

## There is an alternative

### Introduction

We are currently living in a consumer society, and the lives of most of us are affected by constant consumption. Under the influence of tempting ads, we buy many products, even if we don't need them. Disposable items have become a common part of our lives. Plastic cups, cutlery, plastic bags, pastry gloves, PET bottles and many other items are used only once and then thrown into the trash immediately. Waste accumulation is an increasing environmental problem for mankind, mostly because the amount of the waste and its dangerous characteristics and costly disposal methods. So, let's start with reasonable consumption as aware customers. Do you think that excessive waste production also applies to you or your class?

### Learn about the problem

Use the internet, (scientific / popular) literature, or in collaboration with experts to find available information about ZERO WASTE. Also focus on the following questions:

- What types of disposable products you use most often?
- What are they made of?
- What do you do with them if you no longer need them?
- What are the options for reducing waste production?
- What are the alternatives to disposable goods?

### Recommended resources

[Source 1:](#)  
Going ZeroWaste



[Source 2:](#)  
Waste



[Source 3:](#)  
Recycling of municipal waste



### Verify the occurrence of a problem in your area with your own research

#### Goal

Students can identify the disposable goods they use in school and are aware of the problem of excessive waste generation. Students know which types of disposable goods can be replaced with ecological alternatives to help reduce waste.

#### Tools & Materials

- recording cards
- a board / flipchart / tablet or similar
- camera / mobile to record activity

#### Implementation

At the beginning, choose the period during which you will record waste production (e.g. a week). Then agree on which categories of waste to monitor (e.g. PET bottles, paper napkins, plastic bags, plastic beverage cups, sweets packaging, etc.). You determine the number of categories yourself. The list of categories put on a prominent place in the class. The role of each of you will be to record the amount of waste you produce. When writing, be honest and write down the waste you throw away not only in the classroom, but also in other school premises (e.g. school yard, dining room).

## Measurement

Every day write down what you have thrown into the trash. At the end of the week, calculate how many pieces of waste you have produced within each category. Multiply this result by the number of weeks spent at school in the current school year. This will give you an approximate amount of waste generated during school time.

## Analysis of results and proposal of solution

How do you feel about the amount of waste you produce? Discuss how you could reduce this amount. Are there alternatives to commonly used packaging materials? If so, can you use them? Record your ideas on a board or flipchart. You can create a board with your ideas.

## Implementation of the solution and evaluation

Did you put into practise some solutions you have chosen? If so, what are your results? What amount (pieces, kilograms) of waste have you saved? How did your friends and family react to your efforts? Are there other solutions that you can implement? How would you inspire others to join your initiative? Expand this activity to school and record results.

### How would you evaluate your feelings after implementing the selected solution?

<b>Frustrated</b>	<b>Disappointed</b>	<b>Rather Negative</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Rather Positive</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Enthusiastic</b>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Publicity

Record and share photos on social networks with [#mybioprofile](#) during the activity. Help others to join us.

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### Example

Recording card		
<b>Name</b>	John Doe	
<b>Class</b>	9	
<b>School</b>	Elisabeth's Elementary school	
<b>City</b>	London	
Day and date	Categories of waste produced	Amount
1. 3. 5. 2019	Plastic bottle	1
1. 3. 5. 2019	Plastic cup	2
2. 4. 5. 2019	Plastic bottle	1
2. 4. 5. 2019	Plastic bags	2
2. 4. 5. 2019	Paper napkins	4
3. 5. 5. 2019	Plastic cutlery	1
4. 6. 5. 2019	Plastic plate	1
5. 7. 5. 2019	Plastic food container (polystyrene)	1
5. 7. 5. 2019	Plastic bottle	3

Categories of waste produced	Weekly summary	School year summary
Plastic bottle	5	175
Plastic straw	0	0
Plastic cup	2	70
Plastic cutlery	1	35
Plastic plate	1	35
Plastic bags	2	70
Paper napkins	4	140
Plastic food container (polystyrene)	1	35
<b>Total amount</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>560</b>

Recording card – There is an alternative

Recording card		
<b>name</b>		
<b>class</b>		
<b>school</b>		
<b>city</b>		
<b>Day and date</b>	<b>Categories of waste produced</b>	<b>Amount</b>

<b>Categories of waste produced</b>	<b>Weekly summary</b>	<b>School year summary</b>
<b>Total amount</b>		