



# P.A.W.S.

Pet And Wildlife Stewardship

Sometimes it is easy to think that just because we throw our trash in a trash can, we've done our part – but it is important to understand that just because the trash collector takes it away does not mean that our trash can't still cause problems for animals. Household hazardous waste, like antifreeze or other chemicals, can also be harmful to pets and wildlife and should be disposed of properly.

### Objective

Students will learn what types of materials can be recycled and the impact that incorrectly disposing of certain types of waste can have on animals.

### Required Materials

- *Don't Trash the Animals* YouTube video: [https://youtu.be/haEslw\\_NN8Y](https://youtu.be/haEslw_NN8Y)
- Computer
- Internet access

### Overview

- 1. Conduct a classroom discussion.** Ask students to consider how littering might impact wild animals. Transition into a discussion regarding landfills and the time it takes for certain materials to decompose. According to Green Living Tips (<https://www.greenlivingtips.com/articles/waste-decomposition-rates.html>) the following are typical time frames for decomposition (\*indicates that the item can be recycled rather than placed in a land fill): \*Glass bottles: 1 million years; fishing line: 600 years; \*plastic bottles: 450 years; disposable diapers: 450 years; \*aluminum can: 80 – 200 years; Styrofoam cup: 50 years; \*tin can: 50 years; \*Newspaper: 6 weeks; orange or banana peel: 2 – 5 weeks). Discuss the value of recycling, especially for products that decompose at very slow rates.
- 2. Watch the video *Don't Trash the Animals*.** Understanding decomposition rates and the dangers that landfills can pose to animals, conduct a classroom discussion on things that students can do to reduce and eliminate the danger that their trash poses to wild animals.
- 3. Ask students to create a public service announcement.** Ask students to conduct their own research on a standard item that is consistently found in landfills that poses a threat to wild animals. Ask students to share their research through their own public service announcement. This can take the shape of a video, like the YouTube video you watched in class, or a voice recording or poster.

## STUDENT CONTEST

Students can mail their PSA to

**Newspapers in Education | 100 W Main St. Ste 100 | Oklahoma City, OK 73102** with an official entry form or submit them digitally by visiting <https://nie.newsok.com/educators/curriculum/cause-for-paws/>.

The winner in each age group will receive a recognition award and one project will be chosen as the Grand Prize Winner! The Grand Prize winner will be highlighted through The Oklahoman and NewsOK.com and will receive a \$500 cash prize to be shared by all group participants.



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