

How should we dispose of our rubbish?



The Problem

For as long as humans have inhabited the Earth, they have been creating waste! The problem now, however, is that we each produce far more rubbish than in the past. Today we live in a 'throwaway society,' many products aren't built to last and pressure from the advertising industry encourages us to buy new products more frequently than in the past.

The problem is twofold; firstly, it is becoming increasingly expensive to dispose of our rubbish and secondly, we are rapidly using up the store of natural resources that are required to make new products.

In fact, 90% of all products we buy are waste within 6 months of purchase.



Milk

The way in which we buy our milk is a good example. Traditionally, households had their milk delivered by a milk man, in a glass bottle that would be reused, on average, 12 times, thus producing zero waste. Nowadays households tend to buy their milk from the supermarket in large plastic bottles that are used once and then thrown away! By looking

at this item alone it is easy to see why we are producing more rubbish than ever before. By using plastic bottles we are also depleting our valuable resources of oil, the raw material that plastic bottles are made from.

Activity 1

Using Resource A, compare the 1930s bin with the a bin from a household today. Compare the types and amounts of items being thrown away.

What do you notice about the amount of waste that is easily recycled?

What could be done to reduce the amount of rubbish in our bins?