



# What is plastic waste?

## Geography – Y6 – Lesson 1



### Geographical Knowledge and Concept

Human and Physical Geography  
Place, Interdependence, Physical and Human Processes, Environmental Impact and Sustainable Development

### Resources

- Activity worksheets
- Challenge worksheet
- PPT
- Stop and Jot 1 worksheets
- Pre-assessment mind map
- Whiteboard and pens

### Teaching Input

- **How can our school reduce its plastic waste?** – Go through the key questions and the geographical knowledge and concepts used to answer those questions.
- **Key vocabulary for this lesson** – Go through the key vocabulary and their definitions. Have any of the children heard these words before? Did they already know their meanings?
- **Pre-assessment mind map** – Children are to use the mind map on their pre-assessment worksheets to write down everything they already know about plastic waste and how it can be reduced. They can write keywords, facts or sentences or draw pictures and diagrams. Take feedback from the class and produce a class mind map with their ideas. Ask the children if they want to answer any questions about this topic. Get them to write these on their worksheets. You can revisit them at the end of the unit to ensure their questions have been answered.
- **What is plastic?** – Introduce Allisandra. Choose a child to be Allisandra and let them read what she says about plastic.
- **History of plastic** – Introduce Cian. Choose a child to be Cian and let them read what he says about the history of plastic.
- **The life cycle of a plastic bottle** – Watch the video of the life cycle of a plastic bottle. Clarify any misconceptions.
- **The production of plastic** – With a learning partner, children to discuss the question on the slide. Discuss Lula's answer on the following slide.
- **Stop and jot 1** – Children are to use their stop and jot 1 worksheet to write down as many uses as they can think of for plastic in their school, at home and any other places they can think of. Take feedback from the class before possible answers are revealed on the following slide. Did the children come up with any other examples?
- **Where does plastic waste come from?** – Explain to children that much plastic waste comes from land and ends up in the oceans. Share facts and figures on the slide.
- **Problems with plastic** – Explain to children the problem with single-use plastics.
- **How long does it take for single-use plastics to break down?** – Use the diagram to explain the problem with single-use plastics.
- **Problems with plastic in our oceans** – Introduce Florence. Choose a child to be Florence and let them read what she says about the problems with plastic in our oceans over the following three slides.
- **Plastic waste on a global scale** – Show the map and the countries that are the best and worst offenders for emitting plastic into the oceans. Children are to consider which countries emitted the least and the most and potential reasons for this with their learning partners, in groups or as a class. Take feedback from the class before the answers are revealed on the following two slides.
- **What is this graph showing?** – Children are to discuss with a learning partner what they think this graph indicates. They are to look at each axis and the type of graph before making their choice. Take feedback from the class before the answer is revealed on the following slide.
- **Global garbage patches** – Go through the information on the slide using the diagram to explain the main points.
- **True or false activity** – Children are to read the statements on the slide with their learning partners, in groups or as a class and decide whether they are true or false. Take feedback from the class before the answers are revealed on the following slide.
- **Activity 1** – Children are to complete the activity 1 worksheet by writing a letter to the council explaining that they should do more to clean up the beaches and provide better rubbish disposal and recycling services—three differentiated worksheets to select from.
- **Challenge** – Children are to use the knowledge they have gained to decide whether each statement is true or false on their challenge worksheets.

### LA

Begin to understand what plastic is and its history.  
Begin to understand the uses of plastic.  
Begin to understand the problems that plastic creates.

### MA

Be able to understand what plastic is and its history.  
Be able to understand the uses of plastic.  
Be able to understand the problems that plastic creates.

### HA

Be able to confidently understand what plastic is and its history.  
Be able to confidently understand the uses of plastic.  
Be able to confidently understand the problems that plastic creates.

### Challenge

Children are to use the knowledge they have gained to decide whether each statement is fact or fiction and explain their choice.

### Key Vocabulary

**synthetic** – products that are made from chemicals or artificial substances rather than from natural ones  
**raw materials** – materials that are in their natural state before they are processed or used in manufacturing  
**extracted** – removed or taken out by effort or force  
**refinery** – a production place that breaks down certain materials and makes raw materials into products of value

**durability** – a property of material meaning it can last a long time without being damaged  
**biodegradable** – something that can be decomposed by bacteria or other living things  
**microplastics** – tiny pieces of plastic that are less than 5 millimetres across

### Self-assessment

I can understand what plastic is and its history.  
I can understand the uses of plastic.  
I can understand the problems that plastic creates.

### Assessment Questions

What is plastic?  
What is the history of plastic?  
What uses does plastic have?  
What problems does plastic create?

