



Does Litter Decompose?

For teachers/leaders

[Link to science](#)

Environmental Aim: To gain an understanding that litter does not simply disappear.

Materials Required: Samples of different kinds of rubbish that could end up as litter, a trowel, plant pots full of soil (optional) and labels.

Method:

Step One - Collect a selection of materials that could become litter. It is important to use different things like an apple core, crisp packet, paper, glass.

Step Two - Bury the rubbish in some earth (this can be done outdoors or indoors using plant pots), remembering to place a label above where each piece is buried.

Step Three - About six weeks later, carefully dig under each label. What do you find?

Discuss: What happened to the litter? How long did it take for it to rot away? Was there anything that did not decompose? What would happen if we just left all of our rubbish on the ground?

Additional Activities: The litter can be buried again and uncovered at regular intervals to see whether there has been any change.

