



The Secret Life of Our Stuff - Online

6th-12th Grade

View at <https://www.youtube.com/user/OregonMetroGov/playlists> under “Secret life of our stuff”

Get a worksheet with questions and detailed post-activities at <https://www.oregonmetro.gov/tools-partners/education-resources/resource-conservation-and-recycling-education/distance-learning> under “Middle and High School.” *Tier 1 is a standard level worksheet and Tier 2 is more advanced.*

After watching these three videos, students will be able to:

- Follow the journey of trash from home to landfill and identify ways to make less trash.
- Understand how the production, use, and disposal of stuff impacts people and the environment, and analyze the benefits of practices such as recycling, reuse, and repair.
- Identify which common items can go into household recycling in the Greater Portland region.

Secret Life of Our Stuff Part 1: Welcome to trash! (5:07 minutes)

Join Lake from Metro’s outreach team to explore how much trash is generated in the Greater Portland region each day and learn where it goes when it leaves the city.

Secret Life of Our Stuff Part 2: The secret revealed (12:20 minutes)

Join Ken from Metro’s outreach team to explore the lifecycle of our stuff from production to disposal, learn where the most environmental damage takes place, and understand how recycling and reuse matter.

Secret Life of Our Stuff Part 3: What CAN go in the recycling? (13:24 minutes)

Lake will present you with 36 common household items like shampoo bottles, paper drink cups, and snack wrappers and your job is to decide which items CAN go in home recycling.

Next Generation Science Standards

- MS-PS1-3. Gather and make sense of information to describe that synthetic materials come from natural resources and impact society.
- MS-ESS3-4. Construct an argument supported by evidence for how increases in human population and per-capita consumption of natural resources impact Earth's systems.
- HS-ESS3-1. Construct an explanation based on evidence for how the availability of natural resources, occurrence of natural hazards, and changes in climate have influenced human activity.
- HS-ESS3-4. Evaluate or refine a technological solution that reduces impacts of human activities on natural systems.

Oregon Social Studies Standards

- Geography 6.16 – Explain how technological developments, societal decisions, and personal practices influence sustainability.

- Geography 8.21 – Explain how historical technological developments (such as cotton gin, roads, railroads, canals, etc.), societal decisions, and personal practices interact with the physical environment in the United States (e.g., sustainability, economics ecosystems).
- Geography HS.26 – Explain how current globalization trends and policies affect economic growth, labor markets, rights of citizens, the environment, and resource and income distribution in different nations.

National Education for Sustainability K-12 Students Learning Standards

- 2.1 Interconnectedness - Cradle-to-grave design: Students explain the continuous cycling of biological and technical nutrients for a cradle-to-cradle designed product or system. Interdependency: Students explain how natural and built communities are part of larger systems and the inter-relationships that exist among those systems. Systems Thinking: Students identify an unsustainable system (e.g.: apartheid, colonization, fossil fuel energy) and redesign it using systems thinking principles (e.g. long-term, interconnectedness, leverage points).
- 2.2 Ecological Systems - Natural Resources: (renewable & non-renewable) Students investigate the natural systems in their local region and explore how humans have impacted those systems, both positively and negatively.
- 3.1 Personal Action - Personal Responsibility: Students know the difference between actions that they can take themselves and those that require the involvement of other people, organizations, and government. They identify and carry out a personal action that will enhance quality of life in environmental, social/cultural, or economic sectors.