

Years 1 to 7

To flush or not to flush relay

Australian Curriculum link:

Sustainability cross-curriculum priority

In this game, students work in teams to decide the correct place (rubbish bin, recycling or toilet) to put various items. It is a great way to reinforce how to correctly dispose of waste material, particularly focusing on what materials can be flushed down the toilet.

This game has been adapted from a version used by City of Gold Coast. The original game was devised by Melbourne Water as 'What goes there'.

Equipment

Eight buckets comprising:

- two buckets with a 'rubbish bin' picture on them
- two buckets with a 'recycling' picture on them
- two buckets with the 'toilet seat' lid (can be done with a real toilet seat which is actually cooler or a cardboard cut-out)
- two buckets to hold the items or cards with pictures of the items at the start of the game. Each bucket contains the same collection of items. Suggested items include food scraps, toilet paper, wee, poo, toy car, undies, popper juice box, baby wipe, paper, cotton bud, small ball, chip packet, band aid, rag or clothing, apple. If you use the actual item, instead of wee, water could be coloured with yellow food dye and put in a plastic container. Instead of poo, you could use a plastic poo. Food scraps could also be put in a plastic container.
- Optional: you could include a 'reuse' bucket and a 'composting' bucket.

Preparation

The students will form two lines. For each line of students, place a bucket of the cards or items at the front of the line. At the end of each line, place a 'rubbish bin' bucket, a 'recycling bin' bucket and a 'toilet' bucket.

Activity steps

1. Divide the students into two teams and ask each team to line up in front of one of the buckets containing the cards or items. Explain that the aim of the game is to place all of the items or cards from the team bucket in the correct labelled bucket (rubbish, recycling or toilet) at the end of the line.
2. To play, the first child takes a card or item out of the bucket and decides if it should go into the labelled rubbish bin, toilet or recycle bin. They run down the line and put the item in the bin they think is correct. They return and tag the next person in line and go to the end of the line. The tagged student takes a card or item from the bucket and does the same thing. The game ends when all of the cards or items have been put in the buckets at the other end of the line.
3. Sit the students down and discuss where each card or item should go. It provides an opportunity to discuss why you can't put certain things down the toilet. Discuss consequences of putting the wrong thing down the toilet e.g. 'it clogs up the pipes and machinery' or 'it harms the bugs that break down the poo and wee'. As you discuss each card or item, designate one child from each team to check the labelled buckets to see where their team placed that item. Remind students that only wee, poo and toilet paper should be flushed down the toilet.

