



**The Golden Rule
of Sustainability**

Healthy Environment = Healthy You!

Happy Environment = Happy You!

Preparing *young people*
for a future of circularity

Preparing *young people* for a future of circularity

One way to reduce our plastic consumption and build circular economy in the future is to make today's children aware of the amount of plastic we use and throw away. Most people have little idea about the amount of plastic waste generated, let alone the scale of plastic that ends up in landfills or the environment across the world. True sustainability goes beyond recycling, renewable energy, and conservation. It means creating longevity, equity, and harmony for both people and the planet.

Against this background, the **Love Peace Harmony Foundation** and **Safe Living** are collaborating to introduce a curriculum focused on **sustainability literacy**. This program equips students with the awareness needed to build a circular economy while bringing wellness to their communities. Through our environmental initiatives, we have designed a set of lesson plans that teach children about the dual nature of plastic: its benefits and its negative impacts. Students will learn how to reduce their personal plastic consumption and identify which materials can be recycled.

By integrating practices of inner wellness, love, and unity, we aim to inspire individuals not only to care for the Earth but to cultivate compassion, peace, and harmony in their daily lives. Today's children are the future leaders and generations who will champion the concepts of recycling and circularity, carrying these vital movements forward to ensure a safe planet.

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Introduction

It is almost inconceivable that until the middle of the twentieth century, our parents and grandparents lived in a world without plastic. Barely three generations after the new 'miracle product' was introduced to the market, our earth is being flooded by a stream of plastic waste that is getting bigger every year.

Our Shared Legacy

What legacy will we leave for the next generation? How will our children remember our actions? It is time for us to unite—across all generations—to turn the tide of plastic pollution once and for all. While plastic is convenient, it frequently becomes waste that ends up in our landfills and oceans. We must learn to use this raw material more wisely.

From Waste to Resource

Fortunately, we are working hard to change our habits. We must move away from the old model of "Take-Make-Use-Discard." Instead, by using innovative recycling techniques, we can ensure that used plastics are transformed into new products. This shift to a circular economy is essential to creating a happier, healthier world for everyone.

Overview primary education

Periode:	Q1 or Q2 2026
3 schools each:	1 lesson and one workshop and one excursion.
Time:	90 - 120 minutes lesson/workshop.
Age:	Pupils from 10–12 years old.

Needed:

- The PowerPoint. This helps to carry out the educational activities with the students. View the PowerPoint beforehand to make it easier to teach.
- A "Plastic hunt" checklist for each student.
- Mindmap about happiness paper printed.

Empowering global change-makers

This teacher's manual provides a comprehensive guide to delivering a dynamic and impactful experience. Through a blend of playful teaching materials and hands-on learning, students explore the vital themes of recycling and the circular economy. Designed specifically for primary school students (ages 10–12), this curriculum is built to be integrated into educational programs worldwide. Our goal is to empower the next generation with the tools to foster environmental sustainability while cultivating inner peace.

Activities & learning materials

- The Disappearing Ink Adventure * Materials: Love Peace Harmony water mats, "magic" brushes, and water.
- Learning: Learning to let go of worries. As the water evaporates, students watch their "mental loads" vanish, leaving a clear and happy mind.

The Plastic Transformer Lab

- Materials: Mini-extruder, "Smiley" molds, plastic sprinkles (granulate), and "Trash Sticks."
- Learning: Becoming a "Circular Hero." Students see exactly how old plastic is melted and reborn into a brand-new Smiley treasure.

The Great Plastic Float-or-Sink Test (Optional)

- Materials: Water tanks, salt, plastic bags, foil, and Lego pieces.
- Learning: Ocean Detectives. Testing which plastics hide at the bottom of the sea and which float on top, discovering why "throwing things away" is never the end of the story.

Goal of the lessons

These lessons contribute to a better knowledge of the circular economy, with a focus on recycling.

To determine the effectiveness there are several tools:

- The participation of the children in the classes and cleaning the environment.
- The participation in gathering the plastic in kg.
- The participation, quality and the conclusions for discussions.

