



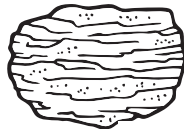
Use Less Plastic



Objective: Given a short article to read, the students will summarize the information in the text using their own words.

Vocabulary

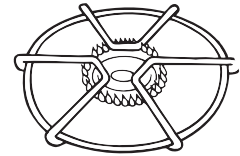
- plastic
- fossil fuel



coal



oil



natural gas

Materials

- Learning About Plastic sample chart (below)
- Why Do We Use Plastic? article (Reading Level 1.2) on page 65
- How Can We Use Less Plastic? article (Reading Level 2.1) on page 66
- Plastic Harms the Environment article (Reading Level 2.8) on page 64

Preparation

1. Enlarge the Learning About Plastic chart for classroom use.
2. Make copies of the articles as needed for student groups. Each group should be no more than four students. Reading levels are noted above in the Materials list.
3. Consider grouping the students based on the reading level of each article.

Opening

1. Have the class participate in a variation of a K-W-L exercise.
2. Ask the students what they know about *plastic*. (It does not break very easily; it is a man-made material that can be molded in many ways and used for many purposes; it is lightweight; it does not cost very much; many things are made of plastic.)
3. Record the student responses in the first column of the chart.
4. Introduce the concept that we should avoid or use less plastic because it is not good for the environment. One reason is that plastic is made from *fossil fuels*—oil and gas found deep in the ground. Fossil fuels are nonrenewable resources.
5. Invite the students to guess other reasons why plastic might not be good for the environment. Help the students brainstorm by asking the questions suggested on the chart or related questions that arise during the class discussion.

Learning About Plastic		
What We Know About Plastic	Questions We Can Ask About Plastic	How We Can Avoid or Use Less Plastic
	How is plastic made? How does plastic affect the environment? Why do people use so much plastic? What is good about plastic?	



Use Less Plastic *(cont.)*



Part 1

1. Divide the students into six groups to read the three articles.
2. Tell the students they will work in groups to read short articles about plastic. After each group has read an article, the groups will share what they learned about plastic.
3. Distribute copies of the articles to the groups. Have the students take turns reading in their groups. Monitor and assist students with reading as necessary.

Part 2

1. Have the groups share what they learned from their articles. Encourage the students not to simply reread the article to the class but to restate it in their own words.
2. Model an example for the class. "The first article states, 'Plastic comes from crude oil. It also comes from natural gas.' I can say that we make plastic from oil and natural gas."

Part 3

1. Conduct a class discussion to complete the third column of the Learning About Plastic chart.
2. Have the students add information from their readings to the third column.

How We Can Avoid or Use Less Plastic

Closing

1. Ask a student volunteer to describe a product he or she has seen advertised on TV. Ask how the student remembers this product. Encourage the student to recite the jingle or slogan from the commercial.
2. Use the student example to explain the concept of a jingle or chant.
3. Have the students work in their reading groups to create a jingle or chant to remind others to avoid using too much plastic. Have them focus on one of the following concepts:
 - Use less plastic.
 - Use reusable containers.
 - Buy items packaged in cardboard, not plastic.
 - Buy food in bulk (large packages or loose items for purchase).
4. Allow time for the students to present their jingles to the class.

Extension

Arrange with another class to have your students present their jingles and chants. If possible, follow up with the other teacher to determine how your students' slogans helped others remember to reduce how much plastic they use and to use resources wisely.

ELL Tip

Before the students read the article about plastic, underline key words in the passage and explain them if necessary. Also preview the article with the students by having them study the illustrations in the article and use these to predict what the article might be about.



