

What Can You Do with an Old Red Shoe?

A Green Activity Book About Reuse By Anna Alter

www.oldredshoe.com

Curriculum Guide

What Can You Do with an Old Red Shoe? introduces a number of concepts related to recycling and the environment that can be explored with children.

Some questions to discuss:

- * Where do the different things we buy come from; where are they made and out of what materials? How did they get to us and how does that affect our environment?
- * Where does trash go when we throw it away and how does that affect our environment?
- * Can you think of a new way to use something you own that is broken, or a way to fix it?

Some ways to use this book:

1. After you read each poem, ask the child or children you are reading to the question on the page following the poem. For instance, after reading about Sarah's situation, ask "What can YOU do with one flip-flop?" Let the children come up with their own inventive answers before talking about what Sarah does.
2. After reading this book, present children with items that you'd find in a recycling bin and have them brainstorm their own ideas about how to reuse the items. Take it one step further and have them brainstorm ways that we could avoid bringing home things that are easily thrown away. For instance, instead of reusing or recycling grocery bags, what are some ways that we could avoid bringing home grocery bags to begin with?
3. Give children the assignment to walk around a classroom or their house, and look for ways to reuse items that might eventually be thrown away. For instance, what could you do with old magazines that would be thrown out? What about worn out books in the reading area? Make it a challenge to figure out how much you can reduce the amount of trash you take out each week!

Related Issues for Discussion

Donation:

If we have reused the items in our house as many times as our imagination will allow, and the items are no longer of use to us, is there another alternative to throwing them in the trash? Could someone else use them?

There are many benefits to donating our unneeded toys, clothing, or other household objects; we can help someone in need, reduce the trash sent to landfills, and foster children feeling connected to their communities.

To broach this subject with children, do some brainstorming about the following questions:

- * What could we donate that we do not need anymore?
- * What could we collect from our neighbors to donate?
- * Where could we donate our things?
- * Who might need them and why?

Global Connection:

Recycling and reuse can be a great way to transition into discussions about other parts of the world, and how we are connected to them. Many of the items in our home were made in other countries around the world, where life is very different from life in the U.S., and people struggle to fulfill their basic needs. We live in a country that uses resources imported from places all over the globe, and with this comes a great responsibility to give back to the world around us.

Choose an object to start this discussion (a shoe for example), and discuss the following questions:

- * Take a look at the tag inside your shoes, where were they made and out of what materials?
- * What is life like for the children in that country? Do some research together.
- * What is something people might need in that country that we could send them?