

The aim of this activity is for each student to realize how much plastic waste he/she is producing (by writing it down), as well as to think of solutions to reduce the plastic waste in his/her daily routine.

Guidelines for teachers:



1

Distribute the following form to each student. It will be his/hers "diary" for a week!



2

Starting from the morning of the following day, and for a whole week, ask your students to write down each plastic item they intend to throw away in the bin or recycle bin.

3

As soon as the week is over, remind your students to calculate the weekly sum of each plastic item that they threw away (e.g. plastic straw: Monday-1, Tuesday-2, Saturday-4, weekly sum=7) and to bring their "diary" back to the classroom.

4



The day that the students return with their "diaries", ask each of your students to present his/hers results and then discuss them with all of them (e.g. What are the most common plastic items within the students' "diaries"? Were most of the plastic items common for all students? Was there a specific plastic item that appeared significantly more frequently within the "diaries" compared to other items?)



5

Write down in the classroom board or a big piece of cardboard- the sum of all the plastic items that the students recorded (e.g. 1. Plastic bottles: student1=10+student2=6+...=total number of students 160 plastic bottles/week, 2. Plastic straws: student1=5+student2=2+...=total number of students 90 plastic straws/weeks).

6

Discuss the final results with your students.

For the higher grades of the school, you could calculate plastic waste for larger groups/populations (e.g. plastic bottles, approximately thrown away by the sum of the school's classrooms during a week's period, according to the results of your own classroom)



7



After analyzing the final results with your students, discuss with them what possible solutions might exist for reducing their plastic waste.

Solutions can derive from asking questions: Is there a reusable item that you could use to replace it (e.g. use a reusable water bottle instead of a single-use plastic bottle)? How could you reuse it instead of throwing it away?

In cases where single-use plastic items cannot be replaced with reusable ones, examine if you really need to use them (e.g. could you ban the use of straw if you do not own a reusable one?)."



8

Give your students some time to write down to their "diary" the solutions they came up with for their individual daily life and also to calculate –using the corresponding column- the total sum if they actually follow the solutions that they proposed (e.g. how many plastic bottles would they have thrown away had they used a reusable water bottle instead?).

9

Finally, next to the classroom's final results you could write down the amount of plastic that will be thrown away if the students adopt the solutions that they suggested.

10



Use the results to inform your students on plastic pollution and present your research to the rest of your school's classrooms.

Finally, if it turns out that within the classroom's bin you discover a single use plastic that cannot be replaced by a reusable item, you could examine whether it can be recycled, or not.



In order to present to your students the consequences of plastic pollution you can visit iSea's webpage.