Students:

- Know that plastic is a valuable material and can name pros and cons of plastic.
- Can describe the process of recycling waste plastic.
- Know that they can contribute to reducing plastic use and how to do so.
- Are aware that the Green Plastic Factory creates solutions for our household waste plastic and knowhow they can support in this process.
- Have formed an opinion about the use of plastic and its recycling.

Concepts, that are used and/or taught about Plastic:

- What is plastic?
- What is plastic waste and plastic pollution?
- The negative side effects of plastic in the environment in general.
- The negative side effects in your environment.
- Where does the plastic often ends up?
- What already happening in Duhok and what is missing.
- Different types of plastic.
- The Green Plastic Factory & the recycle process.
- How can YOU help?

Activity	Description	Estimated time	Slide PowerPoint
Introduction			1&2
1.What is Plastic?	Explanation of plastics creation the and the use of plastic.		3
2. Mind map	Write down all your associations with happiness.	10	4
3.What is plastic waste?	What disposable plastic is. What is plastic household waste.	10	5,6,7,8 & 9
4.The negative side effects of plastic waste	Explain what the negative side effects of plastic in nature are.	5	10
Central part			
5.Were does plastic often ends up?	Ask the children if they know what happens to plastic waste.	5	11 & 12
6. Four types of plastic	Checklist & experiment.	10	13,14 & 15
7. Green Plastic Factory	Theory about the two recycle methods: IEM & AM.	5	16
8. What can you do to support?	Discuss what will help to solve this problem and cultivate more compassion, happiness and good health in your environment.	5	17
9. Workshops Make your environment clean become happy & healthy	1. Create a smiley from waste plastic 2. Disappearing Ink Adventure on water mat. 3. Plastic hunt & learn the LPH song.	45	18
10.Evaluation	1. What were the highlights of this lesson? 2. Did you learn anything in this lesson that you did not already know? 3. Name three words that you remember from this lesson. 4. What are you going to do to make a change?	10	19
Wrap-up			
Optional	Recycle Videos: Visual guides showing the step-by-step journey of recycled materials.		



Welcome! (slide 1&2)

Introduction

Who knows what plastic waste is?

Give a few children a turn and summarize what has been said.

Class Discussion:

- Tell them that this lesson will be about plastic waste and the solutions we have for plastic household waste.
- We will also look at our own plastic use and think about what we can do to tackle the plastic waste problem.

But first, let's talk about plastic

What is plastic? (slide 3)

Let's talk about plastic:

Plastic was a remarkable invention. For a long time, there had been a need for inexpensive, high-quality material that could be produced quickly. With the invention of plastic, that dream came true.

Did You Know? *In the mid-1800s, billiard balls were made from ivory, which required the hunting of thousands of elephants. In 1869, the invention of celluloid (the first plastic) offered a replacement material. Thus, the advent of plastic originally helped protect elephants. Today, our challenge is to find new materials that protect both the animals and the oceans.*

Explain the advantages and disadvantages of plastic (see the Power Point)





Let's create possibilities together



Personal Happiness:
What is your definition of a "good life"?

Nature & Wellbeing:
How much does a healthy planet contribute to your peace of mind?

Mind map happiness (slide 4)

Goal: Activating Awareness

Objective: To spark an awareness of how a healthy, plastic-free planet nurtures inner peace and our physical well-being.

Whole Class Activity: Distribute the "Happiness" handout.

