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Waste Education Curriculum

Meet with the teacher and introduce myself to the students and talk about Cairns Regional Water and Waste and the services it provides.

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The above will relate to student levels and I will provide examples of day to day use in their homes and schools. Discuss waste – What is waste? – Where does waste go? – Can you tell me what you know?

Why is it important to make sure that waste goes to the right place?

Promote discussion on what do we do with waste? Provide examples to the students.

Introduce the waste services that Cairns Water provides – explain in detail:

- MRF – Materials Recovery Facility. I will talk about waste that can be recycled in Bindy and waste that cannot be recycled or put in Bindy. Introduce the “cradle to cradle” concept with visual displays e.g. posters and hand outs along with examples that the students can relate to.
- Bedminster – Talk about what kind of rubbish can go into Gazza. What is the Bedminster? Where is the Bedminster? Talk about the processes of the Bedminster e.g. turning general household waste into agricultural compost.
- Transfer Station – What is the transfer station? What goes to the transfer station? Provide examples about the sorting process and how different materials are relocated.
- Buyback shop – What is the buyback shop? What do people take to the buyback shop? Why is it important to have a buyback shop?

Discussion:

- What happens to anything left over?
- Where is the landfill site?
- What is the landfill site called?
- What goes to the landfill site?
- Why is it important to reduce waste going to landfill?
- What are the challenges for landfill in this region?
- How can you help?

Activities – Bindy and Gazza Handouts

What can you put into Bindy?

What can you put into Gazza?

Plastic Bags

Why can't you put plastic bags into the recycling bin?

What can you do with your plastic bags?

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What happens to the natural environment when plastic bags are not recycled properly?

- Rainforest World Heritage Area
- The Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area
- Water ways
- Animals

Discussion – How can you minimise the use of plastic bags?

Waste Minimisation

Discussion on:

- Recycling practices
- Reduce – Say no to plastic bags, what else can you use?
- Finished with a product – can anybody else use it?
- Buy items with less packaging
- Be aware when purchasing products
- Take your own carry bags
- Use plastic and glass containers to store things
- Take unwanted household items to the buyback shop
- Recycle clothes at charity stores
- Recycle magazines and story books to Doctor surgeries and hospitals

Follow up Field Excursions

Meet students at the MRF.

The MRF has an educational room with plasma TV to view the process of recycling. There is a camera system to follow the paper, glass, aluminium, and assorted plastic products from the drop off stage through to holding areas, ready to transport to Brisbane. This is an excellent visual display for students to understand how recycling works and what is needed to make the above process flow smoothly. Students will see the manual process involved in recycling and workers sorting recyclable materials.

Go to Transfer Station and the Buyback Shop (5 minute drive)

See the transfer station and view what is taken and what is sorted there. They have separate areas for gas bottles, paints and leads, glass, paper etc.

The buyback shop will provide a visual display of what can be taken and the variety of goods that the general public have an interest in purchasing e.g. Landscaping materials, timber, household items, computers, furniture, plumbing supplies etc.

- Teachers and students need to wear full covered footwear.
- Be advised to bring wet weather jackets – no coverage
- Schools responsible for own transport to the MRF - Waste Street off Redden Street, Portsmith. Then onto the Transfer Station – off Ray Jones Drive, then back to school.

The Field excursion will provide the students a full picture of waste and how waste is managed in the Cairns region. It will allow the students to become more aware of what is needed to protect their surrounding environment and how to better manage their resources.

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