

# Ocean Conservation: Plastic Pollution

## Program Resources - Primary



### Overview

Plastic is an incredible invention. Thanks to its transformative nature it can be turned into almost every texture, shape and size. Plastic is found everywhere – it is so integrated into human culture and economy that often we do not notice just dependent we are on plastic. While plastic is very useful it also has a dangerous impact on the ocean ecosystems that we also rely on for survival. Our disposal plastic habits contribute to plastic pollution worldwide. Plastic is valuable and it should not be disposable.

### Key Concepts

- Plastic is valuable – it has many amazing features that help humans in various ways
- Single-use plastic is a leading contributor to ocean plastic pollution worldwide
- All water on earth is connected and how we impact our local environment can have an impact on the global ocean
- There are tangible alternative products and actions that can replace single-use plastic in our lives
- Everyone has a part to play in the health of the ocean and your actions both positive and negative contribute to it.

### Discussion Questions

- How does the ocean help us?
- How does water travel around the world? What happens if that water is polluted with something?
- Why do we need plastic?
- Why is some plastic more dangerous than others?
- Why do individual actions matter when contributing to plastic pollution – both the problem and the solution?

## **Activities**

**Waste Audit:** take a waste audit of your classroom, house or school. See how much waste your produce and research where it is going.

<https://education.ocean.org/oceanaction/assignments/1115043>

**The Majestic Plastic Bag:** Reducing and Reusing plastic is easy to do! Materials like glass and paper are great alternatives to plastic. When you go grocery shopping, remember to bring your own reusable bag. When packing lunch for school, put it into a reusable container instead of plastic wrap. These are just some of the many ways you can reduce or reuse plastic in your life. How many other ways can you think of? Can you create a new product that could be used instead of plastic? <https://education.ocean.org/oceanlitelem/assignments/1112365>

**Classroom Activities:** <https://education.ocean.org/oceanlitlib/resources/>

## **Videos**

What happens to microplastics in the ocean? | Ocean Wise

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0Ks8oSUGIs&t=6s>

What is Plastic? | Brain Waves Episode 1 | Ocean Wise

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZA7bcm4adE8>

How does your Plastic end up in the Arctic? | Brain Waves Episode 6 | Ocean Wise

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzURXrrjTKY&t=4s>

What happens to microplastics in the ocean? | Ocean Wise

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0Ks8oSUGIs&t=6s>

Kids Take Action Against Ocean Plastic | Short Film Showcase | National Geographic

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKFV9lquMXA>

## **Extra Links**

- Marine Plastic Litter Program: <http://plasticedkit.ocean.org/>
- Take the Plastic Pledge! <http://ocean.org/plastic-wise/>
- Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup: <http://shorelinecleanup.ca/>
- Ocean Wise Research: <https://research.ocean.org/>
- Ocean Literacy: <http://literacy.ocean.org/>