

## Recycling in Japan

### Purpose:

Students will learn about recycling in Japan and the factors that have influenced this practice.

### Target Grade Levels: 6-8

### Essential Questions:

1. How does recycling in Japan compare to recycling in the U.S.?
2. What factors (i.e. social, geographical and economical) have influenced Japan's recycling effort?

### Rationale:

- To help students understand that geographic size, economic influences, and limited resources have played a role in Japan's national recycling effort.
- To help students understand the similarities and differences in attitudes and practices of recycling between Japan and the U.S.

### Materials:

- Maps of various maps of Japan and the U.S. (available at: <http://www.eduplace.com/ss/maps/>)
- Overhead
- The Bic Story (Handout A)
- Action Plan For Recycling Presentation (Handout B)

### Activities:

Day 1	5 minutes	Introduce the lesson by presenting the students with the following question: "Which country do you think does more to recycle its waste material: Japan or the United States?" Poll the students and tabulate their responses.
	7 minutes	The teacher will have volunteers use the classroom map to locate both USA and Japan by using the coordinates. The teacher will provide the square mileage of each country as well as the current population.

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- 8 minutes      The teacher will use a board or overhead and will design a graph organizer to list the descriptions of each country i.e., size, location, population. Underneath the teacher will make another graphic organizer to list the problems the above descriptions may cause, i.e., not enough room, uses a lot of resources.
- 20 minutes      The students will place the above information onto their graphic organizer. Using the graphic organizer the students will brainstorm problems each country has with their location, population and square mileage. (One of the key problems for both USA and Japan is the environment. From this problem the students will need to identify the need for recycling/ reusing.)
- Day 2      20 minutes      The students, in groups, will discuss the following questions: does the USA do enough for the environment based on recycling? How? Which country does more recycling?
- 10 minutes      The teacher will read the Bic Story (Handout A) aloud to the students. Using this story he/she will generate a few discussion questions. Following the discussion, the teacher will give directions for the activity.
- 40 minutes      The teacher will organize students into small groups. In their small groups the students will use the contents in each bag and using paper, list as many alternative ways to reuse each item. (Minimum of 2 – 3). Each group will share their alternatives.
- Day 3      15 minutes      Reusing the story and the maps, the teacher will generate a discussion about how the limited space and isolation of the country of Japan has motivated them

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as a culture to recycle and reuse materials more than Americans do.

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| 15 minutes | Have students explore areas Americans need to work on the most in regards to the environment i.e., water, consumable attitude, air, land fills. Using these examples the teacher will introduce the "Action Plan" for their presentations.  |
| 20 minutes | In their pairs or small groups the students will work on a plan of action (Handout B) i.e., what type of presentation, assignments for preparing for the presentations, determining the purpose of the presentation, how will they motivate Americans to reuse and recycle. Each group will orally share their plan with the rest of the class. |

### Assessment:

The Action Plans and oral presentations will be the basis for assessment.

### Grade Adaptation:

This activity is designed for middle school aged students. By modifying the amount of teacher direction and the sophistication of the responses for lower as well as upper grade level students.

### Relationship to Social Studies Standards:

Grades 6-8, People in Societies, Benchmark A

Compare cultural practices, products and perspectives of past civilizations in order to understand commonality and diversity of cultures.

*This lesson was developed by Melissa Conrath, superintendent, Big Walnut Local Schools.*

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### Handout A

#### The Bic Story

Several years ago a male Social Studies Education Professor from Ohio State University was visiting Japan. While there, he attended seminars and visited the local universities.

While in his hotel room, he was writing in his journal and his Bic pen ran out of ink. Thinking nothing about it, he threw the pen into the trash can. The next day, he had left his hotel room with bags in hand. He stopped at the front desk to checkout when all of a sudden a hotel housekeeper tracked the professor down.

"Sir, Sir, your pen" said the housekeeper.

The professor turned around to discover the housekeeper trying to return his empty Bic pen.

"No thank you. I don't need the pen." said the professor.

"You need to refill it." said the housekeeper.

"This doesn't have a refill. It is disposable. I just use it and throw it away." said the Professor.

Sadly, the housekeeper looked at the professor, then looked at the pen. Then the American shrugged his shoulders walked away.

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## Handout B

### ACTION PLAN FOR RECYCLING PRESENTATION

Directions: Decide the environmental problem you want to address in USA, i.e., pollution.

How will you solve the problem?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

How will you present your solutions? (i.e., commercial, video, skit)

When presenting know the following:

Who is your audience? (youth, adult)

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What medium will you use? 3-5 min.

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