



DON'T THROW THAT OUT!

Reuse ideas for the classroom

second edition

Table of Contents

Classroom Arts and Crafts

Bobby Pin Sewing	2
Bottle Cap Castanets	2
Candles	2
Crayons	2
Inner Tube Stamps	3
Foam Food Trays	3
Lids Shakers	3
Paint Holders/Brushes	3
• Deodorant Bottles	
• Dishwashing Liquid Bottles	
• Fabric-softener Sheets	
• Fast Food Cups	
• Sponges	
Yarn, Glue & Glitter	4
• Baby Wipes	
• Film Canisters	
• Salt & Pepper Shakers	

Classroom Displays

Bulletin Board Background	5
• Fabric	
• Gift Wrap	
• Tablecloths	
Bulletin Board Figures	5
• Bubble Wrap	
• Fabric	
• Foil	
• Gift Wrap	

Display Boards	6
• Ceiling Tiles	
• Cookie Sheets	
Dry Cleaning Bag Adhesive	7
Kleenex Box Pockets	7
Paper Plate Collage	7

Classroom Management

Clothespin I.D. Tags	8
Erasing Marks	8
Hula Hoop Stations	9
Index Car Pockets	9
Newspaper Bags	9
Pantyhose Soap Holder	10
Plastic Lid Patterns	10
Pringle Can Note Carrier	10
Shoe Bag Storage	10
Spool Hall Pass	10

Classroom Organization

Bedsheet Cover	11
Dish Rack Organizer	11
Envelope Bookmarker	11
Shower Curtain Hooks	11
Storage Containers	12
• Baggies	
• Box	
• Carry-out Containers	
• Clothes Basket	

- Envelope
- Eye Glass Case
- French Fry
- Frozen Juice Cans
- Hanging Metal Fruit Baskets
- Ice Cream Buckets
- Lunch Boxes
- Plastic Containers
- Plastic Jugs
- Tick Tacs

Toothpaste Spot Remover 14

Classroom Games

Baby Pool Sandbox 15

Game Markers 15

- Bottle Caps
- Buttons
- Margarine Tubs

Paper Bag Pinatas 16

Puzzles & Puppets 16

- Cereal Box
- Greeting Cards
- Labels

Scratch Paper 17

Sponge Dice 17

Spool Parachute 17

Straw Bubble Blower 18

Tire Tee 18

Tuna Can Toss 18

Ziplock Bags 18

Classroom Activities

Science 19

- Plastic Greenhouse
- Tea Bags
- Compost Jar
- Leaky Soil

Math 20

- Catalogs
- Scrap wood/tools

Reading/Writing 20

- Television Guides
- Magazines

**Note: Create a wish list in the beginning of the school year for the students and their families in order to help you collect items contained in this book.*

CLASSROOM ARTS & CRAFTS

BOBBY PIN SEWING

Bobby pins have blunt ends and are stiff and easy to thread. They can be used for sewing cards, stringing beads, or for any project that requires putting string, yarn, or thread through holes in paper.

BOTTLE CAP CASTANETS

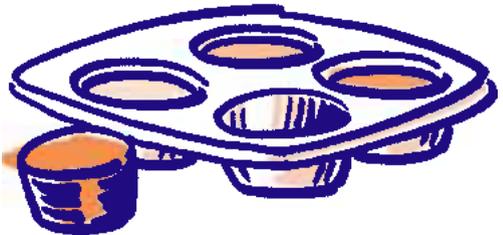
To make bottle cap castanets, punch 2 holes with a hammer and a nail in each bottle cap. Thread a short piece of elastic string through the holes in each bottle cap and knot it. Let a child play the castanets by placing one on a thumb and one on a forefinger, then tap them together.

CANDLES

Students can make hand dipped candles with leftover canning (paraffin) wax and old, broken crayons. Melt wax and several same colored crayons in coffee cans in a pot of hot to boiling water. Tie non-plastic string to stick or pencil for dipping. Remove coffee can from pot. Reheat & repeat.

CRAYONS

Melt broken crayons in a muffin tin in a hot oven. Let cool and pop out of muffin tin. You will have large crayons for young children to use.

