



# Recycling Matters

## Student Objective

I have a general understanding of why it's important to recycle and I know what can be recycled.

## Materials

- 1 One 5-pound bag of sugar or flour**
- 2 A couple of empty recyclables**  
(easier to carry if you place in a reusable or paper bag)
  - water bottle
  - milk jug
  - beverage/soup can
  - cardboard box
  - cereal box
- 3 A couple of items that aren't recyclable**
  - plastic fork
  - paper towel
  - toothpaste tube
  - tissues
  - frozen veggie bag or saran wrap
- 4 WiFi access to watch a video**

## Introduction: 5 lb bag

Bring in a bag of sugar or flour for students to pass around in order to wrap their minds around how much garbage the average person makes each day (4.4lbs according to EPA - so close to a 5lb bag).

**I'm passing around a 5lb bag of sugar. The average person makes about 4.4 lbs of garbage every day.**

Talk about how we can make that bag lighter by pulling out the things that are recyclable. And why that matters.

**If we wanted to create less garbage, we could pull out the recyclables.**

## Discussion: Everything we use is made from something in nature

Talk about how everything we use and make comes from something in nature. If we recycle then we get to use it again without digging more holes or cutting down trees (keeping concepts super simple).

Pass around some empty recyclables as well as some commonly mistaken non-recyclable items and talk about them.

**Can you recycle this can? (yes!)**  
**What about this plastic fork? (no!)**

Talk about one of the things that makes recycling so cool (big machines!) and why it matters that we recycle the right things (less in landfill and better for our future).

Show students a kid-friendly MRF tour video from YouTube, or the following video about aluminum cans.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BXHPNgww5Q8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FnKjVtqLueM>