



**FOOD WASTE
WARRIORS**



**GRADES
9-12**

Equipping Food Waste Activists

STUDENTS WILL LEARN . . .

- the resources that go into producing our food.
- the impact of food waste on the environment.
- ways to reduce food waste, both personally and on a larger scale.
- what effective advocacy and education look like.

Equipping Food Waste Activists



Giving Students a Chance to Audit and Advocate

HOW IT WORKS

1. **Watch the slideshow** to introduce the issue of food waste (10–25 minutes).
2. **Conduct a classroom or at-home food audit** so students can SEE just how much is wasted (1 class period plus a lunch period).
3. **Invite students** to take on one or both of our exciting activism projects to educate leaders, peers, and younger children about the problem of food waste.



What You'll Get

- ➔ Food Waste Slideshow (includes teacher notes)
- ➔ Guide to Conducting Food Waste Audits (printable)
- ➔ “Spreading the Word” advocacy guide (printable)
- ➔ “Passing the Baton” lesson planning guide (printable)

Optional Extras

- ➔ WWF Science Lesson
- ➔ Guidelines for Working With Cafeteria Staff and School Administrators (includes sample letter)
- ➔ Teacher Resource on Four Ways to Fight School Food Waste
- ➔ Taking the Lesson Home (Resource for Families)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Passing the Baton Lesson Planning Guide

To Begin:
Fill out some basic information about the group you will be teaching.

Grade level: _____
School: _____
Number of students: _____

Next:
Now think about the main points you want to convey about food waste. What do you want students to remember? Keep the age of the children in mind as you decide on these main points.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Spreading the Word on Food Waste

This tool is designed to get you thinking about a communication strategy on the importance of food waste reduction to your peers. The more people know and care about food waste, the greater our chances of seeing actual change.

Social media can be a powerful tool for spreading a message. Use the following questions to brainstorm an action plan and take notes on your ideas.

Scouting the Message

Raise Awareness

1. Another way to raise awareness is to share stories of other people/organizations who are furthering your mission. Discuss this strategy—if you want to employ it, assign this role to someone.
2. Talk about whether you want to socialize your message in ways that aren't related to social media: posters, pamphlets, etc. Plan what these will look like and who will create them.
3. Decide how you will track your metrics (likes, shares, etc.) and who will be responsible for this. This is important information for knowing what kinds of posts are working and what kinds aren't. Decide when and how you will evaluate the effectiveness of your campaign.

Now go change the world!

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Slideshow: What is Food Waste?



Show students exactly how much food is wasted at their school or in their homes.

This slideshow introduces students to the problem of food waste. Teacher notes are included for each slide to deepen discussion. No advance preparation is necessary!

- 1.** You can prepare your students for the slideshow with a quick chat using questions like:
 - * What percentage of food that you put on your plate do you think you waste?
 - * What are some reasons you throw away food?
 - * Do you think food waste is a big problem? Why or why not?
- 2.** Then show the slideshow, reading or paraphrasing the notes included with each slide.
- 3.** Afterward, you may want to discuss “take-aways” with questions like:
 - * What did you learn from this slideshow that you didn’t know before? Did anything surprise you?
 - * In what ways does food waste impact the environment?
 - * What do you think are the best strategies for decreasing food waste?

Food Audit

The heart of this program, this memorable activity shows students exactly how much food is wasted at school or in their home.



In this activity, students collect and measure food before it's thrown away, report their data to WWF, and are inspired to consider solutions.

Click here to download the [Guide to Conducting Student Food Waste Audits](#).

This program is super versatile! You can have students do an audit at home for one meal or over several days. In a school setting, students can set up an audit in the cafeteria and record the school's daily food waste, or you can have them eat in the classroom and measure just their class waste. The possibilities are endless.



The Guide to Conducting Student Food Waste Audits includes printables for conducting student interviews about why they are throwing away food and recording the type and weight of food thrown away.

