



Teacher Resource

Soft Plastics Recycling

Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. Why have some big supermarkets stopped accepting soft plastics for recycling?
2. What percentage of the soft plastics collected did REDcycle recycle last year?
3. Give at least three examples of soft plastics.
4. What can recycled soft plastics be made into?
5. What are some solutions to the soft plastics problem?

Activity: What do you know?

Before watching the BTN Soft Plastics Recycling story, use the following questions to guide a class discussion:

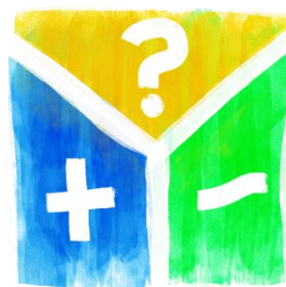
- What are soft plastics? Give examples.
- Why do you think BTN is doing a story about soft plastics?
- Have you got any soft plastics in your lunchbox? Record what you see.
- How could you reduce the use of soft plastics in your lunchbox?



Activity: Note taking

Students will practise their note-taking skills while watching the BTN Soft Plastics Recycling story. After watching the story, ask students to reflect on and organise the information into three categories. What information in the story was...?

- Positive
- Negative or
- Interesting



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KEY LEARNING

Students will investigate the soft plastics recycling problem and take action to reduce soft plastics waste.

CURRICULUM

Geography – Year 4

The use and management of natural resources and waste, and the different views on how to do this sustainably.

HASS – Year 4

Reflect on learning to propose actions in response to an issue or challenge and consider possible effects of proposed actions.

Science – Year 4

Science knowledge helps people to understand the effect of their actions.

Science – Years 5 & 6

Scientific knowledge is used to solve problems and inform personal and community decisions.

Science – Year 7

Scientific knowledge has changed peoples' understanding of the world and is refined as new evidence becomes available.

Activity: Six Hat Thinking

As a class, use Edward De Bono's Six Hat Thinking to explore the issues raised in the BTN Soft Plastics Recycling story. Make your own coloured hat cut outs and place on the floor. Students will take it in turns answering questions in relation to what they already know about the issue, what they have learned from the story and what they want to learn further about the topic. Ask students to respond to the following questions:

- How did the BTN Soft Plastics Recycling story make you feel?
- What do you know about soft plastics?
- What have you learnt from the story?
- Were there any positives from the story? If so, what were they?
- What are some of the negatives or challenges that you learnt from the story?
- Why is it important to find out more about the soft plastics problem?
- What questions were raised during this activity? Think of three questions you would like to ask about the story.
- What do you want to learn further about this topic?



Reflection

After this activity, ask students to reflect on what they have learnt and what recycling means to them. Students can include details about how their thinking on this issue has changed.

Activity: Research project

Discuss the information raised in the BTN Soft Plastics Recycling story. What questions were raised in the discussion and what are the gaps in students' knowledge? The following KWLH organiser provides students with a framework to explore their knowledge on this topic.

What do I <u>know</u> ?	What do I <u>want</u> to know?	What have I <u>learnt</u> ?	<u>How</u> will I find out?

Students will develop their own question/s to research or choose one or more of the questions below.

- Who invented soft plastic? Create a biography.
- What is the history of soft plastic? Explore the history and development of soft plastic and plot your findings on a timeline.

- What are some examples of soft plastics?
- What is the difference between soft plastic and other plastic?
- What are recycling companies turning soft plastics into?
- What percentage of soft plastics gets recycled in Australia? Investigate the percentage of recycling for other materials (e.g., plastic, metal, glass, paper, electronics). Plot your findings on a graph.
- What happens to the soft plastic you throw away? Explore the journey of soft plastic from production, to landfill and its impact on the environment.
- Why can't soft plastics be put in your home recycling bin?
- Should there be incentives for people who reduce, reuse, and recycle? What do you think the incentives should be?

Activity: Take action

Discuss with students what their school already does to reduce waste. For example, their school might have recycling programs, rubbish audits, or clean up days. Does your school have an Environmental Management Plan or team? In small groups, ask students to brainstorm how their school could improve what it already does to reduce waste.

- Make a list of new ways that your school could reduce the amount of waste it creates and new ways that you can deal with the waste it creates.
- Share and compare your ideas with the class.
- Choose 1 of your ideas to present to your SRC or the school leadership team.



Here are some suggestions:

- Nude food days
- Run a workshop to learn how to make reusable beeswax food wrappers.
- Audit rubbish created in one day
- Contact your local council or other schools in your area to find out what they are doing to reduce waste.
- Hold your own school's clean-up day
- Start a school compost or worm farm
- Hold a zero-waste day

Reflection

- What did you find interesting?
- What was challenging?
- What did you enjoy about this activity?
- What worked well and what would you do differently next time?

Activity: Visual literacy

In this activity students will analyse the image below which illustrates the soft plastics problem we are facing and the impact it has on our environment. Students will analyse the image and respond to the following:

- What is happening in the image?
Create a caption.
- What do you think the image is trying to tell us?
- What does the plastic bag represent?
- How does the image make you feel?
- What questions do you have about what you see in the image?



[Clean Up Australia](#)

Activity: Choose a project

Individually or in small groups, students will choose one of the following projects to work on and then present their findings to the class.

Write a letter

Write a letter to your local member of parliament, expressing your concerns about the soft plastics problem. What can local government do to help the problem?

Soft plastics audit

Do you know how much soft plastic you use each day? Think of all the times you used soft plastics in one day. What could you have done to avoid using these soft plastics?

Persuasive writing

How can we convince people to reduce their use of soft plastics? Think of creative ways to raise awareness about the issues raised in the BTN story.

Tips and tricks

How can we reduce our use of soft plastics? Write a list of tips and tricks to help people reduce their use of soft plastics. Think of a creative way to share your information.

Useful Websites

- [Plastic Pact](#) – BTN
- [Single-use Plastic Ban](#) – BTN
- [Soft Plastics Recycling Paused](#) – BTN Newsbreak
- [Shoppers told to put plastic bags in the bin after suspension of REDcycle's soft plastics recycling scheme](#) – ABC News
- [Soft Plastics Recycling](#) – Clean Up Australia
- [Australian government pledges to recycle all plastics by 2040](#) – ABC News