

## 29. LITTER ANALYSIS

**Overview:** Litter will be collected and analyzed.

**Objective:** Students will classify litter at the Garden, interpret their findings, and make inferences about how the litter got there and what impact it may have on the environment.

**Time needed:** 1-2 hours

**Group Size:** 3-4

**Age appropriateness:** any

**Site:** any

**Background:** An understanding of what is natural and what is manufactured and transported into a region is necessary for a citizen to help them be aware of their surroundings and the impact humans have on their environment.

**Materials:**

Provided at the Garden

Clipboards

Provided by the classroom teacher

Plastic collection bags (grocery kind work very well and demonstrates recycling)

Pencil and paper

Tweezers

**Preparation:**

**Pre Activity:** Videos, posters, and class discussions regarding the relationship between natural resources and manufactured goods. The students should have a knowledge of the terms reduce, reuse and recycle.

**Procedure:**

1. Each group will take their own hike through the Garden. Areas or trails may be assigned. Groups should stay on the trails and only step off if they can acquire the piece of litter with only a few steps and not injure the habitat.
2. As they hike, they are to collect any material they think is litter and place it in their collection bags. The location of the litter may be noted on a map.
3. After a specified time has elapsed, have groups assemble in a common area like the amphitheater or under the mesquite tree.
4. Groups should go through their collection and create a chart, graph or some other description of what they found.
5. Each group should choose at least one of their finds and report to the group how they think the piece of litter got there and what would be the best thing to do with it. Could it be recycled or reused?

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6. If any of the groups collected anything that is natural to the Garden, have a class discussion about that object. Some students may not be aware that something like a feather is not litter, but a part of the natural recycling process in nature.

**Modifications:**

**Extensions:** Each group could write a creative story describing how that piece of litter was created in the first place, found its way into the Garden, and what may happen to it next.

**Reference List:**

Education Goes Outdoors, by Frank Johns, Kurt Liske, and Amy Evans. Addison-Wesley.

**Time of Year:** any

\*\*This activity was adapted from Education Goes Outdoors

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