

Plastic is an incredible material. It's durable, versatile and very useful. But we know it's causing harm to our environment. The problem is how we use plastic. Today, you're going to discover where plastic is used around you every day! The first step to making a difference is becoming more aware of the plastic that surrounds us.

Starter: Video

Time: 5 mins

Watch our video "What is Plastic?"

<https://youtu.be/nvzQlpE3cb4>



Activity 1: Plastic Hunt

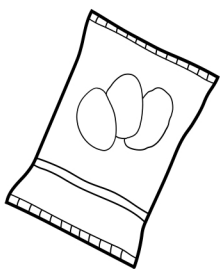
Time: 10-15 mins

Find all the items made of plastic in your classroom. Depending on your teacher's instructions, you can either write them down or collect them. This may end up taking a while!

Before you start, write down how many items you think you'll find.

Many things you would not expect are made from plastic. Don't miss any of these items:

- **Clothes** may be made out of synthetic material, such as polyester or nylon. Check the label!
- **Walls or ceilings** may have plastic items attached to them, but just note these down and don't take them with you!
- **Other items** that at first are not obvious, for example:



Note: When you're investigating, be safe and make sure you don't go anywhere you wouldn't normally! If you end up looking in a recycling bin, be careful to avoid any sharp objects.

Once you've collected all the plastic, if you've got the space put it all together!

Did you guess the number of items correctly?
What's the most surprising item you found?



Activity 2: From Most Useful to Least

Time: 10-15 minutes

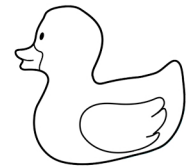
Either individually or as a group, order the items of plastic you've found based on how long they will be used for. Will they be used for years or just a few days? Are there any that will be used only once?

Now, order them from most useful to least useful. Think - How necessary are they? Different people may have different ideas!

Activity 3: Wait for the Plastic to Biodegrade

Time: Forever

You'd be waiting quite a while for this one! Plastic actually doesn't biodegrade. Over time, if exposed to the elements, it will break up, but it does not break down like organic materials. Unless they are recycled and disposed of correctly, the plastic in front of you will be in the same state, **forever**.



This duck is reusable.
But is it useful?

Bonus Activity: Redesign

Time: 10-15 minutes

Share your redesign & other ideas on social media using **#PlasticIntelligent**

Choose one item that you found that wasn't very useful and/or would only be used once or twice. How would you redesign the item so it would be more useful? What would a reusable version look like?

Next Steps...

If you want to learn more about plastic pollution, you can watch our full length award-winning documentary, *A Plastic Ocean* available on Netflix.

Ocean Generation

We are empowering an inclusive global movement to tackle ocean threats through science and storytelling. For workshops, the latest science and more visit www.oceangeneration.org