

## **Trash or Consequences: Making a Dent in Recycling**

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This unit is designed for middle school students, but could be modified for upper elementary grades and high school students. Students will learn about the world's plastic pollution problem and will read excerpts from several books and online resources on this issue, and then investigate the items that are not recycled in their own school cafeteria every day. They will then start a program to expand cafeteria recycling, particularly focusing on collecting plastic milk bottle caps. The gathered plastics will be mailed or taken to a plastic collection bin sponsored by a company that turns them into products like razors, toothbrushes, and reusable kitchen goods. The culminating activity will be an informational writing and speaking project in which students will write about what they learned about the global plastic issue, their school's part in it, and how they helped institute a new recycling program. Students will also answer some oral questions and make observations on Flipgrid; videos will be downloaded and included in their writing projects. The goal of this unit is for students to understand global waste problems and see themselves as integral parts of the world community: Citizens who have a voice and can solve issues they care about or impact them. Learning objectives include WHST.6-8.7, SL.8.5, WHST.6-8.2, and WIDA's standards for literacy.