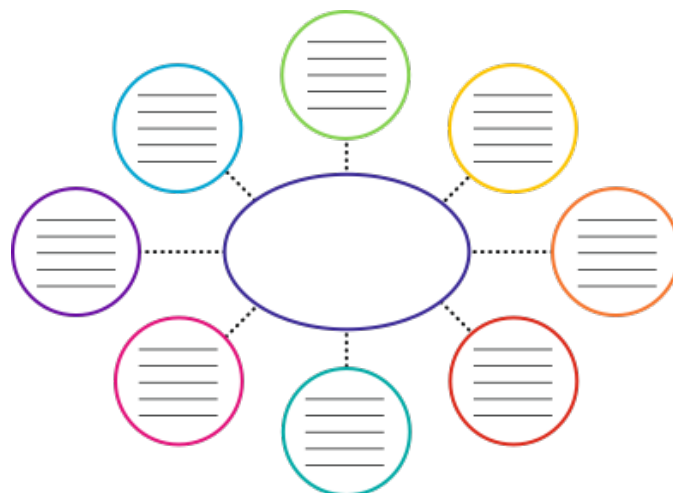
Central Idea: Write the word "Happiness" in the center of the page.

Mind Map: Surround it with everything you associate with happiness. Consider:

- What are your positive associations?
- What does happiness mean to you personally?
- When have you recently experienced a moment of true happiness?

Collect the mind map so that you can review it with the students at the end of the lesson.

Conclusion: Student discussion and reflection.



2. What is plastic waste?

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The average person throws 22 kilos of plastic packaging away every year



Did you know that ...

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Education

The USA Plastic Footprint

40 Million Tonnes of plastic are discarded every year.
That is 40,000,000,000 kg

The Recycling Reality: Only 9% is collected and recycled.

The Rest: Over 90% is sent to landfill, incinerated, or becomes environmental litter.

Individual Impact: The average American uses roughly 150 kilos of plastic per year.
That is nearly 2x the global average.

Reflection: How much plastic do you think you use in a single day?



What is plastic waste pollution?

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Education

There may be more plastic than fish in the sea by 2050



What is plastic waste (slide 5,6 & 7)

Teacher talking points:

From the 1950s onwards (when your grandparents were young}, plastic became easy and cheap to manufacture and became extremely popular. From then on, it was made from petroleum in very large quantities.

Plastic was then used more and more. Advertisements about plastic emphasized its convenience. Housewives could buy plastic tableware and throw it away after dinner without washing it. This gave everyone more time for fun things. People called this 'Throwaway Living'. This means: Buying plastic items and throwing them away after use.

We still have that habit today.

About 40% of all plastic products are thrown away within a month.

Plastic packaging that is thrown away after a single use is called disposable plastic.

Since July 2021, there has been a ban on certain disposable plastic products such as plastic plates, cutlery, straws, stirrers, and cotton buds.

Ask the class to give examples of disposable plastic. (Think of French fry containers, food packaging, snacks, candy, drink cartons/cans (contains a plastic layer), plastic bottles, balloons, ice cream or milkshake cups, etc.).

Fun Fact: *plastic has become so indispensable to modern life that the world now produces approximately 808,000 kg of it every minute. This is equivalent to the weight of **161 elephants** being manufactured in plastics every 60 seconds.*

What is plastic waste pollution? (slide 8)

Thinking and talking

What kind of litter do children see in their own environment?

Try to think together about why something is lying around, how it is possible that this is lying around (carelessly discarded, blown away, etc.).

All litter can become part of plastic waste pollution.

Plastic waste pollution exists in the oceans, but it also occurs in our own environment. And what we drop here causes toxic soil.



Topic: The negative side effects of plastic (slide 9)

The Problem: Plastic Never Disappears

(Discussion Point)

Unlike paper or food, nature cannot break down plastic. It never truly disappears; instead, the sun and waves weather the plastic, breaking it into smaller and smaller pieces. Once it reaches this stage, it is impossible to clean up.

The Invisible Threat: Microplastics

Eventually, these pieces become so tiny they are invisible to the naked eye. This is called microplastic.



3. The negative side effects of plastics ...

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Your Space, Your Health
Pollution Hazards: Trash and waste attract disease vectors (rats/insects).
Physical Health: Polluted settings drive higher rates of sickness.
Mental Happiness: A cleaner environment promotes a more positive mindset.
The Result:
Healthy Space = Healthy You.



What are the consequences of plastic waste pollution? (slide 10)

Pause For Reflection

Optional: first let the children think for themselves and name possible consequences from plastic waste pollution.

