

LEAVE NO TRACE

- 4th grade students
- 45 minutes
- Park advised location

OVERVIEW

In this experience, students will learn how to be environmental stewards using Leave No Trace principles. Students will engage in discussion of their favorite outdoor places, then participate in Leave No Trace's "Trash Timeline" to see how a simple piece of trash can have a significant impact on the environment.

SAFETY + SETTING

Groups can use several park areas. Ask park staff for recommendations.

If outside, it is suggested you set boundaries to prevent students from wandering too far.

For a deeper experience: Direct students to select a location in which they are within arms length of something green and living (grass, moss on a tree, etc.)



ACADEMIC STANDARDS

4.ESS3.2 - Create an argument, using evidence from research, that human activity (farming, mining, building) can affect the land and ocean in positive and/or negative ways.

LEAVE NO TRACE

STEPS

1. Lead students in the “Your Special Place” activity. Allow plenty of time for students to share their stories and memories before moving on to the next activity.
2. Lead students in the “Trash Timeline” activity. Pass a card to each student, then have them try to match themselves up. Ask the students questions about what decomposition time surprised them the most and what may affect these rates.
3. End the program with a call to action. Encourage students to share what they learned with their families, etc. Continue encouraging these behavior even in the classroom!

THE 7 PRINCIPLES



1. Plan ahead and prepare.
2. Travel & camp on durable surfaces.
3. Dispose of waste properly.
4. Leave what you find.
5. Minimize campfire impacts.
6. Respect wildlife.
7. Be considerate of others.



DON'T FORGET!

- This activity has portions that are better for different age groups. Adapt it to your group's needs.
- There are many more FREE teaching resources available at <https://lnt.org/>

RETURN MATERIALS

After you have finished your teacher-led experience, return all materials to the clerk in the Visitor Center.

ACTIVITY #1 - YOUR SPECIAL PLACE

30 MINUTES

Goal - Students move towards stewardship by exploring how special natural environments are and adopting principles of Leave No Trace.

- Ask students to think about a special outdoor place and an activity they like to do there (park, playground, backyard; hiking, swimming, camping, canoeing, sitting under a tree).
- Show the included images of outdoor areas to get them thinking about areas close to home.
- Have students write three (3) sequential sentences about their outdoor experience/activity and how they felt.
First we packed our backpacks for the day. Then we drove to the park. Next, we got in the water and looked for salamanders. I got excited when I found one.
- Pass out art supplies (colored pencils, crayons, markers) and plain paper. Have the students draw their special place and write a sentence describing what is happening in their picture.
- End by leading student through the discussion questions.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What could have made time at your special place better?
2. What could have made it less special? (e.g. trash, litter, other inconsiderate visitors)
3. How would Leave No Trace help keep your special place the way you would like it to be?

ACTIVITY #2 - TRASH TIMELINE

15 MINUTES

Goal - Students understand how long it takes for trash to decompose.

- Trash Timeline is a visual and hands-on way to show how long it takes for trash to decompose.
- Distribute all the picture cards as evenly as possible between the students. Then, similarly distribute the time cards.
- Have the students move around and try to figure out which pictures match up with each decomposition time frame.
- As matches are made, you can discuss the students' reasoning with them and try to correct any errors. Once all matches have been made, correct their final answers, then have them line up in order from shortest to longest decomposition time.



**Up to
2 years**

Orange Peel - Up to 2 years
Cigarette Butts - 1 to 5 years
Leather - 1 to 5 years
Wool Socks - 1 to 5 years
Gum - 5 years
Plastic-coated Paper Cup - 5 years

Plastic Bags - 10 to 20 years
Tarp - 30 to 40 years
Aluminum Cans - 80 to 100 years
Plastic Bottle Holder - 100 years
Plastic Straws - 200 years
Glass Bottles - 1,000,000 years

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What object's decomposition rate surprised you the most?
2. What problems can trash cause for the environment?

OUTDOOR PLACES CARDS



OUTDOOR PLACES CARDS



OUTDOOR PLACES CARDS





Orange Peel



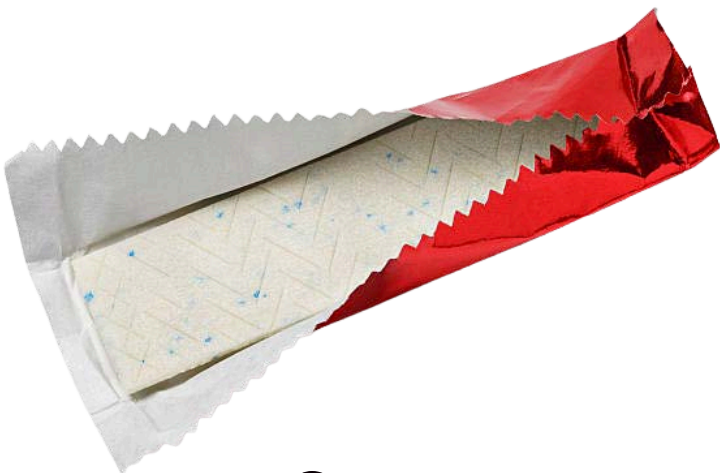
Cigarettes



Leather



Wool Socks



Gum



**Plastic-coated
Paper Cup**



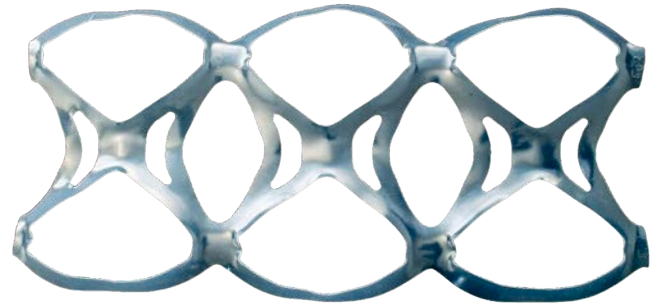
Plastic Bag



Tarp



Aluminum Can



Plastic Bottle Holder



Plastic Straw



Glass Bottle

**Up to 2
years**

**1-5
years**

**1-5
years**

**1-5
years**

5 years

5 years

**10-20
years**

**30-40
years**

**80-100
years**

**100
years**

**200
years**

**1,000,000
years**