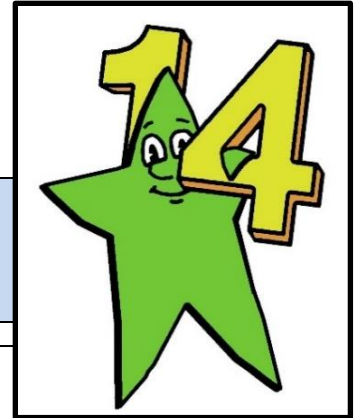


Reusing Children's Books

eco-cycle

Snapshot

This project keeps already-loved books out of the landfill and gets them back into the hands of children.



<https://bit.ly/eco-cycle-zero-waste-schools-guide>

Objective: Used books will be collected and redistributed in a way that benefits the school and/or its students.

Age Groups: PK-12th grade

Setting: School library, classroom, or other locations in the building

Project Duration:

- Planning: 1+ hours, depending on collection type
- Collection time: varies
- Implementation: varies depending on book distribution

Materials:

- Poster-making materials
- Empty cardboard boxes/storage bins

Why This Project Matters:

As kids grow up, parents are often left with shelves of unwanted books. Libraries and school districts often discard perfectly good books to make room for new ones. Many of these unwanted books, especially hard-covered ones, end up in landfills.

Project Summary:

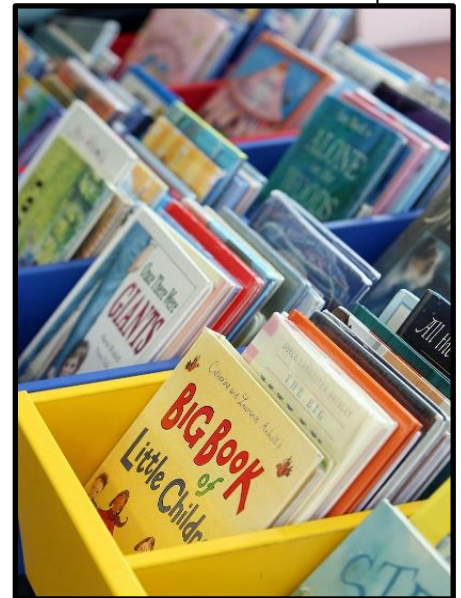
This project begins by focusing on ways to collect used children's books from various sources. Next, it explores ideas about how to use them creatively within the school as an alternative to candy and trinket rewards. The collected books may even be sold as part of a fundraiser, replacing the traditional fundraisers that feature waste-making wrapping paper and candy bars. Most importantly, this project gets these books back into the hands of children.

Implementation:

Collecting the books:

The goal is to gather a large quantity of gently-used children's books that are age-appropriate for the school. Inquire with local libraries, reuse/recycling/thrift centers, and the school district warehouse about unwanted books destined for the landfill. If these sources aren't available, run a book drive at the school using the following steps:

1. Ask school office staff to include information about the book drive in the school's newsletter, inviting families to donate.
2. Work with a student group to promote the book drive (create and display posters, make announcements, etc.) using eco-facts and other motivational messages.



3. Set up collection bins in a central location and ask teachers to donate unwanted books from their classrooms.
4. As the books are collected, sort them into boxes by age categories (preschool, primary, upper elementary, etc.) or type categories (picture books, beginning readers, chapter books, etc.).

Redistribution of books:

Now comes the fun part—giving the books to kids! Here are some ideas:

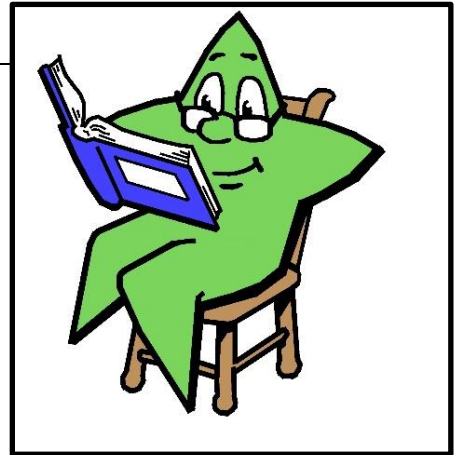
- Host a book sale (to encourage summer reading, raise funds to support the library, etc.).
- Facilitate a book swap.
- Lead a game of Book Bingo.
- Coordinate a Read-A-Thon.
- Place boxes of books in the staff lounge for teachers to restock their classroom libraries.
- Create a Birthday Book Box for kids to choose a book on their birthdays.
- Use books as student rewards or door prizes at school events.

Assessment:

This will vary by chosen project. Request feedback from teachers and administrators when the project is complete. Ask if the books were age-appropriate and if the quality and quantity was acceptable.

Related Activities:

Special Materials for Recycling – Chapter 19



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