

# GOOD HABITS



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## Grades

K-5

## Objectives

Students will be able to: 1) recognize that many of their actions are habits; and 2) realize that littering is a habit that has negative impact on the environment.

## Method

Students will discuss littering as a bad habit. Students will portray various litterbugs and suggest ways to change littering habits. Students will discuss how certain actions are better for the environment and will work on making a few of these actions habits.

## Materials

Writing materials

## Vocabulary

Disposable, environment, habit, littering, reduce

## Procedure

1. Introduce the term HABITS by asking students the following questions:

Do you do any of the following things without thinking about them?

- Do you bite your nails when you are nervous?
- Do you chew on your pencil when you are thinking hard?
- Do you look both ways before crossing the street?
- Do you buckle your seat belt when you get into a car?

These behaviors are habits. A habit is something a person does over and over again without thinking about it. Some of our habits are considered good, such as buckling our seat belts, and some of our habits are considered bad, such as biting our nails.

2. Some of our habits have an impact on the environment. Habits that hurt the environment are considered bad. Explain that some students have a habit of throwing unwanted items on the ground. What is this called? (LITTERING) Littering is an example of a bad habit that hurts the environment. Littering may happen by accident, but the result is land and water pollution that must be cleaned up. Look around the classroom and schoolyard for evidence of littering. Discuss how adults can have the same bad habits of littering.
3. People who litter are called litterbugs. Litterbugs thoughtlessly litter wherever they go, because littering has become a habit. Explain to students that they are going to portray different types of litterbugs.
4. Divide the class into five small groups. Assign each group a type of litterbug to portray from the following list:
  - **The Sport Bug** – this litterbug loves to attend all types of sporting events and cheer on his team. In between his cheers, he samples every type of food in the concession stand, and leaves a pile of food wrappings under his seat
  - **The Traveling Bug** – This bug is constantly on the go. When travelling in his car he can be seen continually throwing items out of his window.
  - **The Picnic Bug** – A true nature lover, this bug loves to enjoy a meal in the beautiful outdoors. When he leaves the site (littered with the remains of his meal), he is surprised to find the site is not as pretty as he originally thought, and he vows to find a better spot for his next picnic.
  - **The Bad Aim Bug** – This bug makes a game out of throwing trash in the trashcan. He gets one point if the toss is good. If he misses, he figures there's always next time.

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## continued

### Procedures continued

Instruct groups to develop short skits that portray the typical actions of their litterbugs. Each group member must be in the skit.

5. Play "Name That Litterbug." The class will try to name the litterbug portrayed in each skit. No guessing is allowed for the first 30 seconds of the skit.
6. After each skit is presented, review the actions of that particular litterbug. Ask students if they have ever seen that type of litterbug. Have they ever been that type of litterbug?
7. Brainstorm and list reasons a litterbug might give for littering. Make sure all of the following reasons have been mentioned:
  - There was already litter there.
  - Who cares? I don't live there.
  - It was only one little piece.
  - The trashcan was too far away.
  - They pay people to pick up this junk, anyway.
  - I didn't litter; the wind blew it away.

Guide students into realizing that these reasons for littering are really just excuses for a bad habit.

8. We can change bad habits. To change a habit, first you have to be aware of what you are doing and when you are doing it. For instance, if chewing gum too loudly is a bad habit of yours, you first have to be aware of when you are doing it before you can stop it and change. To replace the bad habit with a good one, you then have to practice doing the good habit in place of the bad one until it becomes so natural you don't think about it anymore. Then it has become a new habit.
9. Tell the class that they are going to work on correcting bad solid waste habits and developing good ones.

10. Let the students know that they've formed a good habit when their choice of action makes a positive difference. Tell them how we all need to think twice about the consequences of our actions and to take responsibility for both good and bad habits.
11. Brainstorm and list good solid waste habits on the chalkboard. Have each student select one action from the list and work on making it into a habit. Have students write down their choices at the top of a sheet of paper. Every time they do this action, have students record the time and date on this sheet. Give them two weeks to try to establish their good habits.
12. At the end of the two weeks, have students share their experiences. Did anyone succeed in establishing a good habit? Do they think it takes more time?