Question for the classroom:

Does the plastic also end up in human beings?

Answer: Yes, human beings can also ingest plastic unknowingly by eating fish or chicken who has eaten plastics from the environment themselves. The long-term consequences of this is not yet known but we do know that it will not be good for your health.

Another problem is that microplastics come into the soil. We let vegetables grow on this ground and the microplastics come via the soil in the vegetables. We eat the vegetables and get these plastics inside us and could get sick. Or be breath in the small pieces of plastic that are in the air. Animals could get sick too. We eat the animals like chicken and the plastics come into our body.

Did you know that?

The Connection: Environment and Well-being

- **Environmental Impact:** Living in a polluted environment directly affects our quality of life.
- **Health Hazards:** Mismanaged waste attracts pests and spreads diseases among animals and humans.
- **The Health Link:** A degraded environment leads to poor physical health, which in turn diminishes our inner happiness.

The Golden Rule of Sustainability:

Healthy Environment = Healthy You! Happy Environment = Happy You!

4. The final destination where our plastic lands

This slide features three small images on the left: a landfill, a street with a fire, and a sea turtle. The text on the right explains the three main destinations for plastic waste: landfill, incineration, and the ocean. Each destination is accompanied by a specific problem related to plastic's persistence and environmental impact.

Where Does Our Plastic Go?

When we throw plastic away, it doesn't just "disappear." It ends up in one of three places:

- The Giant Hole (Landfill):** * Plastic is buried in the ground.
The Problem: It stays there for 450+ years. It's like a "time bomb" that never goes away!
- The Giant Oven (Incineration):** * Plastic is burned to make energy.
The Problem: It gets rid of the trash, but it can create pollution that's hard to keep out of our air and we breathe it in.
- The Big Blue (Oceans):** * Plastic travels through drains and the sea.
The Problem: Fish and turtles think it's food, which makes them very sick.

4. Uncovering the afterlife of plastic

This slide features a sea turtle image on the right and a flowchart at the bottom. The flowchart shows the path of plastic from a recycling bin to a recycling plant, then to a new product, and finally back to a recycling bin. The text on the left explains the challenge of finding the "Great Loop" through recycling and provides a hero tip about the impact of recycling on sea turtles.

The Planet Hero Challenge

Instead of letting plastic take a "450-Year Nap" in a landfill, can you help it find the "Great Loop" through recycling?

Hero Tip: Every time you recycle, you are helping our hero save a sea turtle from microplastics!

Where does plastic often end up (slide 11 & 12)

Show the slides and ask the students what they see?

1. Landfill
2. Dumpsite
3. Ocean
4. Burned in the street
5. Waste companies burn them in their incineration

Why is this a problem?

Hero Tip: Every time you recycle, you are helping our hero save a sea turtle from microplastics! How can you do your part?

5. Classifying the Waste
4 key plastic types

Plastic Diversity:
How many different types did you track?

The "Top Offender": Which plastic type was used most often?



Sort	Type	Examples	Pictures	Tally list
PET		Thin, clear plastic used to make water and soft drinks.		
HDPE		Thicker, harder, opaque plastic, e.g. plastic milk cartons, juice bottles, bags, buckets, shampoo bottles, detergents and toys.		
LDPE		Used for soft products such as plastic shopping bags, plastic sleeves and squeeze bottles. Feels over meat trays in the supermarket.		
PP		Harder and flexible plastic, including butter tubs, straws, ice trays, storage trays.		
Other plastics		Like Styrofoam. That is not recyclable.		

Four types of plastic (slide 13)

Teacher Activity:

Identifying Plastic Types

Classroom Instruction:

Distribute the "Different Kinds of Plastics" list (Fig. 1) to each student. Using the Education Kit, show the students physical samples of various plastics. Explain that not all plastic is the same; each type has a unique chemical makeup and a specific melting temperature.

