

SUSTAINABLE SANDHILLS

Recycling Competition Activity - Grades K-12



To celebrate America Recycles Day on November 15, Sustainable Sandhills invites your class to participate in our Recycling Competition, in order to educate students about what is and isn't recyclable. Because many students help put out their family's recycling on the curb, this activity could have a broader impact and help decrease contamination and improve waste diversion rates for the City of Fayetteville and Cumberland County. The winning class will also be treated to ice cream, generously donated by The Sweet Palette!

Please complete this waste audit once per week for each of the first three weeks in November. The class who ends the challenge with the least number of contaminants in their trash/recycling will win (in the case of a tie, a winner will be selected in a random drawing). Classes must complete the audit once a week for all three weeks to be eligible to win the prize. **Teachers must submit their final contamination numbers by Wednesday, December 1 in the Google form at <https://forms.gle/kjDAM3EQZPFzws5y8>. Please contact Anna Chott with any questions, at anna@sustainablesandhills.org or 910-484-9098). The winner will be announced on Friday, December 3.**

This activity was created for classrooms that have two separate bins: 1) trash, and 2) single-stream recycling (paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, and metal).

STEP ONE: Watch the America Recycles Day video as a class.

STEP TWO: Have students complete the recycling "jam board" activity.

STEP THREE: Perform a recycling audit.

- Have students look in the recycling bin and count the number of items that shouldn't be there. Refer to the list of recycling rules, if needed. Note the number of contaminants/misplaced materials on the Recycling Audit Record Sheet.
- Have students look in the trash can for items that could have been recycled. Note the number of misplaced items on the Recycling Audit Record Sheet.

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RECYCLING RULES

- **Cardboard should be collapsed and placed behind the bins (cardboard goes in a separate recycling dumpster to prevent it from getting wet/contaminated).**
- **Paper receipts are not recyclable, as they contain plastic.**
- **For now, milk cartons are not recommended in the recycling bin, as they may have contamination.**
- **Loose shredded paper is not recommended in recycling bins in schools, as all the recyclables will eventually get mixed together in a “single-stream” recycling dumpster, and the shredded paper is difficult to sort out at the recycling plant. Shredded paper should only be recycled at locations that keep paper separate.**
- **All containers must be clean. Water bottles must be empty!**
- **Plastic bags and plastic wrap are not recyclable, except when separated out and brought to an appropriate bin at grocery stores, etc.**
- **It is best practice to recycle only plastic bottles, tubs, jugs, and jars. Other shapes like plastic cups and clamshells may not make it through the sorting machines to get recycled, and they may also be contaminated with food.**
- **Nothing except for plastic, metal cans, glass bottles and jars, paper, and cardboard should be in the recycling bin.**

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Recycling Competition Activity - Grades K-12

Recycling Audit Record Sheet WEEK 1

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

TEACHER: _____ CLASSROOM: _____

BIN	NUMBER OF CONTAMINANTS/MISPLACED, OR INCORRECTLY RECYCLED MATERIALS
Recycling	
Trash	

Recycling Audit Record Sheet WEEK 2

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

TEACHER: _____ CLASSROOM: _____

BIN	NUMBER OF CONTAMINANTS/MISPLACED, OR INCORRECTLY RECYCLED MATERIALS
Recycling	
Trash	

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Recycling Audit Record Sheet WEEK 3

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

TEACHER: _____ CLASSROOM: _____

BIN	NUMBER OF CONTAMINANTS/MISPLACED, OR INCORRECTLY RECYCLED MATERIALS
Recycling	
Trash	