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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND AWARENESS

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle: A Quick Review

If you have been in school for a few years, chances are you know your "R's": Reduce, Reuse and Recycle; but what about the terms waste reduction and source reduction? Although part of the 3 "R's", they are often left out of teaching. By learning more about your "R's", you can become a conscious consumer, someone who tries to make smart choices about the types of things you buy and use.

Waste and Source Reduction:

America is a large country with lots of people. If you've never thought about it, take a moment to think about how many things you throw into the garbage can during the day or over the course of a week. Now, imagine how much the rest of your family or the other students in your class throw away. When you start to add it

up, American's make a lot of trash! Since 1960, the amount of waste produced in America has tripled which means that for every piece of trash in 1962, there are now three. Landfills today are so full that some can even be seen from space!

Consumers (you) and manufacturers (the people making the things you buy) are increasingly working together to reduce the amount of "source materials" being used. Plastics have been made lighter and more products are being made from recycled goods; both of which contribute to the reduction of materials and new products needing to be made. As you demand more environmentally conscious products and packaging, the way things are made changes too.



Simple Ways to Reduce Waste and Reuse Products:

- Instead of bagging your grass after you mow, leave it on the lawn.
- Choose a cup or bottle that can be used over and over again.
- Buy in bulk! The more you get at once, the more wrapping materials you will save.
- Create your own soil by composting food scraps.
- Ask for paper bags at the grocery store instead of plastic; they can be reused and recycled.
- Use products made from recycled materials.
- When you buy something, choose the item with the smallest amount of packaging
- To find locations where you can drop off recyclables in your area, go to <http://www.KAB.org>.



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