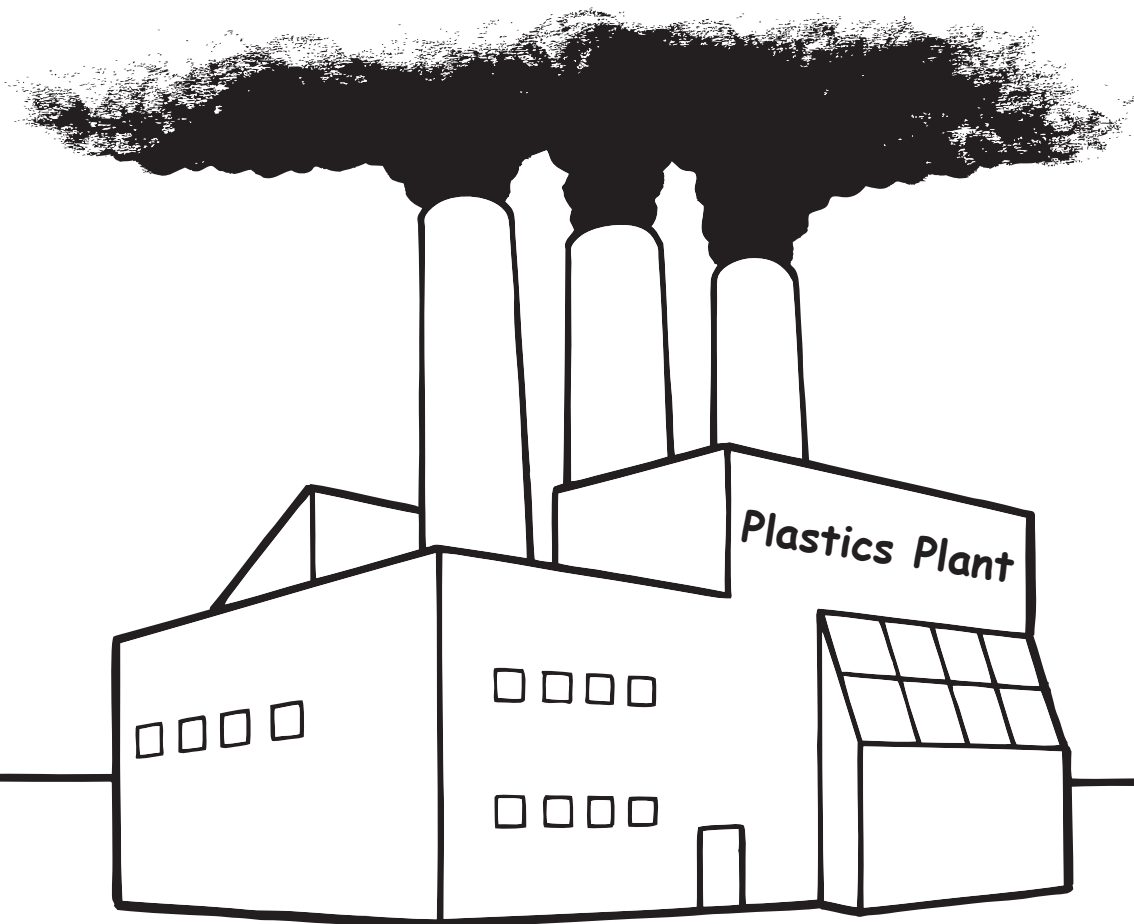
Plastic Harms the Environment

Plastic comes from crude oil. It also comes from natural gas. We call these things fossil fuels. They formed in the earth a long time ago. Fossil fuels will not last forever.

Oil and gas are natural. We break them down into smaller parts. Some parts pollute the air. They pollute the water. This is not good for the environment.

Plastic is hard to recycle. It costs money and uses energy. Some cities do not recycle plastic. People who live there have to throw away their plastic.

Some plastic is recycled. Machines make it into something new. It can become a table. The table might break. Then it will still have to be thrown away.





Use Less Plastic (cont.)



Why Do We Use Plastic?

Plastic is strong. It does not break easily. This makes plastic safe to use. We can get hurt when glass breaks.

Peanut butter was sold in glass jars. A child could drop the jar. It might break. Someone could get cut. Now peanut butter comes in plastic jars.

It does not cost a lot to make plastic. Things made out of plastic are cheap. Stores have plastic toys. We use many plastic things. Even your toothbrush is made from plastic!

Plastic starts out as a liquid. It is poured into molds. The molds are different shapes. Plastic can be thick like a slide. It can be thin like a ruler.





Use Less Plastic *(cont.)*



How Can We Use Less Plastic?

Use containers more than once. An empty peanut butter jar can be used for other things. You can buy food in bulk. You put the items in your own jar. You use the same container over and over again.

You can buy one large bottle of soap. Then you do not need to buy many small bottles of soap. You can buy a large bottle of glue instead of small bottles.

Take a cloth bag to the store. Look for things that are not in too much plastic. Sometimes you can find things in a cardboard box. Cardboard is easy to recycle. Some crayons are in plastic cases. Some are in cardboard boxes. You can make a choice to buy the cardboard box.

