

## **SLIM YOUR BIN ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS**

### **EQUIPMENT NEEDED:**

- 2 identical sets of varied shopping items
- 2 identical shopping lists
- 2 tables or shelves (for displaying shopping items)
- 2 small dustbins
- 1 REUSE/COMPOST box with sign
- 1 RECYCLE box with sign

**APPROXIMATE DURATION:** 30 mins

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

- This activity can be varied/adapted easily to meet the groups needs eg children etc
- 1.** Arrange the tables/shelves at opposite sides of the room and display one set of shopping items on each table (the sets should be exactly the same). Arrange the items neatly, as they would be on a shop shelf, placing similar products next to each other eg all types of orange juice together.
  - 2.** Have the 3 types of shopping bag laid out at the start of the tables/shelves for the groups to choose from.
  - 3.** Divide the group into 2 teams and give each team a shopping list.
  - 4.** Explain to the group that they are about to embark on a virtual shopping trip, collecting the waste they would end up with after buying everyday products.
  - 5.** Explain that 1 team are going to be the SMART shoppers who will be trying to REDUCE their waste as much as possible by choosing minimally packaged goods and items that last longer. The other team will be the bad shoppers who are trying to find items that would produce the most waste.
  - 6.** Both teams should start by choosing one of the 3 shopping bags available at their table/shelf to place their "shopping" into. They should then work their way through their shopping list choosing the items that suit them (depending on which team they are). They should discuss decisions as a group before placing an item in their bag.
  - 7.** After collecting all the items from their list they should then take their full bags back to their seats and place all the items into their team's dustbin (including anything that would eventually be thrown away eg plastic bags, toys etc).

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**8.** Immediately there should be a visible difference in the volume of rubbish in the “good” teams bin and the “bad” teams bin. Emphasise this point to show that by **REDUCING** your waste by not buying it in the first place, you can dramatically cut down on the waste sent to landfill.

**9.** Next, both teams should try to place the items they have in their bins into the REUSE/COMPOST box. Only items that can be reused for a long time and for a sensible reason should be placed in the REUSE box ie a valid reason could **not** be “This could be reused by making it into something” The reason would have to be more specific and something useful eg “This could be reused to make a musical shaker”. Also, the teams must think of a valid ‘reuse’ for both an adult with children and a single adult living alone for **each** item or they cannot place it in the REUSE box. Encourage the groups to discuss their decisions together.

**10.** Once both teams have reused the items as much as possible (by placing them in the appropriate boxes) point out the difference in volume of waste in each of the team’s bins again (the “good” team’s bin may even be empty at this stage!).

**11.** Finally, each group should place any items they have left in their bin into the RECYCLE box. This time the discussion will simply be can the item be recycled or not.

**12.** By the end of this whole process, the SMART shoppers should have a completely empty bin and the other team will have several items in theirs. End the activity by holding each of the dustbins up and showing what’s left to go be taken to landfill. The items left in the “bad” team’s bin are all items that we should be trying to **REDUCE** (ie not buy in the first place).

This activity proves that using the 3Rs really works!

## **TOP TIPS**

1. **Have team names** eg the SMART shoppers (good team) and the Wicked Wasters (bad team) – this makes the activity more fun, especially for younger groups!

2. This activity can be **simplified for children’s group** eg use fewer shopping items and only ask children to think of **ONE** way they could reuse an item.

The activity can also be made more challenging for experienced groups by adding a different selection of shopping items etc

3. It’s a good idea to **recap on the items** that were reduced, then reused, then recycled at the end of the activity to re-emphasise the importance of the waste hierarchy.