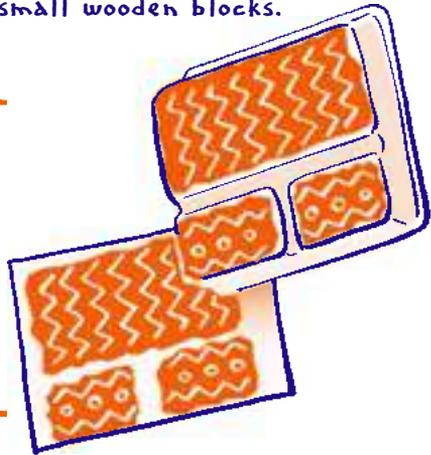


INNER TUBE STAMPS

Make your own rubber stamps by cutting shapes out of tire inner tubes and rubber cement them onto small wooden blocks.

FOAM FOOD TRAYS

Wash and sanitize foam trays. Scratch out pattern with a pencil on the inside of tray and apply paint with a rubber roller. Make several prints on paper.



LID SHAKERS

Add beads, beans or tiny objects in one lid. Glue or tape an identical lid from aerosol and other cans/bottles. Decorate lids to create musical shakers.

PAINT HOLDERS/BRUSHES

Deodorant Bottles

Eliminate sloppy painting with empty roll-on deodorant bottles. Fill with thinned tempera paint and use on paper. Remind students to shake the bottles often with the caps on!

Dishwashing Liquid Bottles

Store tempera paints in dishwashing liquid bottles. The paint can then be squirted into paint dishes or cups, even by students!

Fabric-Softener Sheets

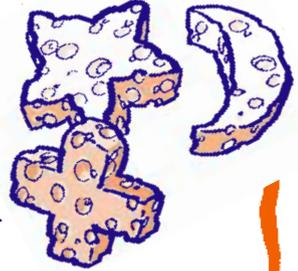
Cut used, pink fabric-softener sheets into fourths. Then fold a section into fourths. Roll it up and staple to the end of a drinking straw. These paintbrushes are great for painting leaves, flowers, and lots more.

Fast Food Cups

To cut down on drips and spills, put paint in fast-food cups. With the fitted top, you'll have a built in hole for a brush. Paint-brushes will bend slightly on the way in, but they will come out free from excess paint.

Sponges

You can make your own sponge shapes. Wet a sponge, and place several heavy books on top to flatten it. After the sponge is dry, draw desired shapes and cut out. Use for sponge painting projects.



YARN, GLUE AND GLITTER

Baby Wipes

The hole in the top of a cylinder shaped baby wipe container is perfect for yarn. Simply pop the top and refill when needed.



Film Canisters

Turn empty film canisters into individual glue cups for your students. They're easy to fill, clean and store. Or, poke holes in the lid to dispense glitter.



Salt and Pepper Shakers

For simple glitter dispensers, use plastic bottles with perforated caps, such as spice bottles or salt shakers. These bottles will help keep student's hands cleaner and less glitter will be wasted.

CLASSROOM DISPLAYS

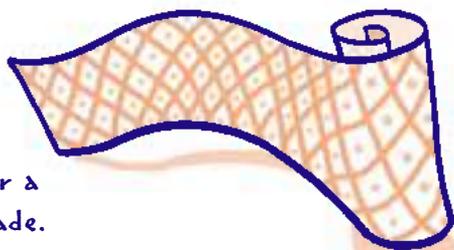
BULLETIN BOARD BACKGROUND

Fabric

As an alternative to paper bulletin board backgrounds, use scrap fabric. It does not fade and can be folded or rolled in cardboard tubes for storage.

Gift Wrap

Gift wrap or shelf paper can make a colorful background for a bulletin board that does not fade.



Tablecloths

White vinyl tablecloths provide durable and economical backgrounds for bulletin boards. They look great with colorful borders and you won't have to replace them all year long.

BULLETIN BOARD FIGURES

Bubble Wrap

To give bulletin boards a three-dimensional effect, use sheets of packing bubbles. Cut out shapes of graduated sizes and glue the bubbles between each layer. This works especially well with clouds, smoke, leaves, waves, and letter shapes.

