



WILD CLASSROOM

Why does food waste matter?

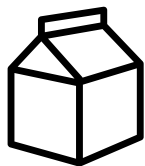
Explainer Video Student Handout

Use with the video on the [Wild Classroom YouTube channel](#).

1) Identify: Use what you learned from watching the video to complete the sentences with one of these key vocabulary terms: **greenhouse gas, composting, landfill, methane**

- a. A _____ is a place where trash is buried and can create harmful gases.
- b. A _____ traps heat in the atmosphere.
- c. Food waste in landfills emits _____, which is even more harmful to our environment than carbon dioxide.
- d. _____ is when leftover food and natural waste is broken down into healthy soil, bypassing landfills.

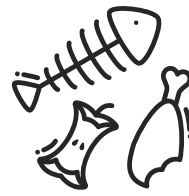
2) Explain: Recall from the video how throwing away an unopened milk carton can affect our environment. Describe three things that are wasted when food gets thrown out.



3) Reflect: In the U.S., about 30-40% of the food we grow is wasted. Why do you think food waste is such a problem at schools, specifically? What's one solution you would propose to solve this?



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4) Discover: Read the following sample from a blog post by Rogue, a high school senior who ran a food waste audit at her school. Then answer the questions below to show what knowledge you gained from reading about Rogue's experience.



The first food waste audit was completed in October of 2024. After reviewing the data, it became very clear that fruits and veggies were being avoided the most during lunchtime. Out of almost 100 lbs of uneaten food, fruits and vegetables accounted for 45% of it at 44 lbs.

After learning this, finding a solution became our next priority. Since the next food waste audit wouldn't be for months, I wanted to do something to raise awareness in the meantime. That's when I got the idea to create a visual display using real food from school lunch to help students see what was being wasted.

By the time of our next audit, I had a poster at every station showing the types and amounts of food being thrown away. When we reviewed the data, we saw that food waste had gone down by about 30%, from 96 pounds to 70. Whether it was the audits, the posters, or both, we saw a big improvement.

a) What kind of food was being wasted the most in Rogue's school?

b) What happened after students saw the posters and art made from wasted food?

5) Plan & Share: In the space below, create a catchy slogan to convince others to reduce food waste in your home, school, or community. List what your message will be, who you will share it with, and one other personal action you will take to limit food waste!



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Explainer Video Student Handout: Answer Guide

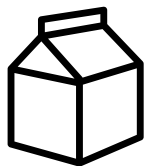
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1) Identify: Use what you learned from watching the video to complete the sentences with one of these key vocabulary terms: **greenhouse gas, composting, landfill, methane**

- a. A landfill is a place where trash is buried and can create harmful gases.
- b. A greenhouse gas traps heat in the atmosphere.
- c. Food waste in landfills emits methane, which is even more harmful to our environment than carbon dioxide.
- d. composting is when leftover food and natural waste is broken down into healthy soil, bypassing landfills.

2) Explain: Recall from the video how throwing away an unopened milk carton can affect our environment. Describe three things that are wasted when food gets thrown out.

Many possible answers



- *the food itself is wasted*
- *the resources used to produce the food are wasted, i.e. water, energy, and land used to raise cows, process the milk, and package it*
- *fuel and energy costs are wasted to transport the food to the store and then to you*

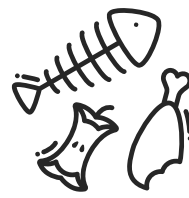
3) Reflect: In the U.S., about 30-40% of the food we grow is wasted. Why do you think food waste is such a problem at schools, specifically? What's one solution you would propose to solve this?

Many possible answers

Some possible solutions students may think of: create a share table, start a composting program, advise the cafeteria to distribute smaller portions, encourage teachers to teach about food waste, and have schools allow more time for meals.



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a) What kind of food was being wasted the most in Rogue's school?

Fruits and vegetables were wasted the most (45%).

b) What happened after students saw the posters and art made from wasted food?

Food waste went down 30% in Rogue's school cafeteria.

5) Plan & Share: In the space below, create a catchy slogan to convince others to reduce food waste in your home, school, or community. List what your message will be, who you will share it with, and one other personal action you will take to limit food waste!

Many possible answers. Encourage students to get creative!