Make the most of waste

An English language teaching resource about recycling in Auckland
Level 3-4
This English learning module has two aims. It is going to teach you how to recycle correctly in Auckland. It is also going to help you learn some English so you can understand and talk about rubbish and recycling in Auckland. This module uses the Auckland Council booklet ‘Here’s your rubbish and recycling guide’.
Auckland Council is responsible for the domestic kerbside recycling collection in the Auckland region.

1. Talking points:
- How often is your rubbish collected?
- How often is your recycling collected?
- What day is your rubbish day?
- Do you put your rubbish for collection in a wheelie bin or a bag? Recycling and rubbish are collected in different ways in different areas of Auckland.

After the rubbish is collected, it goes to a landfill. It stays in the landfill forever. A landfill is a large hole in the ground.

2. Talking points:
- What happens to rubbish in your country?

Aucklanders throw away about 160 kgs of rubbish a year each. That is enough rubbish to fill Eden Park every week.

3. Talking points:
- What did you throw away yesterday?
- How much rubbish do you throw away a week?
- How do you feel about the amount of rubbish Aucklanders throw away every week?

Read the box ‘How recycling is collected in different areas of Auckland’ for more information.
Vocabulary:

Read the words and definitions. Put the words into the correct sentences. Be careful to use the correct form of the word.

**environment** (n) environmental (adj) The environment is the world we live in. The natural environment includes sunlight, water, air and soil. When something is wrong in the environment there is an environmental problem.

**pollution** (n), **pollute** (v) When we put chemicals or rubbish into the land, water or air that change it in a bad way, we pollute the environment in that place. Some examples of pollution are smoke in the air, plastic in the water or chemicals used in farming. Pollution can make people and animals sick; it can harm the environment.

**product** (n) a man-made item we use, e.g. a book, a car, soap.

**resources** (n) things we use to make products. Natural resources are things like water, soil, trees, sunlight, gold.

**throw away** (v) to put something in the rubbish.

**valuable** (adj) important, special, precious, worth a lot of money.

**a waste of** (n) a bad use of something. Some common phrases are a waste of time and a waste of money.

1. It is easy for plastic bags and other litter to blow into streams. This can ______________ our waterways.

2. ______________ materials, like copper and gold, can be taken from old mobile phones and reused in other products.

3. If you pour paint or cleaning products down the sink, they go into the water and can pollute the _________________.

4. I always take my own shopping bags with me when I go to the supermarket so I don’t need plastic bags. It is _________________ money and resources to take a plastic bag from the supermarket and throw it away as soon as I get home.

5. Every year, Aucklanders ______________ about 90,000 tonnes of food and garden waste, and it is taken to the landfill.

6. Soil and water are two _________________ that are used to grow plants.

7. We use __________________ made of plastic every day, such as bags, bottles and food containers.
Landfills are an **environmental problem**. The chemicals from the rubbish can cause **pollution**. They also use **valuable** land that could be used for many other things.

**Throwing away** rubbish is a **waste of resources**. Instead of **throwing away** old or unwanted things, we can reuse or recycle them.

**Recycling** is making old **products** into new **products**. Then our old **products** don’t need to go into the landfill.

### 4. Talking Points:

- Do you think landfills are a good place to put rubbish?
- Do you usually use the Auckland Council recycling collection?
- What do you usually do with old clothes?
- What about broken electronics?
- What about old car parts or building materials?
Vocabulary about looking after the environment

Vocabulary:

Read the words and definitions. Put the words into the correct sentences. Be careful to use the correct form of the word.

**prevent** (v) stop something happening. (USAGE: prevent + obj + verb + (from) + -ing e.g. We should try to prevent food waste from going to the landfill.)

**protect** (v) keep someone or something safe from injury, damage or loss.

**reduce** (v) use or buy less.

**save** (v) to not use something so it can be used later, for example save money, save time.

Vocabulary note: Waste

The word waste is used in different ways.

**Waste** (n) 1. Things we don’t want, rubbish. For example, food waste, garden waste 2. (uncount.) The unnecessary loss of something valuable, because it is not being used carefully. For example, “Using a new piece of paper every time results in a lot of waste.” 3. (sing.) An action or use that results in unnecessary loss. For example, “These old computers are still useful. It’s a waste to throw them away.”

**waste** (v) to not use something sensibly or carefully. For example, “Don’t waste paper, write on both sides of the page.”

**a waste of** + n. (n) a bad use of something. Some common phrases are a waste of time and a waste of money.

1. Putting used paper and cardboard out for the recycling collection _____________________ it from going to the landfill.

2. If we ______________________________ the amount of products we buy, we can ______________________ money as well as protect the environment.