Fabric

Check your fabric store for cutouts such as Mickey Mouse, Snoopy, etc. Trim around the figure leaving 1/4 inch of fabric. Spray the wrong side of the fabric with a spray adhesive and attach to a piece of tagboard. Cut away the 1/4 inch allowance, and your bulletin figure is ready.

Foil

Used, clean foil to make great holiday stars or snowflakes for bulletin boards or they can be hung on the ceiling.

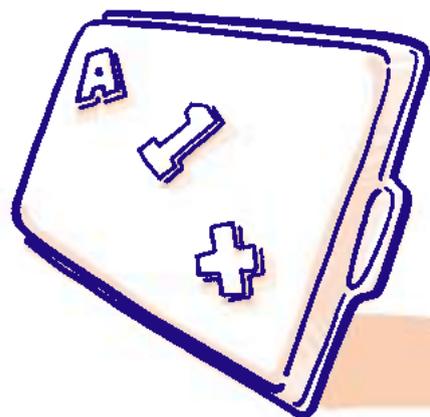
Gift Wrap

Cut letters from wrapping paper to coordinate with bulletin board themes. Laminate to make durable letters. The comics section of the newspaper works well with cartoon themes.

DISPLAY BOARDS

Ceiling Tiles

If you're running out of bulletin board space, acoustic ceiling tiles convert quickly and easily to small bulletin boards or flannel boards. Cover the tile with fabric, bulletin board paper, or felt.



Cookie Sheets

Take an old cookie sheet to use as a center for magnetic letters and numbers. It can also be painted and used for any other magnetic surface teaching aid.

DRY-CLEANING BAG ADHESIVE

An inexpensive way to apply flannel to pictures is to place a piece of the bag between the flannel and figures. Using a protective covering between the iron and the figure, seal with an iron. The heated plastic fuses the flannel to the picture and eliminates wrinkles and bubbles often caused by glue.

KLEENEX BOX POCKETS

Cut empty Kleenex boxes in half and fasten to posters or bulletin boards for durable pockets.



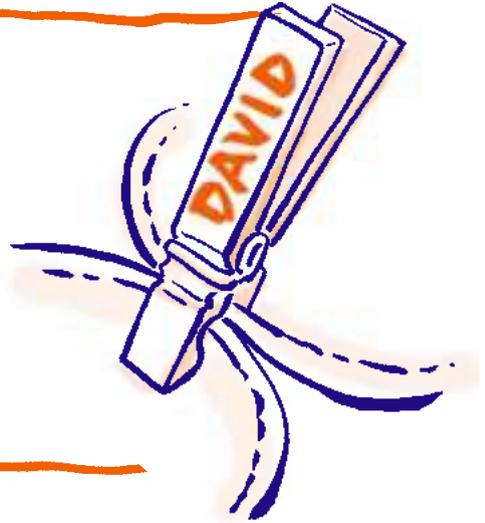
PAPER PLATE COLLAGE

Host a people picnic. Cover paper plates with pictures that tell about students' favorite things, hobbies, family, etc. Cut the pictures from magazines and glue them to the plates in an overlapping collage. Spread a large tablecloth on the floor and invite students to set around the cloth and share the "story" the plate tells. When the sharing is finished, transfer the cloth to the wall and tack the plates to it.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

CLOTHESPIN I.D. TAGS

During the start of the winter season, have each student write his name on a clothespin. To distinguish boots, have students clip boots together with the clothespin.



ERASING MARKS

Dilute a bottle of Glass Cleaner to spray on grease pencil marks. Collect old gloves and mittens to wipe off grease pencil marks.

Use carpet scraps to erase crayon marks from wipe-off surfaces. They are easy to use and very economical.

For precise erasing while using an overhead transparency, use facial or cosmetic wedges. When moistened they make an ideal eraser for small areas.

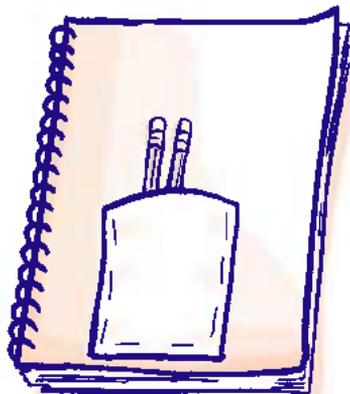
Remove crayon build-up from laminated materials by spraying on a petroleum-based prewash laundry product. Spray an extra amount on stubborn stains. After a few minutes, wipe clean.