Key Concepts to Explain:

1. Recycling at the Green Plastic Factory: We primarily focus on plastics with a melting point of 200°C, which are ideal for our mini-extruder.
2. PET Bottles and Other Plastics: Explain that items like water bottles (PET) require different processing temperatures and techniques compared to other household plastics.

Sort of plastic	Type	Examples	Pictures	Tally list
PET		Thin, clear plastic used to make water and soft drinks.		
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Other plastics		Like Styrofoam. That is not recyclable.		

What special thing made of plastic has been thrown away?

Fig. 1 different kinds of plastics

Discussion Points:

How many different types of plastic did you throw away last week?

Which type of plastic did you use the most?

5. Practice types of plastics

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The 7-Day Plastic Challenge:

- **Post the Guide:** Hang the Checklist above the recycling bins.
- **Track & Sort:** Mark the plastic type on the chart before disposing of it.
- **Tally the Total:** Aggregate the data at the end of the week.
- **Analyze:** Discuss our collective results in the next lesson.

Four types of plastic (slide 14)

Explain about the Green Plastic Factory initiative.

Explain What plastic we are going to collect at school for the Green Plastic factory.

What are we going to do?

1. Hang the checklist above the rubbish bins at school.
2. Every time you throw something made of plastic away, mark the type of plastic. Bring it to school and put it in the right bin at school.
3. At the end of the week add up the week's numbers.
4. During the lessons the teacher discusses what the results are.

Experiment (slide 15)



Activity:

The Sink or Float Challenge

Objective: To demonstrate how density is used to sort plastic waste for recycling.

Teacher Instructions:

1. **The Inquiry:** Explain: *"We are going to experiment to see which plastics float and which sink."*
2. **Prediction:** Ask the class: *"Which plastic types do you think will stay on the surface?"*
3. **Participation:** Invite two students to help manage the water container and samples.

Materials Needed:

- Container of water.
- Samples: Pen, plastic bag, sandwich bag, Lego piece, and plastic foil.
- A PET bottle and its cap (cut into small pieces).

The Experiment:

- The PET Test: Drop PET bottle pieces into the water. (Note: Cutting them prevents them from floating like a boat). Result: They sink.
- The Cap Test: Have students feel the texture of the bottle cap, then drop pieces in. Result: They float.
- Discovery: Challenge students to think of other separation methods, such as using air (blowing) to move lighter foils.

Learning Outcome:

Plastics must be separated from each other because high-quality (PET) and low-quality (films) plastics require different recycling processes.

- The Floaters: Usually Number 2 (HDPE), 4 (LDPE), and 5 (PP).
- The Sinkers: Usually Number 1 (PET).



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WOy8lq7HR5o>



Green Plastic Factory (slide 16)

Activity: Video Reflection & Discussion

Instructions: Show the short YouTube film. Afterward, lead a discussion explaining the video's key message and the benefits of a circular economy:

- **For the Environment:** Reducing waste and preventing pollution in our oceans and forests.
- **For the People:** Creating a cleaner world makes us healthier and happier.
- **For the Community:** Showing how "waste" is transformed into useful items like benches, planters, and even houses.
- **Student Feedback:** Open the floor for students to share their thoughts and ideas.

What can you do to support? (slide 17)



Explain and ask questions to create awareness and joint actions:

Collecting plastic

- How is the rubbish in your house collected?
- Do we collect plastic at school?
- What can you do to support? Collect your household waste and bring it to school!
- Make a plan for the future!

From today we are going to collect the plastic foils/ nylons (LDPE number 4) and Shampoo bottles (HDPE and PP number 2&5) and bring them to school.

Sort it and throw it in the appropriate waste bins.

The waste collector comes to pick it up and bring it to the Green Plastic Factory where they make new products out of it.

Make your environment clean, become happy & healthy (slide 18)

Activity Stations: Learning by Doing

Divide the class into three groups to rotate through the following stations:

Station 1: The Plastic Transformer Lab

- **Activity:** Create a “Smiley” from recycled waste.
- **Process:** Use the mini-extruder and Smiley mold to transform household plastic waste into a brand-new token.

