

Recycling, Get Involved: Write an Editorial

Objectives

- Interview and research to gather information about community recycling. Organize problems and solutions on a T-chart.
- Write an editorial to inform and persuade the reader. Include a title, an attention-getting problem (a “hook”), an opinion, persuasive ideas, facts, solutions, opposing viewpoints, a conclusion and an action statement (a “kicker”).
- Edit the editorial to improve research accuracy, persuasive ideas, supporting details and organization.

Websites

Recycling: <http://www.obviously.com/recycle/>

<http://science.howstuffworks.com/recycling.htm>

<http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/recycle.htm>

<http://www.eia.doe.gov/kids/energyfacts/saving/recycling/solidwaste/plastics.html>

<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/education/index.htm>

<http://www.wm.com/WM/community/Resources.asp?id=sub3>

http://www.environmentaldefense.org/documents/611_ACF17F.htm - summary

<http://www.recycling-guide.org.uk/>

Recycling lessons: http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/enved/Rec_Lessons/survey.htm

<http://www.southernwaste.com.au/schools/wasteAudit.html> (School waste audit)

Reducing waste: <http://www.reduce.org/>

Composting: <http://www.howstuffworks.com/composting.htm>

Landfills: <http://www.howstuffworks.com/landfill.htm>

Writing editorials: http://www.snn-rdr.ca/snn/nr_reporterstoolbox/writingeditorials.html

<http://projects.edtech.sandi.net/pbmiddle/environment/editor.htm>

<http://languagearts.pppst.com/journalism.html> (scroll down to: Opinion Writing/Editorials)

Lessons for writing editorials: <http://www.wku.edu/3kinds/jrpeaw.html>

http://www.highschooljournalism.org/Teachers/Lesson_Plans/Archive.cfm (see Editorial Writing)

Newspapers online: <http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/>

Extensions

- Collect examples of editorials from different types of newspapers. Identify the parts of an editorial.
- Compare television programs that present commentary in an editorial format.
- As part of information gathering, complete a school waste audit using the *Recycling lessons* website above. Research the solid waste processes for garbage and recyclables in the community: sorting, collecting, hauling, processing and marketing.
- When news stories in the newspaper feature recycling, write a letter to the editor. Include problems and solutions.
- Compile the interview responses from the student page (*Plan* part 1), then prepare graphs illustrating *Community Recycling Habits*. Create a *Recycling, Get Involved!* display of student editorials and graphs.

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Plan: Gather information for an editorial about recycling in your community.

1. Interview people about their recycling habits:

<p>anti-recycler bulk purchase buy secondhand goods composting curbside recycling disposable product disposal fee donate usable items electronic (e-waste) environmental levy hazardous/toxic waste illegal dumping incinerator landfill manufacturing costs markets for recyclables materials recovery facility NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) syndrome</p>	<p>nonbiodegradable nondurable product nonrenewable resource obsolete consumer goods packaging pollution recycling "rules" recycling drop-off center redeemable deposit reduce waste refillable/reusable container reuse save energy save natural resources sort and clean recyclables throw "away" habit waste hauling cost yard waste</p>
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2. **Research:** Use the word list above for ideas. Write notes on the T-chart below:

Problems (Why aren't people recycling more?)	Solutions (How can you encourage more recycling?)
Sample student activity sheet	

3. Circle or highlight the **main ideas** in your plan above.

Write: Your editorial will inform the reader about recycling and persuade them to your opinion. Choose your words carefully as you talk to the reader. The outline below is a guideline for your paragraphs:

- Introduction — catch the reader's interest; state the main problem
- Your Opinion — strong arguments
- Your Solution — reasons, facts, evidence...
- Opposing viewpoints — explain why you disagree
- Conclusion — your opinion; challenge your readers to take action (Create a title with the same message.)

Edit: Read your editorial carefully. Use the editing checklist below and check each part when completed:

- Research — accuracy of facts has been checked
- Introduction — grabs the reader's attention and clearly states the problem
- Opinion — supported by reasons, facts and evidence; presented with solutions
- Organization — order makes sense and persuades the reader
- Conclusion — summarizes your opinion and suggests an action
- Capital letters, punctuation, spelling and gram