HULA HOOP STATIONS

Place hula hoops around the class with tubs of manipulatives, floor puzzles or task cards in the center of each. Instruct students to sit inside the hula hoop and work on their activity. Students enjoy having their own space and should focus on tasks longer!

INDEX CARD AND POCKETS

Have students make a pocket by stapling the sides and bottom of an index card on the cover of their class notebooks. Tell students to keep two pens or sharpened pencils in the pockets.



NEWSPAPER BAGS

As winter weather arrives, teachers of young children need to help students with their boots. Save time by using bread and newspaper bags. Just slip one over the child's foot and his foot will slide in easily, and they will keep their feet dryer.



PANTYHOSE SOAP HOLDER

Encourage students to bring soap bits to school instead of throwing them away. Collect the soap bits and place them in a stocking. Tie stocking to the handle of sink for handwashing soap.

PLASTIC LID PATTERNS

Make durable patterns by using margarine or coffee lids. Trace shapes, numbers, and more with a permanent marker on plastic lids and cut out with scissors.

PRINGLE CAN NOTE CARRIER

Ensure your notes arrive home in good condition to parents. Have each student decorate and label a Pringles can. Children can use their creations to carry notes, messages or forms home.



SHOE BAG STORAGE

A multipocket shoe bag can store many small supplies. Hang the bag and fill the pockets with pens, pencils, crayons, paper clips, scissors, tape, etc.

SPOOL HALL PASS

Plastic spools from gift wrap ribbons make great, durable hall passes that students can slip over their wrists. They are easy to recognize by school officials and are not easily lost.



CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION

BEDSHEET COVER

To hide inevitable clutter, cover the front of shelves with bed sheets. Have students make designs such as handprints with fabric paint.

DISH RACK ORGANIZER

A drying rack that fits inside a kitchen sink is a great storage spot since letter-sized file folders fit perfectly in it. The holder at the other end works well for pencils, pens, tape, spinners, game markers or anything else needed to accompany file folder games.

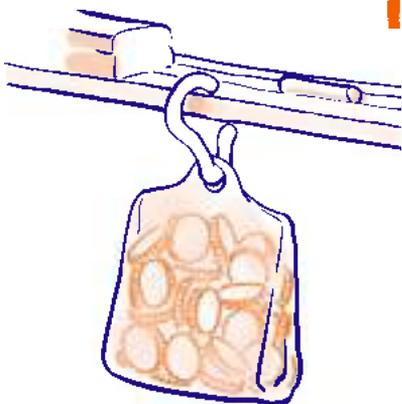
ENVELOPE BOOKMARKERS

Have students cut off the corners of a business envelope, so that the straight edges are at least two inches long. Decorate the corners and use as bookmarks.

SHOWER CURTAIN HOOKS

These hooks can serve several purposes. Some types can be clipped on chalkboard trays to hold book sets or games.

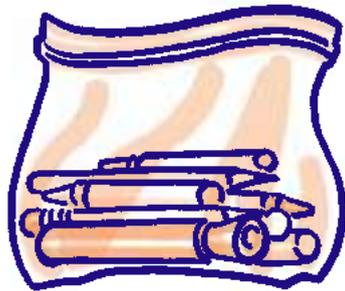
Others clip over window bars to hold headphones. These hooks may even be used as plant hangers.



STORAGE CONTAINERS

Baggies

Place photos in a ziploc bag, so pictures can be handled eliminating fingerprints. Have students store their crayons, pencils, erasers, and other loose items inside quart-sized ziploc bags. Use a permanent marker to write students' names on the outside. Everyone can organize their desk without needing plastic school boxes.



Boxes

Detergent boxes can be cut away to store old magazines. Use contact paper to cover and give extra durability. Spaghetti boxes are the right shape for slides. A large cardboard box can be decorated to hold scrap and recycled paper.

Carry-out Containers

Wash Styrofoam and clear plastic containers to store games, flash cards, markers, etc.. Label or decorate outside with permanent markers.

Clothes Basket

Use plastic clothes baskets to store recess equipment such as balls, mits, etc. They will not only keep your equipment neat, but will be easy for students to transport outside.



