



d3

KNOW
FEEL
ACT!

to Stop Marine Litter

OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANGE

In this activity, learners reflect on what may keep them from acting in a more environmentally responsible manner. They identify their reasons and personal motives and think about the best way to overcome these barriers. Afterwards, they commit to a “greener” routine for a set period of time and monitor their new habits.

SUBJECTS

Environmental Studies, Social Studies, Language, Arts

LEARNERS' AGE

14-15 yrs

DURATION

1 month

OBJECTIVES

- To think about why we may not always “do the right thing” and identify what keeps us from doing so
 - To identify what drives our habits of consumption and waste
- To consider if we are, ourselves, “resistant to change” and how we can overcome it.

SECTION D

WORKING TOWARD
SOLUTIONS

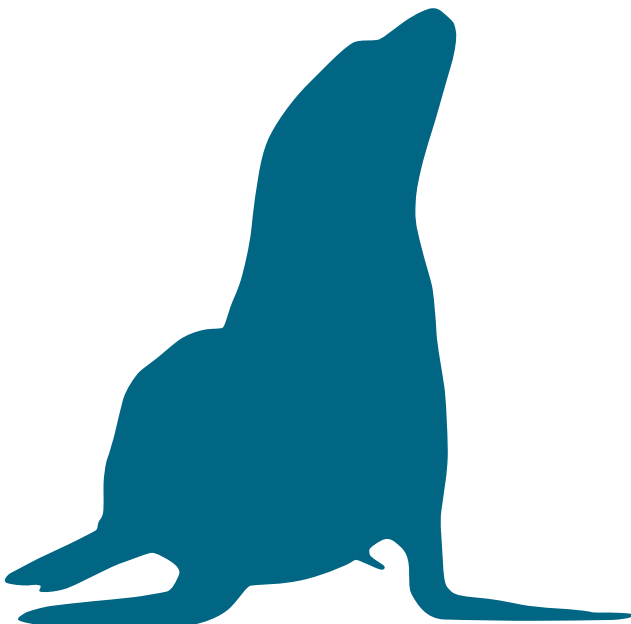




For better or for worse, human action plays a significant role on global ecology. Many of the environmental issues we face today are a direct result of human behaviours and routines. A number of solutions to these challenges will be found by changing human behaviours. In this context, many researchers have investigated the factors that influence our environmental attitudes and behaviours, and how these could be shifted towards a greener lifestyle that is more conscious, more responsible and more sustainable.

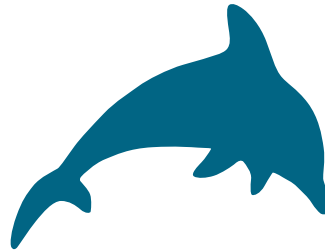


Responsible individuals lead to responsible societies. A sustainable community is in large part the result of each of its members: when members of a community use resources wisely - by recycling, for example - the community moves towards sustainability. When community members pollute less, the community becomes both healthier and more sustainable. Therefore, to promote a healthier, more sustainable future, it is essential to know how to encourage individuals to adopt corresponding lifestyles. Laws and regulations are just one tool. Education can also encourage the needed behavioural changes.





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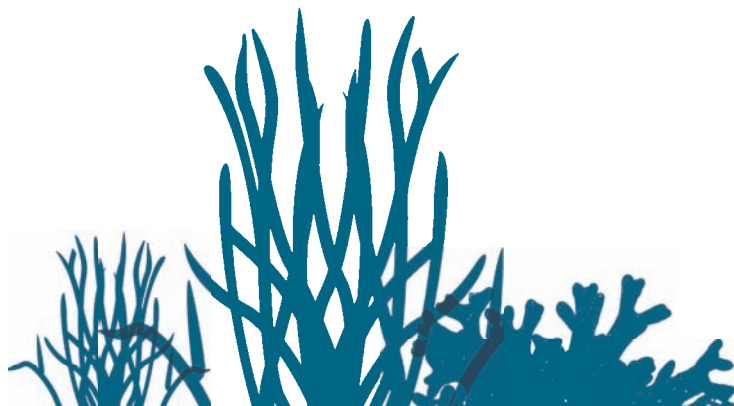


Reducing, reusing and recycling habits

Reducing, reusing and recycling are learned behaviours. The only way to make them a habit is to practice them daily at school, at home, at work, while travelling. Perhaps the household routine is the most difficult to change especially since adults are accustomed to doing things in a certain way. As young learners become used to reducing, reusing and recycling in school, they are able to take these behaviours home and encourage their families to adopt them as well.

The concept of “akrasia”

Why we sometimes are unable to do the right thing even if we know what is right, has been a central concept of philosophy since antiquity. The great Greek philosophers and particularly Aristotle examined the concept of “akrasia” derived from the Greek: “a” meaning ‘without’ and “kratos” meaning ‘power or strength’ or “the state of mind in which someone acts against their better judgement through weakness of will”. Simply put, Aristotle recognised that even though we may have the moral knowledge of the ‘right thing to do’ we may not necessarily do it. He understood that for every human action, apart from beliefs, principles and logic, feelings and passions play a decisive role in how we behave.





Materials and Equipment

A notebook or diary and a pencil

Instructions step by step



Learners think of a behaviour or habit that is connected to dealing with marine litter that they would like to exhibit but currently do not. Some examples: bringing lunch from home in a reusable container, drinking water in refillable containers, carrying their litter with them, picking up others' litter every time they go swimming, etc.

Learners need to identify their personal barriers: What stops them from exhibiting this behaviour? They list the factors that keep them from repeating the desired behaviour. For example, lack of time, convenience, the reaction of peers, etc.

Following, learners consider ways to overcome these barriers. They make a list of what they would need to change to shift towards the “greener” behaviour. For example, carrying lunch in a reusable container would require e.g. cooking more, or devoting sometime in the morning to prepare it, etc.

EXAMPLES OF MONTHLY CHALLENGES:

- **For one month I will not purchase any bottled water!**
- **All of next month I will carry my lunch in nothing but reusable containers!**

They are free to decide whether they share these insights in class.

Learners consider making a decision to overcome these barriers and then consciously practice the “greener” behaviour over a certain period time – a month, for example. They commit themselves to the new behaviour and reflect on their emotional response to it by keeping a diary.

Younger learners may decide to monitor their progress in practicing a new ‘green’ habit by keeping a monthly calendar on the classroom wall with all their names included. They record their daily green behaviour by getting a stamp or sticker, or by drawing a green happy face on the days they are successful. The calendar also functions as a snapshot of the daily progress of the class as a whole.

At the end of the month, learners decide whether their new habit will become part of their routine or if they will fall back to their previous less green lifestyle. Whatever they decide, self-observation of their behaviours and actions over a month may give them deeper insight into how they behave and why.