Online Learning

Encourage students to measure leftover food after two different meals. If they have a kitchen scale, they can use that. If they don't have a scale at home, they can use a plastic container (milk jug with top cut off, disposable food container, etc.). Have students fill the container with leftover food after a meal and mark the line with a Sharpie. Then have them repeat the activity another day and see if their "leftover line" is any lower. If you want, students can take and share pictures of their Meal 1 and Meal 2 leftovers in your virtual classroom, explaining what strategies they employed to decrease their food waste.

Your class can be part of WWF's national research by entering your classroom's audit results in the Food Waste Warriors Data Dashboard.



Learn More 

Project

Passing the Baton

Elementary education project

Time required:

One class period for planning, then whatever additional time it takes the group to finalize their lesson.

Several hours for in-person or virtual meetings, teaching the class, and conducting a food audit.

Name: _____ Date: _____



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1. _____
2. _____
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Plan:

1. Spend some time brainstorming visual aids that might help you communicate your message. Write your ideas here.

2. Think about fun games or activities that would engage the students and relate to your lessons. **Elementary school kids** love things that are hands on or involve movement. Write your ideas here.

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1. Communicate with elementary teachers in your district to find those willing to allow high school students to conduct a lesson on food waste (including audit if desired).
2. Download and print the “Passing the Baton” lesson planning guide.
3. Explain that students will be describing the problem of food waste to elementary school students. Divide students into groups if there are several classes or grade levels with whom you will be engaging.
4. Hand out the “Passing the Baton” lesson planning guide and give class time for initial planning. Students should continue working in groups as homework.
5. Facilitate elementary classroom visits. After these are completed, lead a discussion about what students learned by educating younger children.
6. To assess this activity, ask participating elementary teachers to write a brief note describing the strengths and weaknesses of the students’ lesson.

Simplify

To simplify this activity, have students forgo conducting an audit and keep their lesson basic with content and one activity.

Amplify

To amplify, invite students to create food waste worksheets or activities for younger students. They can plan to include a read-aloud session as part of their lesson.

Online Learning

Students can plan and lead their lesson using whatever platform the elementary students are accustomed to. They will need to shape their lessons accordingly, relying more heavily on discussion than activities.

Advocacy Project

Spreading the Word

Time required:

One class period for planning, then flexible based on teacher/student preference and expectations.

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Raise Awareness



1. Another way to raise awareness is to share stories of other people/organizations who are furthering your mission. Discuss this strategy—if you want to employ it, assign this role to someone.
2. Talk about whether you want to socialize your message in ways that aren't related to social media: posters, pamphlets, etc. Plan what these will look like and who will create them.
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1. Download and print the “Spreading the Word” advocacy guide.
2. Explain to the students that this is their chance to raise awareness of the problem of food waste in their community. Their goal is to help others see the environmental impact of food waste and how they might be able to effect change by advocating for prevention efforts, food donations, or landfill diversion.
3. Have students divide into two groups based on whom they will target with their message: adults or peers. The adult group may want to further sub-divide based on whom specifically they will target (school administrators, restaurant owners, etc.). The peer group students may want to further sub-divide based on roles they will play in their effort (social media managers, video creators, etc.).
4. Have students use the “Spreading the Word” advocacy guide to plan and execute their campaign. Set benchmarks and due dates based on what makes sense for your situation.
5. To assess this project, have the adult group forward you emails they sent and turn in copies of letters they mailed. Find out if they received any replies or if recipients took any action. Ask the peer group to do a brief demonstration of their various social media posts and report on how effective they felt their campaign was, what changes they saw in behavior/thinking, etc.

Simplify

To simplify this activity, allow students to have conversations with peers or school leaders explaining the problem of and potential solutions for food waste.

Amplify

To amplify, invite students to create a video that illustrates or dramatizes the issue of food waste. It should include both statistical data and a compelling argument.

Online Learning

This project is fully accessible to those learning at home. Share the advocacy guide online and then have groups meet virtually rather than in person. The rest of the project is unchanged.



Passing the Baton

Lesson Planning Guide

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Passing the Baton

Lesson Planning Guide

3. Think about how to conduct a food audit in an elementary school classroom. What supplies will you need? What are the steps for a single class or grade to collect and weigh their food waste?