3. If we use less paper, less trees will need to be cut down, and we can ______________________ forests and the animals that live in them.
When we recycle, we save the time, money and natural resources that are used to make new products. In other words, we don’t waste valuable resources.

Recycling can also prevent more landfills being needed. This saves land for other uses; and protects the environment from pollution caused by landfills.

After being collected, the recycling goes to a Material Recovery Facility or MRF (say “merf”) where it is sorted. Then it is sold to companies who make new products out of it.

To help you understand more clearly what happens in the recycling process watch a video on Youtube about recycling.

Search term: ‘recycling process’. After you watch, explain the recycling process to a partner.

5. Talking Point:
• What do you do now to prevent pollution?
• What do you do now to reduce the amount you buy?
• What do you do now to save money?

6. Talking Point:
• What other products are made of recycled materials?
• Do you have anything with you today made from recycled materials?
Make the most of waste
Zero waste

Vocabulary, reading and speaking tasks. (Use pages 2-3 of the Auckland Council booklet ‘Here’s your rubbish and recycling guide’.) Page numbers to the Guide are given with each task.

Introduction: Reading and Speaking (Page 2 of Guide)
Read the heading and sub-heading on page 2 of ‘Here’s your rubbish and recycling guide’. Talk about these questions.

• What is the goal for Auckland by 2040?
• What do you think ‘zero waste’ means?
• Why does Auckland Council want to have ‘zero waste’?
• What ‘waste services’ does the Auckland Council provide at the moment?

Reading: Zero waste
Vocabulary (Page 2 of Guide)
Read all of page 2. Match the words with their definitions.

1. rates (n) a. improved
2. urban (adj) b. start something new, and make sure it is working properly
3. enhanced (adj) c. a tax paid to a city or regional council by home owners, which is used to pay for council costs and services
4. region (n) d. change
5. transition (v) e. city or town area, not rural area
6. implement (v) f. area or place, e.g. the Auckland region
Reading A (Page 2 of Guide)

Read page 2 again and answer the questions.

1. How does Auckland Council pay for waste services in Auckland?
2. What three waste services are listed on page 2?
3. What new service is going to start?
4. What service will be improved?
5. What two changes are going to be introduced to the rubbish collection?
6. Are these changes going to apply to all parts of Auckland?
7. How long does Auckland Council plan to take to make these changes?
8. Why do you think Auckland Council is making these changes to the rubbish collection?

Reading and Speaking: Why are we changing?

Reading B (Page 3 of Guide)

NOTE: Complete the Pre-Reading task before reading page 3.

Pre-Reading task. Do not read page 3 yet. Choose the correct number to complete each sentence.

| 65 | 100,000 | 160 |

1. __________ tonnes of material is currently sent to the recycling collection in Auckland every year.

2. The average Aucklander sends __________ kg of rubbish to landfill every year.

3. __________ % of rubbish could be recycled or used again.

Read page 3 and check your answers.
Read page 3 again. Remember to read the graphic at the bottom of the page. Mark the statements below true (T) or false (F).

1. More than half of what the average Aucklander throws away could be prevented from going to the landfill.
2. Most of the waste that could be saved from landfill is food waste.
3. A food waste collection could prevent over 4,000kg of food waste a year going to the landfill.
4. About 15kg of rubbish a year per Aucklander could be put in the recycling collection.
5. 104kg of rubbish a year per Aucklander that goes to the landfill could be recovered.

**Speaking:**

Talk about the following questions.

- 35% of the waste that could be recovered is ‘other waste’. What kinds of things do you think this includes?
- What do you think of the changes Auckland Council is planning?
- Do you think the planned changes will achieve zero waste?

Homework task: In the next lesson you are going to learn what types of household items can be recycled in the Auckland Council recycling collection. Bring 3 or 4 empty bathroom, laundry or kitchen containers to class so you can talk about whether they are recycling or rubbish.
Recycling: Can it go into the recycling?

Vocabulary, reading and speaking tasks using the Auckland Council booklet ‘Here’s your rubbish and recycling guide’, pages 4-5.

Useful language

Questions:

- Can this be recycled?
- Do you put this in the rubbish or recycling?
- What do you do with this?

Comments:

- I think this is recycling.
- I think this might be rubbish.
- I don’t think this can be recycled.
- I’m pretty sure this can’t be recycled.
- This is definitely rubbish.
- I’m not really sure about that one.

Vocabulary and speaking:

Packaging

Vocabulary:

Put the packaging items you have brought from home around the room. You will need about 25 items in total. Use pictures too if you don’t have enough.