Goal: To see firsthand how a circular economy turns “trash” into treasure.

Station 2: The Art of Peace

- **Activity:** Water Calligraphy & Meditation.
- **Process:** Use the brushes and water-writing mats to trace the Love Peace Harmony characters.
- **Reflection:** Sing the LPH song together while focusing on the disappearing ink to practice letting go of stress.

Station 3: Plastic Hunt & Song

- **Activity:** Environmental Cleanup.
- **Process:** Use pickup sticks, gloves, and bags to collect plastic litter outside (collect plastic only).
- **Learning:** While cleaning, the supervisor will teach the Love Peace Harmony song.
- **Reference:** See the attached “Plastic Hunt” guide for safety and sorting rules.

8. A Greener World for a healthier you.

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From Waste to Wellness: Our Interactive Workshops.

Upcycled Art: Transform plastic waste into custom keychains—turning “trash” into treasure.

Mindful Calligraphy: Just as the ink washes from the water, paper, we envision our waste—and our worries—disappearing from the world.

The Plastic Hunt: A hands-on cleanup challenge followed by the collective LPH Song.



Evaluation! (slide 19)

Questions & answers

1. What were the highlights of this lesson?
2. Did you learn anything in this lesson that you did not already know?
3. Name three words that you remember from this lesson.
4. What are you going to do to make a change?

9. Reflection

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Key Takeaways & Reflection

- **Highlights:** What were the most impactful moments of today's session?
- **New Insights:** What is one thing you learned today that surprised you?
- **Core Vocabulary:** Which three terms or concepts stand out most?
- **Commitment to Change:** What is one practical step you will take today?



Plastic Hunt

Goal: the students become aware of disposable plastic in their own lives & their environment.



For this workshop select the children who are genuinely interested in this topic as they will be the plastic managers of the class. In collaboration with the teacher, they will be responsible for ensuring that plastic is collected from households and brought to school.

Give the students you selected the tally list of plastic types, which are often thrown away. (See attachment 2: the checklist). Give the students empty bags to collect the plastics in. Explain ONLY collect the plastics from the list number 2,4 & 5.

Invite the students to bring back all the collected plastics to the school and store the plastics into the right waste bins.

The Plastic Hunt: Discovery Tally



Not all plastics are made the same. They have different properties, so they are more useful for different applications (see Figure 2). They also have different melting temperatures, which is why it is important to separate by material type when recycling.

Hang the plastic Tally list in your house above the bin. This does not need to be perfect, hang a paper on the wall and a pen on a piece of rope.

Discuss with the students the plastic packaging they scored. Which packaging did the students throw away the most at home? Let the pupils indicate which sort of plastic is the most common at their home and make an overview on the board. What do the students think of this number? What are the advantages and disadvantages of so many types of plastic?

The Plastic Puzzle: Q&A

Q: What is the advantage of having many plastic types?










A: It allows for versatility. We can create distinct products for every need, from flexible shampoo bottles to rigid water containers.

Q: What is the disadvantage for recycling?

A: Complexity. Having too many varieties makes sorting difficult. The fewer types of plastic we use, the easier and more efficient recycling becomes.










Q: How do recycling plants handle so many types?

A: Every type must be strictly separated. Because different plastics have different melting points and chemical properties, they cannot be mixed. This process requires significant time, labor, and technology.

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PP	 PP	Harder and flexible plastic, including butter tubs, straws, ice trays, storage trays.		
Other plastics		Like Styrofoam. That is not recyclable.		
What special thing made of plastic has been thrown away?				

- Hang the tally list above the recycle bin.
- Count the number of pieces of plastic that you throw away for 1 week.
- Every time you throw away something made of plastic, put a vertical line next to the type of plastic.
- Add up the number of pieces of plastic waste you have thrown away each day.
- At the end of the week, you add up all the bars of the week.
- Take the completed poster and the waste to school and then sort the bin.

Tally list Plastic Hunt

Sort of plastic	Type	Examples	Pictures	Tally list
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