4. What other resources might be helpful (think library books, YouTube videos, a slideshow you create, etc.)?

5. How will you reflect on the learning?

Now use this space to write out your plan for a Fighting Food Waste elementary school lesson.



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Socializing the Message

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The Message

- What are some hashtags we could use?
- How often will we post?
- What platforms will we use (Instagram, Twitter, etc.)?
- Could we create a specific challenge of some kind? (Check out [this girl](#) who warned all of her trash in a jar—there something similar we could do?)
- What kinds of posts do we want to create (images, memes, videos, inspirational writing, etc.)?
- What do we want people to do as a result of our message? Is there a program we could set up (cafeteria share table, school composting, etc.) that we could invite them to join? Or is it more about personal habits?
- How long will this campaign last? Once you have spent time brainstorming together, decide who will do each task. Based on your roles (social media managers, video producers, meme creators, etc.) you may want to divide into smaller groups for more planning.

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Speaking Truth to Power

Here you have a chance to communicate with decisions makers who can make a big difference on food waste—people like hotel and restaurant owners, school administrators, grocery store managers, and government officials. Spend some time brainstorming as a team and jot down your ideas here.

- Who do we want to target?
- For each category of decision maker, what will we be asking them to do?
- What will be the most effective avenues of communication with each person (formal letter, email, in-person/Zoom meeting, petition signatures)? You may want to try different forms to see what works best.
- What information will be most important to include so that this person is convinced that

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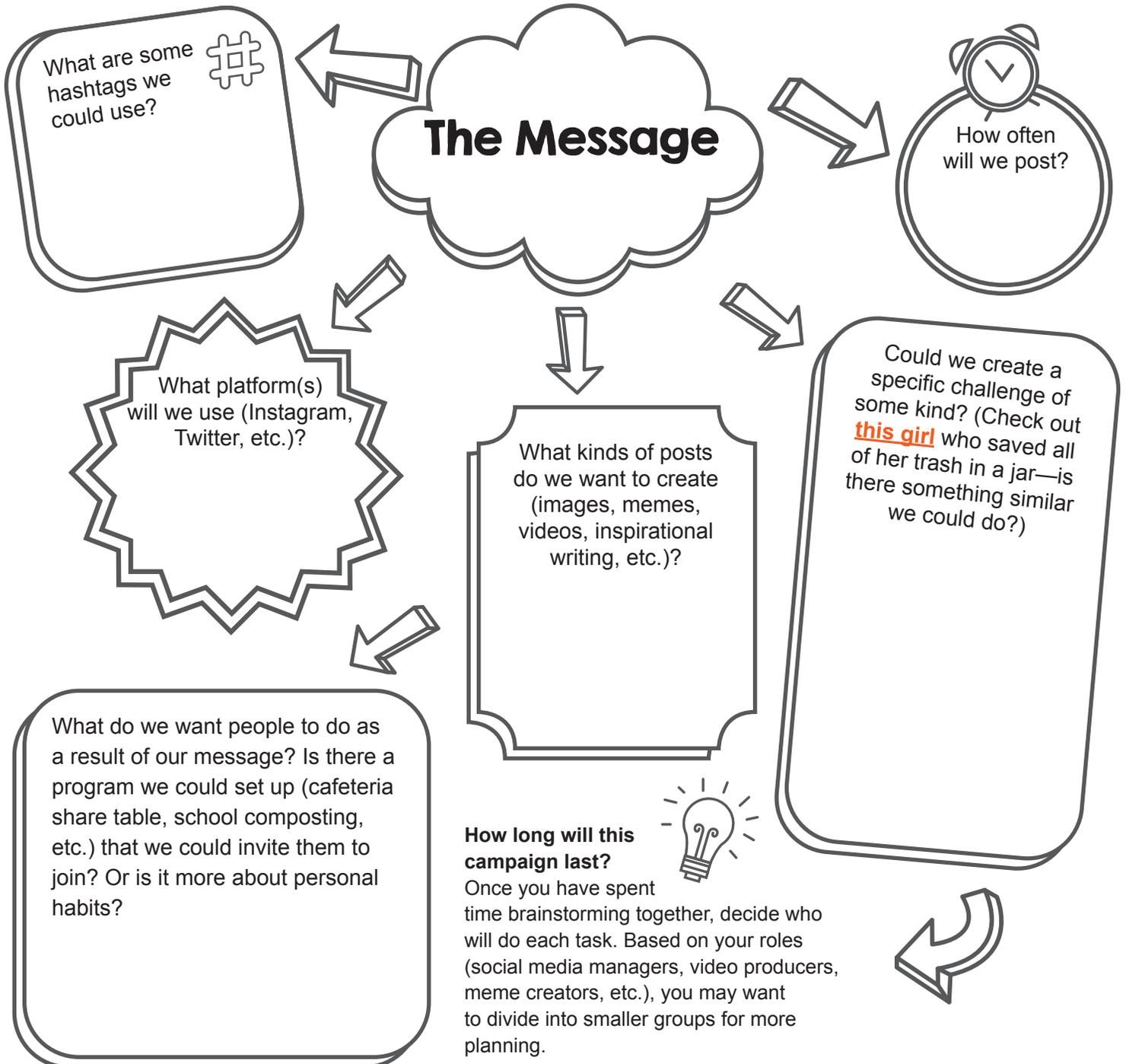
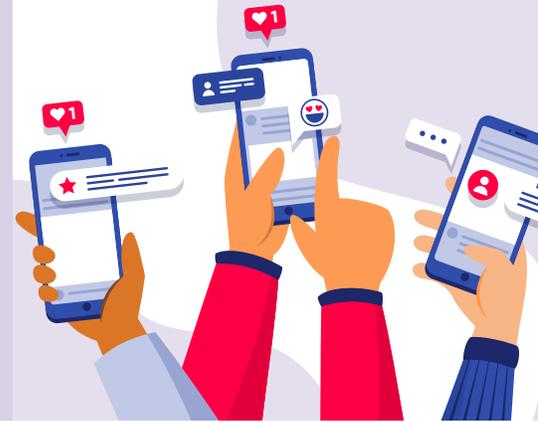
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Name: _____