Take 3 labels from the teacher. Walk around the room and put your label beside the correct item. Check your labels with a partner and the teacher.

Speaking:

1. Work in pairs or small groups. Use the ‘Yes please and No thanks’ sorting sheets, provided by your teacher. Take about 8 packaging items. Talk about the items with your group and sort them into items that can go into recycling and items that can’t go into recycling.

Look at the ‘Useful language’ box for questions and comments to help your conversation.
2. Change places with another group.
Talk about these questions.

- Do you think they are right? Why or why not?
- What do you think happens if you put items that can’t be recycled into the recycling collection?

Are the items sorted correctly? Read the graphic on page 5 of the Guide. Talk about the correct answers with a partner.

- Is there anything that surprised you?
- What is different from what you usually put in the rubbish and recycling at home?
- What will you do differently in future?

Vocabulary and Reading: Recycling

What are these household items made of? Look at the packaging items again. Write the items in the correct list. Use the pictures on page 5 to help you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>egg carton</th>
<th>ice-cream container</th>
<th>tin can</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>milk bottle</td>
<td>newspaper</td>
<td>bottle top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drink can</td>
<td>shampoo bottle</td>
<td>wine bottle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jam jar</td>
<td>mirror</td>
<td>water bottle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plastic</th>
<th>Metal</th>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Cardboard</th>
<th>Glass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

Add 2 more items from home or your classroom to each list.

Homework:
Complete Packaging Vocabulary Homework sheets on pages 16 and 17.
Recycling
Can it go into the recycling?

Vocabulary (page 4 of Guide)
Match the word with the correct meaning.

1. laundry (n)  a. wash lightly
2. sorting machine (n)  b. waterproof cardboard box used for liquids like milk or juice
3. squash (v)  c. object used for holding food or liquid, such as a box or can
4. carton (n)  d. room where clothes are washed
5. rinse (v)  e. squeeze to make something a flat shape
6. container (n)  f. large machine used for separating different types of recycling materials
7. tetra pak carton (n)  g. cardboard box.
Reading B (page 4 of Guide)

Read page 4 of the Guide. Mark the statements below true (T) or false (F).

1. Plastic bags can go in the recycling bin.

2. Shampoo bottles should be rinsed, squashed and put in the recycling bin.

3. You can put an empty 5 litre cooking oil bottle in the recycling bin, but you should rinse and squash it first.

4. Take the lids off milk bottles and throw them in the rubbish — they can’t be recycled.

5. You can’t recycle tetra paks in west Auckland.

6. You can check your collection dates and get more information about recycling at the website makethemostofwaste.co.nz

7. In south Auckland you should put your paper in the recycling bin.

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Optional Tasks: Recycling at home and in the community

Task 1:
Make a poster or classroom wall display about recycling in Auckland. Some ideas for the display or poster:

- Use packaging materials on the display. Label the packaging and materials.
- Say what can be recycled and what can’t.
- Explain how to recycle things correctly.
- Write a short paragraph about why recycling is important.

Present your poster or display to other students, at home or to people in your community.

Task 2: Recycling is easy
Take home a ‘Recycling is easy’ page in English or your home language. Talk to the people you live with about recycling in Auckland. Talk about why recycling is important and what you can do at home to improve your recycling habits. Talk to the class tomorrow about your family’s or flatmate’s responses and what changes you are going to make at home.

You can also talk to people in your community, such as at work, at church, at the temple or at the mosque.

You can find the ‘Recycling is easy’ flyer in English and seven other languages under the heading ‘Quick guide to recycling – translations’, under ‘Recycling guides’ at makethemostofwaste.co.nz

Recycling is collected every fortnight. Check your calendar or use the collection day search at makethemostofwaste.co.nz

Recycling conserves natural resources and saves energy, helping to protect our environment.

Recycling turns used materials into new products.

Auckland Council provides a recycling collection in most areas. Recycling is different depending on where you live.

You can recycle packaging from the kitchen, bathroom and laundry:
- plastic bottles and containers
- glass bottles and jars
- tins and cans
- paper and cardboard.

Don’t put plastic bags, clothing, food scraps or garden waste in your recycling bin.
Name the household items.

a.__________________  b.__________________

c.__________________  d.__________________

e.__________________  f.__________________

g.__________________  h.__________________

i.__________________  j.__________________

Items:
- polystyrene tray
- egg carton
- ice-cream container
- plastic bags
- tin cans
- milk bottle
- newspapers
- drink can
- shampoo bottle
- glass bottles and jars.
Packaging Vocabulary

Homework

Write the packaging word in the spaces to complete the puzzle. Use the words from the previous page.

R

E

C

Y

C

L

I

G
Acknowledgments
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