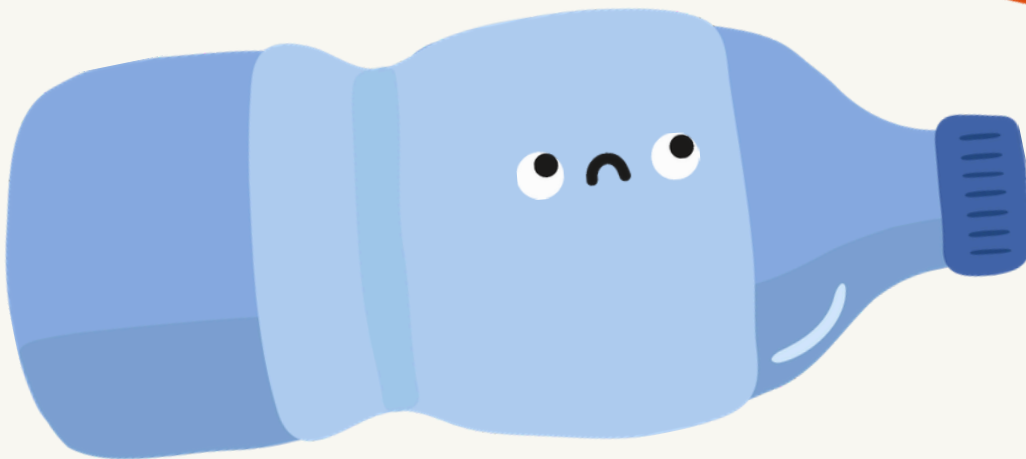




Litter

Introduction

In the UK over two million pieces of litter are dropped every day. It can have a devastating impact on communities, harming wildlife, causing pollution and costing councils large amounts to clean up. It's time to act!

This resource supports you to explore Litter with your children over 3 steps:

- **Talk** - Introduce and discuss the theme of Litter with stories or rhyme. This will help you to gauge your children's areas of interest.
- **Play** - Explore the theme through a small-world play activity.
- **Act!** - Deliver a hands-on litter-pick in your local area.

Eco-Topics:



Litter



Biodiversity



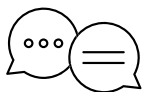
Global Citizenship



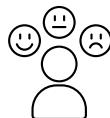
Waste

Learning and Development

Areas of Development:



Communication
and Language



Personal, Social and
Emotional Development



Understanding
the World



Physical
Development

Children will Understand:

- Litter is waste that is in the wrong place - waste belongs in a general bin or a recycling bin, not on the street.
- Items like plastic bottles or wrappers, left on the ground, are litter.
- Litter is bad because it can hurt animals, make places look messy, and other people have to clean it up, even though they didn't drop it.
- We can help look after our world by putting our waste in the correct bin.

Reading Suggestions



Stella and the Seagull
Georgina Stevens
& Izzy Burton



Clean Up!
Dapo Adeola &
Nathan Bryon



Somebody Swallowed Stanley
Sarah Roberts

Key Words

Aim to include the following words in your discussions with children, developing their vocabulary and understanding:

Litter Rubbish Re-use
Recycle Waste Litter-picker

Conversation Prompts

Use the following questions to inspire deeper conversation with children:

- What is litter?
- What should we do with rubbish, like an empty wrapper or a used tissue?
- Why do you think it is bad to drop litter?
- Who could be hurt by litter?
- How do you feel when you see litter on the ground?
- Can different types of litter go into different types of bins?



Small World Play: Helping Animals

The Activity

Prompt children to help animals in a 'small world' set-up by removing litter in this self-directed play activity. Once a litter item has been picked up, children decide where it belongs by sorting it into the correct bin for reuse or recycling. This activity explores what litter is, why it does not belong in nature, and how we can help care for our environment.

You Will Need:

- Toy Animals
- A small world tray (e.g. a grass mat, soil, sand, fabric, or water tray)
- Small, safe litter items (e.g. bottle tops, clean wrappers, used paper)
- Tweezers, scoops or child-safe tools to pick 'litter'
- Small containers or 'bins' for sorting

Set Up/Delivery

Create your Small World

Set up the tray to resemble a real-world scenario. Add appropriate wildlife toys and your small, safe litter items. For example, if using a water tray to simulate the ocean, add marine animals and waterproof pieces of safe litter such as bottle tops or clean wrappers.

Prepare Equipment

As this activity is a precursor to real litter-picking, model safe and hygienic behaviour by providing tools such as childfriendly tweezers or scoops for collecting the litter.

Organise Sorting Bins

Keep sorting simple and visual. For example, provide one container for bottle tops and another for wrappers so children can confidently sort items once they've been collected. Label sorting bins with imagery.

Complete a Litter-Pick

The Activity

Enable children to take part in a short, supervised litter-pick to clean up a real outdoor space. This builds on their small world play by helping them transfer what they have learned into the real world. Children will practice collecting litter safely, noticing where litter does not belong, and feeling proud about caring for their environment.

You Will Need:

- Child-friendly litter-pickers or PPE gloves
- Buckets or bags for collecting litter
- High-visibility vests (optional but recommended)
- A risk-assessed local space that has non-toxic litter (i.e. a park)
- Adult support (staff and/or family members)

Set Up/Delivery

Choose a safe location

Select a familiar area such as a local park, field, or nearby path. Risk-assess the area beforehand for safety.

Provide Safe Equipment

Provide children and adults with litter-pickers, gloves and a bucket or bag. Model how to use the equipment safely, carefully, and hygienically.

Prepare Adults and Children

Explain to all that only adults should handle unsafe items. Children should only pick up litter that an adult says is safe and always use their litter-pickers.

Invite Families (optional)

Families can support children, model positive behaviour, and help reinforce key messages about caring for the environment.

Introduce the Activity

Remind children of the small world animals and how they needed help to clear the litter, before explaining that now you're going to help their local wildlife by collecting litter in your chosen location.

During the Activity

Allow children to spot litter, pick it up safely, and put it into your bags or containers. Take photos to remember the activity and encourage discussion throughout!