Date: _____



4. What information will be most important to include so that this person is convinced that food waste matters?

Now plan who will be reaching out to each community member.

1. You may want to work in teams (two people work on a letter together), or you may decide that splitting the work between individuals is easier.

2. Make sure you read the information below (Communication Tips) so that your interactions are professional. This makes you more likely to be taken seriously.

3. Decide when and how you will evaluate the effectiveness of your campaign.



Now go change the world!

Communication Tips

Note:

The principles above are the same whether you are writing an email or a business letter that you will mail. The only difference is that you don't need the date and contact information at the top of the email!



If you wanted to make an announcement to a big crowd but forget to turn on your microphone or speaker, your audience wouldn't have a chance of hearing you—no matter how important your message may be. In the same way, there are some important ways you need to “turn on the mic” when communicating with adults. Here they are:

- * Be polite. This means expressing gratitude, using appropriate titles (Ms. Brown, Dr. Collins, etc.), and saying “please.”
- * Don't be overly familiar. These are adult leaders, not friends. Use “Dear” not “Hey.” Avoid slang. You don't want your language to be unnatural, but it should not sound like a text message either.
- * Early in the message, explain who you are and why you are reaching out. By the end of the second sentence, your reader should understand the gist of why they are receiving this email or letter.
- * After you introduce yourself, explain the problem (food waste) in a clear, concise way. You want the reader to understand the gravity of this issue through concrete data that supports your point of view.
- * Then state what you are asking the reader to do. What action are you hoping they will take to enact solutions or impact the problem? Can you offer any practical help to facilitate their action?
- * Close by thanking them for their time and stating how they can reach you if they desire further dialogue.
- * If you want to initiate a conversation (phone, Zoom, or in person), you should first reach out with an email. This email should not be as detailed as a stand-alone email but will give the recipient the general information about who you are and why you would like to meet. State how much time you are requesting and make sure you honor the commitment if they agree to a meeting.