




# Let's Put an End to Litter

## Goals:

-  To define litter.
-  To make children aware of how litter looks and how it can harm wildlife.
-  To help children understand that they can have a positive influence on the environment by helping to reduce the amount of litter.



## Background:

Keeping our earth clean is the responsibility of every individual. Each of us must be aware of our own behavior and how it affects the environment. We also must develop a sense of caring and ownership for the world in which we live – its air, water, land and all its inhabitants. We need to teach this to our children, too. Even children, who often feel that what they do has little or no affect, can have a positive influence on the environment by helping to reduce the amount of litter and pollution. *Litter* is anything (wrappers, packaging, paper, bottles, cans, etc.) that is left on the ground or left where it does not belong. Litter does not look nice and it can harm plants and animals living in nature. (For more information about litter, see the Background section for “Dirty Ditches.”)

## Observe Litter

### Procedure:

1. Find an area in your neighborhood that is littered, or for learning purposes, you can temporarily place litter on the playground to show children what litter looks like.
2. Take the children outside and ask them to observe the area. Ask: What do you see? Do you see anything that does not belong here? How do you think litter looks? How does seeing litter make you feel?
3. This is an opportunity to talk about litter being not nice to look at, unsafe, unhealthy and dangerous for plants and animals.
4. Ask your children to help you pick up the litter and throw it away or recycle it.

## Trash Can Hunt

### Materials:

- Paper
- Black and blue crayons (one set for each group)

### Procedure:

1. Explain to your children that just like the special places where they keep their toys, gum and candy wrappers also have a special place. Ask: Do you know where we should put wrappers? When we are done with wrappers, they belong in a trash can. When wrappers and other garbage are thrown on the ground instead of being put in the trash can, they are called litter. When we throw things on the ground it is called littering. Trash that cannot be recycled or reused belongs in the trash can.
2. Plan a trash can hunt with your children. Divide them into small groups. In each group, designate one child as the recorder and give him or her a piece of paper and a black and a blue crayon. Explore your facility, playground and surrounding neighborhood. Search for trash cans. Each time the group finds a trash can, have the recorder make a black mark on the paper. If there is a recycling bin next to the trash can, have the recorder make a blue mark as well.
3. After the hunt, bring all the children back together and give each group a chance to report on how many trash cans they found. Ask: Where did you see the trash cans? What was in the trash cans? Did you see litter nearby? Did any of the trash cans have a recycling can next to them?
4. Now that children know where several trash cans are located, encourage them to throw their trash away in one of these cans.

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## Wee Hunt for Litter

### Materials:

Garbage bags  
Heavy gloves  
Newspapers

### Procedure:

1. Picking up litter can be a lot of fun. Make your litter hunt a big adventure. Outfit a small group of children with gloves and special litter-hunting hats. (Help the children make these hats from folded newspaper.) Create special litter bags from paper or plastic grocery bags to hold litter that they capture.
2. Get excited about hunting for and capturing litter. Ask your children where they think litter may be hiding. Take them outside to the playground (and surrounding neighborhood, if possible). Talk about good “hunting” techniques, like looking under, behind and around things.
3. Sneak up on the litter and capture it. Make sure that glass and metal are carefully handled with gloves. Put the captured litter in the litter bag and bring it back to your classroom.
4. Afterwards, empty the litter bags onto a newspaper covered floor to see what was collected. Talk about trash that was collected. What is it? What was it used for? Who may have used it? Why might someone have left it? Where should it have gone? Can it be recycled? Properly dispose of the trash.

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## Litter Collage

### Materials:

Litter collected from litter hunt  
Frozen pizza backing for each child  
Glue

### Procedure:

1. Supply the children with “safe” litter collected on the litter hunt, glue and cardboard backing from frozen pizza.
2. Let the children create a trash collage from the litter. Help them attach pieces of litter onto the frozen pizza backing.

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## Wee Recyclers Clean Up

### Materials:

Wee Recyclers Clean Up\*  
Crayons

\* Found in **Wee Recyclers Online Resources**,  
<http://dnr.wi.gov/eek/teacher/weerecyclers.htm>

### Procedure:

1. For each child, make a copy of the Wee Recyclers Clean Up page found in the **Wee Recyclers Online Resources**.
2. Tell your children to look at the first half of the picture. Ask: What do you see? How does seeing litter on the ground make you feel? Ask children to draw a face on “themselves” showing how the picture makes them feel. They can color themselves; add flowers, trees and more litter.
3. Now have your children look at the second half of the picture. Ask them how they would feel after cleaning up the litter. Ask the children to draw a face on themselves showing how they would feel after helping to clean up the litter. Finish coloring the picture.
4. Write the children’s names in the blank. Have them take turns telling a story about picking up and throwing away litter.



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# The Story of Litter Red Riding Hood

## Materials:

5 Litter Red Riding Hood story pages\*  
Litter Red Riding Hood sequencing (take-home)\*  
Garbage props: paper lunch bag containing a wrapped sandwich, orange peelings, small chip bag, paper napkin and soda can  
Clean contact paper (optional)

\* Found in **Wee Recyclers Online Resources**, <http://dnr.wi.gov/eek/teacher/weerecyclers.htm>

## Preparation:

-  Print the story pages from the **Wee Recyclers Online Resources**. Laminate the pages with clear contact paper if desired.
-  Assemble the garbage props in the reading area.

## Procedure:

1. Read the story of Litter Red Riding Hood to your children from the back of the picture story pages. Talk about the pictures and help your children identify plants and animals. Have them imitate sounds they may hear in the forest and have samples of flowers and pine needles or cones for them to smell.
2. You may want to act out the scene where Litter Red Riding Hood eats her lunch to demonstrate how she litters.
3. After reading the story, talk to your children about what it means to litter. Use “Let’s Talk About It” for discussion.

## Let’s Talk About It:

1. What did Litter Red Riding Hood throw on the ground?
2. How do you think the animals felt when Litter Red Riding Hood threw things on the ground? Why?
3. Why do you think the little girl’s name was “Litter Red Riding Hood?”
4. After Litter Red Riding Hood learned that it is not right to litter, her name changed. Do you remember what her new name is?
5. Where did she and the wolf put the litter?
6. In the end, why were the animals happy?

## Going Beyond:

-  Practice sequencing and retelling the story of Litter Red Riding Hood. In the **Wee Recyclers Online Resources** find and duplicate the Litter Red Riding Hood sequencing page. Cut apart the pictures and then glue them to heavier paper or laminate them, if desired. Mix the cards up. Have the children practice retelling the story and putting the pictures in the correct sequence.
-  Reproduce a copy of the Litter Red Riding Hood sequencing page for each child to take home and practice retelling the story to a family member.
-  Ask your children for ideas about how a Wee Recycler might pack a picnic lunch. Think about packing in reusable containers instead of disposable containers. For example, use a lunch box or picnic basket instead of a paper bag; use a thermos or reusable bottle for beverages instead of a can or plastic container; use small reusable containers for food instead of plastic bags; prepare only as much food as you can eat so that none is wasted.

