

Topic	Environment
Phenomenon	Waste disposal
Experiment	Waste separation and avoidance
Material to be provided	none
Additional Material	large sacks or cartons suitable for collecting garbage
Preparation for experiment	none

Researcher question

How much waste is produced in a week?

Description of experiment

This experiment should not be conducted in small groups, but together with the entire group of children.

Ask the children what kinds of garbage they know about and where waste is produced. How much waste material do the children think they produce together in a week?

Suggest to the children that they collect all garbage accumulating from now on in the sacks or cartons so that at the end of the week they can see what and how much they have accumulated together. After collecting for a whole week look with the children and see what has been collected. What types of garbage are there? Together with the children separate the plastic, paper, and glass again. What did the children not expect to see as garbage when they originally thought about it? What is the most common type of waste?

Explanation

Garbage is produced in many everyday situations and needs lots of space. Many waste products are not degradable by natural means, but are at least recyclable, i.e. they can be processed for reuse. Garbage which is simply dumped in the countryside pollutes our environment and hence the Earth on which we live. Thoughtlessly dumped waste also spoils the appearance and the beauty of a landscape. A first important step towards environmental protection is therefore a responsible approach to garbage. Separation of garbage and avoidance of waste are really easy and quick to do.

Waste that cannot be recycled must be disposed of separately. This can either be incinerated or stored very carefully. In this context also address the topic of batteries, which must be collected separately, since they belong to this group of waste products.

Further ideas

Get the children to think about how they can actively avoid creating garbage and consider possible ways in which they can put this into practice.