



Why is there
no waste in
nature?

TAKE IT FURTHER:

THINK

What curiosity questions can you ask?

e.g. What is waste? How is our waste created and how does this approach differ from nature's? What do you know about natural life-cycles in nature? Can you think of examples in nature where waste material is transformed into something else?

FEEL

How might different people feel about this?

e.g. How does it make you feel when see people being wasteful? How does it make you feel seeing waste in nature, e.g. plastic in the ocean, crisp packets in the rivers or in the forests? How might you feel if you were to reuse or create something new out of "waste"?

CONNECT

What links can you start to make?

e.g. How does nature reuse waste materials? What can we learn from the cycles of nature? Where are inspirations of the cycles of nature already being used in the human world?

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Activity ideas:

1. It can be argued that waste is a human invention because in nature, waste does not exist - literally everything that is used is reused again. For example, in autumn many leaves fall from the trees, but they do not become waste – they decompose and become nutrients for the soil. Take a look (or a walk) outside and see if you find other examples where nature is recycling itself.
2. Have you heard of the phrase ‘Zero Waste’? What do you think this means? Take a look at this short video about being zero waste: [Zero Waste Lifestyle](#). If you feel inspired, why not try a zero-waste challenge and continue it for as long as you wish or are able. To get started, check out this useful link [here](#)
3. Waste is not all the same. Some materials, called *organic materials* such as plants, leaves and food can be broken down by nature. Other materials, like plastics, metals, and glass cannot be broken down by nature so easily. To find out how long it takes for some materials to break down, try this guessing game activity: [How long to decompose?](#)
4. Unlike plastic, leaves and food waste break down and turn into soil. This is nature’s way of reusing or recycling its materials. When you throw your food away in the bin, it is often taken to *landfills*. Landfills are large areas of rubbish, where the food cannot compost or break down into soil. To learn more about nature’s process of recycling, did you know that you can create your own soil from your food waste?!
Use this handy guide to make your own: [How to make your own compost](#)

USE THE **THINKER'S GUIDE TO HELP YOU*

What other activities could you do?

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RESOURCES:



THINGS TO READ

[What is zero waste?](#)

Article | *Nature Path*




[5 Types of Waste](#)

Article and resource | *4 Waste*

[The differences between human waste and nature “waste”](#)

PDF resource | *Science Companion*



THINGS TO WATCH



[Cradle to cradle approach](#)

4 minute video | *Cradle to Cradle NGO*

[Zero Waste Lifestyle](#)

5 minute video | *Permacrafters*



THINGS TO LISTEN TO



[Practically Zero Waste](#)

Podcast series | *Spotify*



THINGS TO DO



[A beginner’s guide to zero waste](#)

Zero waste guide | *Going Zero Waste*

[Meet our Waste changemakers](#)

(*Richard & Nicola Eckersley*)



THINGS TO INSPIRE



[Explore our Waste topic](#)

(A home-learning topic for 5-18 year olds | ThoughtBox)

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