



### Theme:

Class activity investigating the amount of food waste and associated packaging thrown away from lunch boxes.

### Objectives:

Students to get a better understanding of how much food and packaging waste is created in one day, one week and one year. Additionally, they are asked to think of why food or packaging is thrown away and how they can reduce the amount of food and packaging waste they create. They are also asked to investigate food disposal options. No matter how much they reduce food waste, there must be a sound solution for the treatment of residual food waste. What are the options (Landfill, composting) and what are the implications?

## **Curricular Strands:**

SESE, Science and Geography: Environmental awareness and care

Maths: Weighing, Calculations and Multiplication

## **Skills:**

Questioning, observing, predicting, estimating and measuring, recording and communicating.

## **Time:**

10 minutes introduction, 20 minutes preparing, weighing, calculating and summarising.

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# Food Waste: Don't Dump...Decrease!

## Primary School Food Waste Reduction

### Challenge

*Coming up with solutions to decrease the amount of food waste we create.*

*Solutions to treat residual food waste and how it's done (composting, wormeries, anaerobic digestion).*

#### What you need:

- 2 plastic containers with attachable lids (one for food waste and one for packaging waste)
- weighing scales
- student tabulation grid (Appendix 1); school tabulation grid (Appendix 2)

#### What you do:

##### Week One:

1. At the end of the day, ask students to dump the remainder of their lunch into the appropriate bins (food and packaging). Close bins after all lunch waste is thrown in.
2. Ask each student to fill out the attached chart of what they threw away and why.
3. Ask each student to make recommendations on how he/she can reduce the amount of waste, on the chart.
4. Add waste to the bins for one week and weigh each bin at the end of the week. Take down weight. Calculate if the class threw out this much waste each week, how much would they throw out in one year.

##### Week Two:

- Students to talk to their parents about their suggestions about how to reduce their waste and implement suggestions in making their lunches.
- Repeat steps 1-4 above.

#### Optional:

Each class or teacher can select students to create a food blog on the food his/her family made and wasted during this project through an amusing blog that will be featured on VOICE's website and Facebook page.

## Questions:

1. What can we do at home and at school to reduce the amount of food and packaging waste we produce? We throw about 1/3 of the food we purchase out, wasting up to €1,000 a year. Look at websites [www.stopfoodwaste.ie](http://www.stopfoodwaste.ie) or [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com).
2. What happens to all this food and packaging waste? Where does it go and what are the environmental implications?
3. If we compost the food waste we can't prevent such as vegetable peelings , how does this work and what happens to the food waste? Why does it decompose and what can we do with the compost?

### STUDENT WASTE LOG: Week One

Name:

Class:

School:

<b>Day</b>	<b>What food did I throw away</b>	<b>What packaging did I throw away</b>	<b>Why?</b>	<b>How can I avoid throwing so much away?</b>
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				

## STUDENT WASTE LOG: Week Two

Name:

Class:

School:

<b>Day</b>	<b>What food did I throw away</b>	<b>What packaging did I throw away</b>	<b>Why?</b>	<b>How can I avoid throwing so much away?</b>
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				

### SCHOOL WASTE LOG

Name of School:

Class:

<b>Week</b>	<b>Amount of Food Waste (kg)</b>	<b>Amount of Packaging Waste (kg)</b>
Week One		
Week Two		
Total Amount of Waste (2 weeks)		
% Reduction of Waste from Week One to Week Two		