

Promote the Waste Hierarchy



Introduction

In England, we produce far too much waste. The latest government figures show that we generate 162.8 million tonnes every year. If all this waste were loaded into trucks and parked bumper to bumper, they would circle the Earth several times! This is not sustainable. The best way to protect our environment is to prevent waste from being created in the first place. In this activity students will explore the 'Waste Hierarchy'. The Waste Hierarchy is a simple guide that places the best ways to reduce waste into a recommended order. This activity challenges students to create their own waste hierarchy display, relevant and engaging to their schoolmates. Once complete, it will inspire others to think differently about waste and take action to reduce it.

Eco-Topics



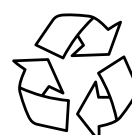
Global
Citizenship



Litter



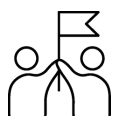
Marine



Waste

Green Skills and Learning

Young people will develop the following skills in a green context:



Collaboration



Communication
& Marketing



Creativity &
Innovation

Young people will develop their knowledge of:

- The Waste Hierarchy and how it helps prevent waste.
- The different types and sources of waste produced in their school and community.
- The importance of clear communication when inspiring others to make positive environmental changes.

Find out more

- [Keep Britain Tidy - Recycling](#)
- [BBC Bitesize - Waste and Waste Management](#)
- [BBC Bitesize - Managing Resources \(includes description of the waste hierarchy\)](#)

Follow These Steps

1. Research the Waste Hierarchy

Start by exploring the Waste Hierarchy and how it helps reduce waste. Look at different versions and ways it has been presented. A great place to begin is [Keep Britain Tidy's reimagined waste hierarchy infographic](#) (also included on page 5), which uses images and examples to show the best action to take for different items.

2. Think About Waste in Your School Community

Once you understand the Waste Hierarchy, consider the waste created by your school community.

- What waste is produced at school?
- What waste is produced at home?
- Which regularly purchased items are likely to become waste?

Make a list of these items and decide where each one fits on the Waste Hierarchy. For example, does a new school bag need to be bought every year, or could the old one be used for longer? Could revision guides be passed down instead of bought new?

3. Create Your Waste Hierarchy Display

Your aim is to design a clear, eye-catching display that explains the Waste Hierarchy, is bespoke and uses examples of waste produced by your school community (at home or at school), and helps prevent waste before it is created. Key things to consider:

What will your waste hierarchy look like? Will it follow the traditional pyramid shape, or will you create your own design? You might go for a flow chart, or colour-code the different stages - green for the most sustainable actions through to red for the least sustainable. Think about what will be most engaging and easiest to understand for other students.

Grab attention. Take inspiration from brands, campaigns, and art that appeals to young people. Think carefully about colours, images, and messaging to make your display memorable. For example, could you have a bold, central piece of text that makes people stop and think? This might be a fact, statement, or even a question that catches people off guard (i.e. 'Why are you a WASTER???') ...get creative!

Choose relatable examples. Select examples from your list that are relevant and relatable to schoolmates. Show where each item fits in the Waste Hierarchy and how this waste can be reduced. Be creative and make sure your design remains eye-catching and easy-to-understand.

Work as a team. Share tasks across the group, whether that's writing content, creating artwork, designing graphics, or building the display. Be prepared to adapt your ideas as your project develops.

Remember, the goal isn't just to create an attractive display. It's to encourage your school community to think and make smarter, more sustainable choices every day.

4. Launch

Your Waste Hierarchy is ready, now it's time to share it! Promote it across your school through assemblies, presentations, newsletters, social media, or the school website. Explain why reducing waste matters and how applying the Waste Hierarchy can help people make more eco-friendly choices.

5. Reflect

Gather feedback from pupils and staff. What stood out? Has it inspired anyone to reduce waste or rethink their habits? Use your findings to update your display and make it even more effective.

Green Career

Communications Officer

There are many communications roles within the environmental sector. These jobs involve raising awareness, engaging different audiences, and inspiring people to take positive action. For example, once Keep Britain Tidy's new Waste Hierarchy had been researched and developed, members of the organisation's communications team were responsible for launching, promoting, and sharing it to maximise its impact.



RECYCLING IS GOOD. BUT WE CAN DO BETTER...