Envelope

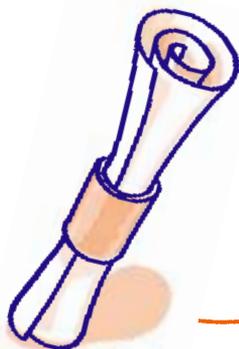
Cut 9 x12 or larger envelope in half and tape on side of desk or chair as a student mailbox. The mailboxes can substitute for student name plates on desks. Cover writing on envelop with stickers or scrap construction paper.

Eyeglass Case

Use an old glass case (preferably one that opens at the top) to hold pens, pencils, or markers. The cases can be left at a learning center, overhead or on desks for students to use conveniently.

French Fry Container

If you love french fries, you'll love gathering materials for this idea. Collect a fast-food french-fry container for each student or number of calculators available to your class. Arrange the calculator caddies on a bulletin board using thumbtacks.



Frozen Juice Cans

To store maps and posters neatly, roll them up and insert them into frozen juice cans that have both ends removed.

Hanging Metal Fruit Baskets

Excellent for holding odd-sized games and activities. Spray-paint them to match your classroom colors.

Ice Cream Buckets

Cover cardboard ice cream buckets with self stick paper. Write a child's name on the inside front of each bucket. Stack the buckets. Let your students use them as storage cubbies.



Lunchboxes

Discarded lunch boxes are great for storage. Just paint them a bright color or cover with contact paper. Wonderful for games, puzzles, activity cards, etc.

Plastic Containers

Rubbermaid silverware caddies can also be used as a perfect storage place for markers, scissors, grading pencils or other school supplies.

Plastic Jugs

Storage for nails and other shop-type items. You can see what's in there and the handle makes it handy for carrying. Can also be used for storage for shells, puzzle pieces, small toys, etc...

Tic Tac Containers

Save empty plastic breath-mint containers to keep baby teeth and little earrings that have been lost. Breath-mint containers are small enough to fit into most pockets, but large enough not to get lost.

TOOTHPASTE SPOT REMOVER

Use toothpaste to remove water spots and other stubborn stains on wooden desks and chairs.

CLASSROOM GAMES

BABY POOL SANDBOX

Reuse an old, plastic wading pool. Patch cracks or holes with duct tape. Spread a large dropcloth on the floor and place the plastic pool on top filled with sand.

GAME MARKERS

Bottle Caps

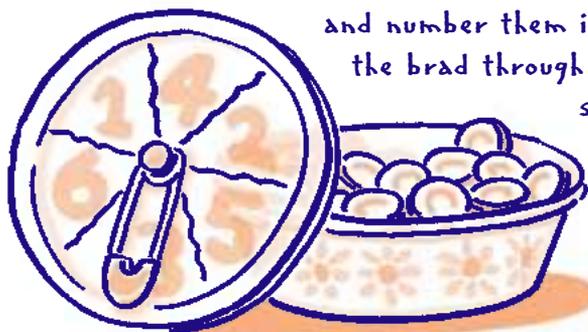
Plastic bottle caps from two-liter containers make easy-to-handle game markers. You can decorate with stickers.

Buttons

Collect old buttons by removing them when making old clothes into rag. Buttons can be used as game markers or help with math activities.

Margarine Tubs

Make a homemade game spinner from an empty margarine tub with a lid, a brad, and a large safety pin. Divide the lid into several sections and number them if desired. Insert the brad through the loop in the safety pin and then through the plastic lid. You can also store the game right in the tub!



PAPER BAG PINATAS

Pinatas are easy to make from brown paper bags. You will need two brown bags. Cut the bottom out of one bag. Cut away the top half of the other. Punch one hole for each student along the bottom edge of the second bag. Tie one length of yarn inside each hole, pulling yarn to the outside. Slide the second bag inside the first one and tape into place. Put one ziploc bag of candy inside the pinata for each student. Staple the bag closed at the top and decorate. Each child should then hold a yard length and pull at the same time.

