

Recycling Relay Race

Overview:

A relay race where students must sort out common waste items depending on the best method for their disposal. This game should follow a lesson on Recycling, Reducing, and Reusing.

Objectives:

1. Students will know the difference between recyclables, compostables, and trash
2. Students will think about where their trash ends up
3. Students will brainstorm ways to reduce waste

Time:

About 10-20 minutes

Materials:

For each team:

A trash can

A recycling bin

A compost bucket

Another container for things to re-use

A bag full of items to be re-used, recycled, composted, or thrown in the trash (to be fair, each team should have the same items)

Procedure:

1. Divide the group into equal teams
2. Set up the containers with the re-use container closest to the start line, the compost bucket next, then the recycling bin, and the trash can the furthest away. The distance represents the environmental effects for each of these processes, re-using being the easiest on the earth, and trash being the worst. Place the bag of items a couple feet out from the start line, this will prevent cheating as the students won't be able to see in the bag ahead of time.
3. Have the teams line up in the appropriate area, facing their line of containers. Explain the procedure/rules: Each person will take one item out of the bag and run it to the appropriate container. If they are unsure, they can look to their team for help. The next person in line cannot grab an item until the previous team member has returned and tagged them. Once all the items are properly disposed of, the whole team should sit to indicate they are done.
4. Time to add up points. The 1st team to finish gets 5 points, 3 points to the 2nd place team, and 1 point to the 3rd place team. From there they get 1 point for every item properly disposed of. However, points can be subtracted for items improperly disposed of, for example compostables in the trash can, or trash in the recycling bin. For the items in the re-use box, students must tell you how they plan to re-use it in order to get a point.
5. Congratulate the winning team.
6. As a wrap-up, have a conversation about where our trash goes (most of Humboldt's trash is trucked to Oregon), and the energy it takes to recycle some of these things. The best way to help the environment is to reduce waste - brainstorm easy ways to do this.