

MINIMIZING WASTE - SUPPORT PACKAGE

Upcycling & Green Gifts



No matter the occasion, gift-giving provides a great opportunity to demonstrate our appreciation and to bond with our loved ones. When giving a gift, we consider the recipient's personality and values, but in our modern world, consumerism and waste are also major concerns. For the next gift you give, try the Do It Yourself (DIY) approach. There's nothing like creating or receiving a personalized card, hand-crafted item, or other thoughtful creation. Your selfless action can be one that also helps the Earth. When making gifts, where can you find free resources to work with? Look in the recycle bin!

Clean, dry waste can be a great resource for projects and crafts. From paper to plastic, from cloth to furniture, there is probably a way to use it again! Innovative solutions can happen when waste is seen in new ways. The only limit is your imagination! Get into your crafting mode with Green Schools resources on Minimizing Waste, one of our five program themes. After a special occasion such as a birthday, what happens to all the gift wrap, packaging, and garbage? Explore waste reduction with the primary focus of waste prevention. Through upcycling we can practice creative expression and design while exploring the possibilities of repurposing waste.

Action Plan

Step 1- Change your mind! Waste isn't for the landfill- it's a resource! Check out the concepts, and explore ideas from the design book [Cradle to Cradle](#) for ideas about smart products that include disposal in the design process. Have you heard about [toothbrush recycling](#)? Design a product that has an end destination that helps the Earth.

Step 2- Consider the recipient of your gift. What's the occasion? If you're giving a gift for a particular reason like a birthday, consider the recipient and ask yourself what gift would be useful and helpful. How about a glow in the dark mobile or a pencil holder? Check out the many boards Green Schools NS has on [Pinterest](#) for heaps of ideas!

Step 3- Host a free-for-all Upcycling Day! As a free school event, the focus can be on a particular theme such as dioramas. Mother's Day cards, or simply make new with the old! Crowd-source clean recyclable materials from parents or other community members.

Step 4- Got old textbooks? Why not make snowflakes or origami! Simple crafts like these are beautiful and practical as they beautify a space for a birthday or special event, and have created no additional waste, but gave a waste resource new life!

Step 5- Start a fundraising initiative by selling upcycled crafts, cards, etc. Instead of giving the gifts, why not get really good at a particular craft, like the business [Kind Krafts](#), perfect it and then sell it? The fair could coincide with another event such as a bake sale, spring fling, fall fair, etc. This market table could raise money, for example to buy better waste bins for sorting, bringing the concept full circle.





Step 6- Make it a game! With your upcycling materials, get students together in small groups or pairs to design a board game. The system can have a theme, such as an arcade game like the [Caine's Arcade](#), or it can be a tabletop game similar to Settlers of Catan or Sorry.

Step 7- Find a solution to a local or global challenge of using waste materials. Having a simple design brainstorming session on a topic currently being studied in class such as [water filtration](#). Reusing waste and crafting can generate creative ideas, for example, in the [garden](#). Complex problems can be solved [using waste products](#).

Resources

[Green Schools NS YouTube - Upcycling project ideas and tutorials](#)

[Green Schools NS Pinterest - Green Upcycling](#)

[Green Schools NS Pinterest - Minimizing Waste](#)

[Green Schools NS Activity - How to Upcycle Used Paper into Seed Paper P-12](#)

[Green Schools NS Slideshow - Intro to Ecological Footprint P-12](#)

[Green Schools NS - Green Holidays Support Package](#)

[Green Schools NS - Gift of Time Support Package](#)

[Upcycled Wonders - Upcycling ideas](#)

[HGTV - Upcycling in the home](#)

[Upcycle That - Inspiration and ideas](#)

[Good Housekeeping - Upcycling ideas](#)

[Saskatchewan Environmental Society - School Waste Audit: Lesson Plan Grades 2-8](#)

[Pinterest - Recycle Nation](#)

[Waste Reduction Week Canada](#)

[Clean Up The World Weekend](#)

[Greenest School in Canada Contest](#)

[Great Nova Scotia Pick Me Up](#)

