then it becomes litter. (See the Overview and Kid's Speak.)
- Explain to students that while any trash that is not properly disposed of is considered litter, there are types of waste that are more commonly found when picking up litter. The most common items include: cigarette butts, fast food waste, aluminum cans, glass and plastic bottles, and paper. Discuss with students the various ways these types of trash become litter.
- Explain to students that in this lesson they are going to learn how to recognize litter. Run off the Before It's Litter Page and on the reverse side of the paper copy the Now It's Litter Page.

#### **Conducting the Lesson:**

1. Distribute the Before It's Litter Page to students. Ask them to look carefully at the paper to see if they can spot potential litter problems and use a crayon to circle anything they feel could possibly become litter. Students may circle: The man who is smoking a cigarette, the woman holding the coffee cup, the water bottle in the backpack, the wrapper the burger came in and the fries container both sitting on top of



the trash can, the newspaper on the bench, and the soda can in the boy's hand and the balloon tied to the stroller.

2. Ask students which items they circled. Record their responses and have them explain their rationale. Identify any items students may have missed and how they could potentially become litter.

3. Ask students to turn the paper over to the Now It's Litter page and circle each example of litter they can find. Ask students to describe each example they found. Find the examples on the list made in Step 2 and check them off as students find them. Discuss with students if any items they thought may have been litter, did not become litter. (Students may notice the water bottle is still in the backpack where it belongs.) Ask students why that happened.

**After Conducting the Lesson:**

- Ask students to draw a picture of a potential litter situation that might happen in the schoolyard. After completing their pictures have students swap with a partner. Have students look at their partners picture for potential litter problems and circle any they see. Partners should do a quick share with each other about what they found in each other's pictures.

**Adaptations:**

- This lesson can be done as a whole group search, using enlarged picture pages, rather than individual pages.