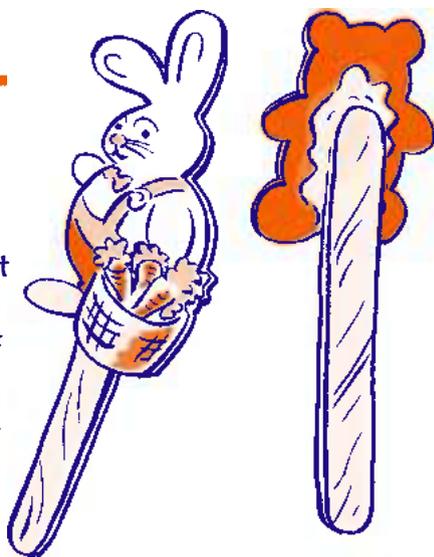
PUZZLES AND PUPPETS

Cereal Box Puzzles

Colorful cereal boxes make great puzzles. To make a cooperative game for two or three players, cut out the front panels of three boxes, then cut each panel into pieces (just a few for preschool, more for older students). Put all the pieces into a big pot and have student take turns building the puzzle.

Greeting Cards

Trim a greeting card or postcard and paste it to the inside of a plastic foam food tray. Cut it into puzzle pieces. Save greeting cards with pictures of animals, people or other characters. Cut the characters out and attach one each to craft stick handles. Now you're puppets are ready for almost any story.



Labels

Save those colorful and bold lettered labels from canned goods for reading games. Cut to uniform size and mount on cards. Collect identical pairs for Concentration and Go Fish games.



SCRATCH PAPER

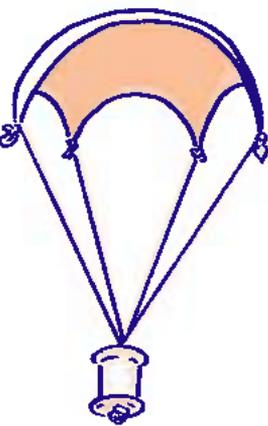
Kids can make their own scrabble-like game using a pencil and a large sheet of paper. The first player writes a word in the middle of the page. The next player adds a word, using a letter from the previous word, and so on. When you're stumped, you're out.

SPONGE DICE

Instead of using regular dice in your learning games, cut cubes out of sponges and label with numbers or dots. Not only are the sponge dice cheaper, they're also a lot quieter too!

SPOOL PARACHUTE

Cut four 12-inch pieces of string. Tie the strings to the corners of an old handkerchief or fabric square, one string on each corner. Then thread the ends of the strings through the hole in an empty spool. Tie the ends in a knot too big to slip back through the hole. Toss the parachute up into the air and watch it float down to the ground.



STRAW BUBBLE BLOWER

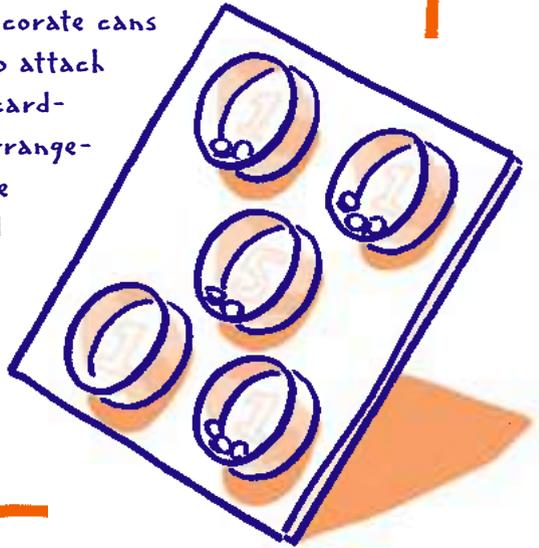
Tape four to six straws together. Dip one end of the bundle into a bubble solution and blow through the other end for a super-duper bubble blower.

TIRE TEE

Make a your own tire-tee ball. Fill the center of an old tire with cement. Place the handle of a plunger in the cement. Let students take turns placing a ball in the upside-down plunger and hitting it with the bat.

TUNA CAN TOSS

Clean six empty tuna-size cans and place several layers of tape over the edges. Decorate cans and glue with a glue gun to attach them to a sturdy piece of cardboard or plywood in any arrangement. Write a score inside each can. Place the board flat on the floor or at a slight tilt. Mark where players must stand and toss coins or buttons into the cans.



