

## Rubbish?

### Read what a teacher says about this activity

‘Rubbish?’ is a great activity for raising awareness of issues connected to waste, recycling and looking after our planet. As the saying goes: ‘One person’s rubbish is another person’s treasure.’ When I use this activity with my learners I can see them learning far more than just English.

<b>Stage 1: Prepare</b>	<p>Collect around 10-12 before the class. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a small stone</li> <li>• an elastic band</li> <li>• an empty plastic bottle</li> <li>• one sock</li> <li>• an old coin</li> <li>• a light bulb (not working)</li> <li>• a used tea bag</li> <li>• a dead battery</li> </ul>				
<b>Stage 2: Introduce</b>	<p>Start by showing each item and asking: ‘What is this?’ Elicit the answers and write the words up on the board.</p> <p>You can also ask: ‘What is it made of?’ and elicit or provide words like plastic, cardboard, metal etc.</p>				
<b>Stage 3: Discuss</b>	<p>Then, on the board draw the following table:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="480 1469 1342 1615"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="480 1469 882 1541">Useful?</th> <th data-bbox="882 1469 1342 1541">Rubbish?</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="480 1541 882 1615"></td> <td data-bbox="882 1541 1342 1615"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Put the learners in pairs or small groups and say: ‘Work together and decide if each item is useful or rubbish. If it’s useful say why. Complete the table. Monitor.</p>	Useful?	Rubbish?		
Useful?	Rubbish?				
<b>Stage 4: Collate</b>	<p>Say: ‘Let’s share our answers together.’</p> <p>Write up anything interesting on the board and try to reach a class consensus.</p>				

**Stage 5: Follow-up**

Either write the following questions on the board or dictate them. Learners should then discuss the questions in groups. They can then share their ideas in a whole class discussion.

1. How much rubbish do you throw away each week?
2. Do you try to recycle things? If so, how?
3. If yes, what kind of things do you recycle?
4. How can we reduce the amount of rubbish we produce?
5. What happens to the rubbish we throw away?
6. How can we persuade people to produce less rubbish and recycle more?

**Using activities that include social issues is a good way of encouraging your learners to think about the world around them and to take personal responsibility for their behaviour and the decisions they make.**

**Author: Adrian Tennant**