



# SHOPPER POWER - TEACHER'S NOTES

## KEY MESSAGES

Individuals have power as consumers to make sustainable choices for the health of the planet.

## CURRICULUM LINKS - NSW

- **This program explicitly teaches GEOGRAPHY Stage 2**

**The Earth's Environment:** Protection of Environments & Perceptions of Environments.

**A student:**

**GE2-2** describes the ways people, places and environments interact.

Students investigate sustainable practices that protect environments e.g. discussion of ways waste can be managed sustainably.

**GE2-3** examines differing perceptions about the management of places and environments

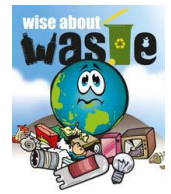
**GE2-4** acquires and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry.

- **This program supports parts of the SCIENCE Stage 2**

**A student:**

**ST2-2VA** demonstrates a willingness to engage responsibly with local, national and global issues relevant to their lives, and to shaping sustainable futures.





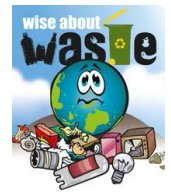
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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

By making simple changes in our buying habits, we can help build a more sustainable future. Such changes include making purchases of high quality, durable products; sharing and buying second hand goods, re-using and buying products made of recycled materials. Being a 'mindful consumer' can help our environment more than most people realise.

The majority of waste is generated during the manufacturing, processing, and distribution of a product. Moreover, air and water pollution also occurs during manufacturing and distribution of a product. Thus, by picking products that are durable, re-usable, recyclable and not over-packaged and by buying locally made products whenever possible, we can make a direct impact towards protecting our environment.





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## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

### 1) What Am I?

Provide students with the following clues:

- a) "In Australia, people use 7000 of me every minute."
- b) "They usually only use me for about 3 minutes before I am no longer needed."
- c) "I will be around for a really really long time, possibly up to 1000 years!"
- d) "I'm really light and when I go outside, the wind can take me a really long way, I can even get stuck up in trees."
- e) "If I wash down the stormwater drains or creeks and get in the ocean, I can be deadly."
- f) "I am such a good swimmer, sometimes other animals think I am alive and want to eat me."

ANSWER: A plastic bag

Students can make a huge difference to the environment if they refuse single use plastic bags. If there is just one thing you do differently from today, saying no to plastic bags is a great place to start. Students can suggest some alternatives to using plastic bags.

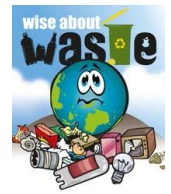
Today we will be looking at how just by changing the things we buy, and carry our shopping home in; we can make a really big difference to the environment.

### 2) Hungry Planet Images – see think wonder

Students work in groups of two or three. Each group receives a *Hungry Planet* image of a family from a different part of the world with their weekly groceries. Students have 5 minutes to study their image. They are to report back to the class with responses to the following;

- i) What do you see?
- ii) What does it make you think?
- iii) What do you wonder?





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*Hungry Planet Images – see think wonder continued*

By looking at how much people buy and what they buy, we can think about the impact they have on the environment. Often food is bought but not actually eaten. Ask students how much food gets thrown out in their house? Australians throw out approximately 20% of the food they purchase. That's approximately \$1,000 of food per household, per year.

If there is a lot of packaging in the food we buy, the environment suffers because we are left with a lot of plastic that won't break down and will end up in landfill.

**a) Class Discussion Focus questions:**

- i) Which of the families would have the biggest impact on the environment through using the most resources and packaging?**
- ii) Which family would have the smallest impact on the environment?**

Students can order the images from the least amount of packaging to the most amount of packaging. Eg. Laying the pictures on the floor in a long line.

**b) Focus questions:**

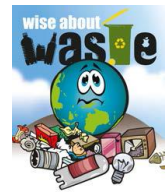
- i) Why do you think this family has so much packaging?**
- ii) Why do you think this family has no packaging?**
- iii) What can we learn from this?**

**3) Grocery product match-up.**

Students will be given a picture of a grocery item from the resource box. Once they receive their item they are to consider the following questions:

- a) What is my product made of?*
- b) Where have the resources come from?*
- c) How long would I use it before I throw it away?*
- d) Is there another alternative or is my item a good choice for the environment?*





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*Grocery product match-up continued*

Students are then asked to form into groups of other similar items that are used for the same purpose. Eg. The disposable tissues and the handkerchief would go together. In your groups discuss which items would be the worst choice for the environment and which items would be the best choice? Each group reports back about their observations and justifications.

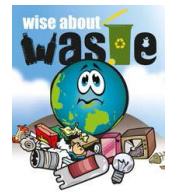
#### 4) **Zero waste party – booklet activity**

Students complete page 11 in their Wise About Waste booklet. They are to circle the items they would purchase that have the least impact on the environment.

### GOING FURTHER

- Consumer Card Role Play
- Think about something you or your parents bought recently, it might have been a birthday present or a Christmas present, or something you bought with your pocket money. Wait until all students have an item in mind.
  - Ask yourself the following questions
    - Did it have a lot of packaging?
    - Is it going to last?
    - Has it broken already?
    - Can it be repaired?
    - Can it be recycled?
    - Was there a better alternative?
    - Could you have found a second hand one?
    - Could it have been borrowed from a friend?
    - Students are invited to share their thoughts and feelings about this reflection.





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- Every time we buy something, we can make a good choice for the environment. The *Eco Shopper* cards in the *Wise about Waste* booklet are a resource that students or their parents can take with them when they shop to remind them of the questions they can ask whenever buying something.
  - Work in small groups to consider the different possible shopping scenarios and ways you can use the Eco Shopper cards.
- You really want a particular toy or electronic device but you know a friend bought one and it broke before they even had it for a week. Look at the Eco Shopper cards – decide which one you could use and act it out with a couple of other people eg a shopper, a parent, the shopkeeper or store manager.
- You have a favourite book, movie, computer game or toy you are thinking of buying. Think through the answers to all the questions on the first Eco Shopper card. If time allows perform this “thinking aloud” to a small group or the class.

### SOURCES

- 1) [www.coolaustralia.org](http://www.coolaustralia.org) (2015). Education Resources. Retrieved from <http://www.coolaustralia.org/>
- 2) NSW Environment Protection Authority (1996). *Earth Works, Living with Less Waste*. Anne Munroe (ed).
- 3) <http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.nsw.gov.au/> NSW Government food waste reduction program

### RESOURCES

- 1) Hungry Planet Images x 12
- 2) Pictures of consumer products and alternatives x 30 eg tissues, handkerchief, disposable plates, cups, cutlery, re-usable plates, cups, cutlery, lunch boxes, plastic containers, cling wrap, zip-lock bags, sandwich wrap, plastic table cloth, fabric tablecloth, plastic shopping bag, fabric shopping bag, plastic toys, metal toys and wooden toys.