ZIPLOCK BAGS

Large Ziplock bags can be used as a gameboard. Permanent markers work great on the plastic. The bag can also store gamepieces, markers and directions. Also, you can wipe the board off if it gets dirty.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

SCIENCE

Plastic Greenhouse

Put a layer of small rocks and two or three inches of potting soil in a clear, plastic cup or in a bottom of a 2-L soda pop bottle. Plant one or two small plants in the soil. Place a second plastic cup upside down on top of the first one or top of bottle and tape together.



Tea Bags

Flatten a spent tea bag and lay it in the center of a paper towel. Cut a hole in the top of the tea bag. Put a seed in the wet tea bag and place in a bowl. Put the bowl in a sunny place and add a little water to the tea bag each day. When your seedling has grown enough, you can replant it, tea bag and all, in the garden or in a pot with soil.

Compost Jar

Collect canning or glass jars for a team of students to observe how materials decompose. Poke holes in lid and add 1/4 full of soil or compost, food scraps (egg shells, coffee grounds, fruits, veggies and breads), 1/4 soil & several spoons of water. Add newspaper and other items to see how long they take to break down.

Leaky Soil

Place a small paper or plastic cup with holes poked in bottom on two popsicle sticks over a large and cup. In small cups, test soils (potting soil, sand, clay, pebble, etc...), and pour same amount of water in each. Have students observe how long it takes for water to drain & how much water soil absorbed.

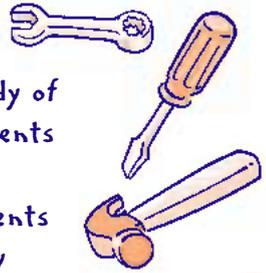
MATH

Catalogs

Start saving mail order catalogs for math practice. Give each student a catalog, making sure that the original worksheet or order form is enclosed. Students choose 3-5 items to purchase and fill out the order form. Be sure the student includes the cost, postage and handling, tax, and the final total of the order. Use old or starter checks to put the final touch on the order.

Tools and Scrap Wood

A fun science/math unit can involve the study of common tools and measurements. Have students bring old tools from home, or you can ask a hardware store to loan you some tools. Students learn the names and uses of common tools by building birdhouse, butterfly, duck or bat boxes. Call the metroparks naturulist for the latest drawings and guides.



READING AND WRITING

T.V. Guides

Old television program listings can be useful tools for teaching students how to write short summaries. Have students study several viewing guides, noting the style used in describing movies and programs. After a class discussion of several examples of the mini-plot summaries, show a short film or ask students to read a short story. Then ask your students to write about what they've seen or read.

Magazines

Collect different magazines for students to read and do activities such as summarize a longer article, guess the audience of the magazine or ad, write a story based on ad pictures, etc... When you are finished, pictures in the magazine can make collages.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

***Choose to Reuse: An Encyclopedia of Services, Businesses, Tools & Charitable Programs That Facilitate Reuse.* Nikki & David Goldbeck, Ceres Press, Woodstock, NY, 1995.**

***Cups & Cans & Paper Plate Fans: Craft Projects from Recycled Materials.* Phyllis Fiarotta and Noel Fiarotta, Sterling Publishing Co., New York, 1993.**

***Earth-friendly Toys: How to Make Fabulous Toys and Games from Reusable Objects.* George Pfifner, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1994.**

***Teachables from Trashables: Homemade Toys That Teach.* C. Emma Linderman, Toys 'N Things Press, Minnesota, 1979.**

***Using Recyclables: Grades 4-6.* Kathy Rogers, Instruction Fair, Inc., Grand Rapids.**

Department of Energy, soda bottle hydrology, www.em.doe.gov/soda/index.html

Cornell Composting, www.cfe.cornell.edu/compost/soda

Family.com, recyclable *crafts*, www.family.com search *recycling*

Reduce Garbage, Eliminate Landfills, reuse ideas, www.geocities.com/RainForest/5002/index.html#ideas

The Imagination Factory www.kid-at-art.com/htdoc/matchtmp.html

Please send your ideas that you have used in the classroom to Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District, Education Specialist, 323 Lakeside Ave., Suite 400, Cleveland, OH 44113 or to krocco@www.cuyahoga.oh.us



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July 2001