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Toxic Waste

- Do you know where your **drinking water** comes from? What would happen if harmful substances got into the source of your drinking water? Write your thoughts in your notebook.
- The words **toxic** and **hazardous** are synonyms. Synonyms are words that have the same meaning. Look up the words **toxic** and **hazardous** in the dictionary. Write the definitions on the lines below.

a) The definition of **toxic** is: _____

b) The definition of **hazardous** is: _____

3. Fill in the blanks with the words in the list. You may use a dictionary to help you.

algae batteries bleach damage industry

- _____ provide energy for portable music players.
- _____ can be used to make things whiter.
- Businesses that all manufacture a certain type of product are sometimes called a(n) _____.
- Another word for harm is _____.
- _____ live in water and, like plants, use energy from the sun to make food.

Toxic Waste

Waste that is harmful to living things is called **toxic waste**, or **hazardous waste**. These types of wastes must be treated in special ways. They can cause a lot of damage if they **contaminate**, or get into, the environment. For example, if toxic waste contaminates a stream, it can harm the fish in that stream. It then harms the animals that eat those fish. People who use water from the stream may get sick, or else they must find another source of water.



Describe toxic waste. Define the word "contaminate" in your own words.

Where does toxic waste come from?

Toxic waste can come from many different sources. You can often find toxic substances in factories that manufacture goods. For example, toxic substances are used to clean machinery, whiten paper, and make computer chips. These toxic substances can end up as pre-consumer waste. Or, they can end up as part of a product. When the product is no longer useful, it creates toxic post-consumer waste. You might be surprised to learn that many products you use every day can become toxic waste. Toxic waste that comes from homes is often called *household hazardous waste*. Batteries, electronics, paint, motor oil, pesticides, and fertilizers are common examples of household hazardous wastes. **Pesticides** are substances used to kill unwanted insects. However, many pesticides are harmful to other animals, including pets and humans. **Fertilizers** used to aid plant growth can be toxic in the environment. Too much of it can cause unwanted growth of algae that can harm water habitats.

Toxic Waste

1. Circle all of the liquids in the list below that are toxic waste.

- spoiled milk video game cartridge hammer ruler
- old computer monitor motor oil fertilizer batteries
- T-shirts wrapping paper broken cellular phone broken plate
- candy wrapper toothpaste tube aluminum foil glass bottle
- paint can lawn fertilizer Styrofoam food container glue

2. Use the words in the list to answer the questions.

contaminate pesticide radioactive
bleach motor oil liquid fertilizer

- What substance is used to help plants grow?
- What toxic liquid is used in cars, buses, and trucks?
- Which word describes toxic substances that release harmful energy when they break down?
- What substance is used to kill unwanted insects?
- What toxic substance is used to whiten paper used to make books?
- Which word describes harmful substances getting in to the environment?
- Which word describes a substance that can change volume depending on its container?

Toxic Waste

3. Explain how fertilizers can harm natural habitats.

4. List three things you should do to safely handle toxic wastes in your home.

- _____
- _____
- _____

Extension & Application

5.

Part A

Do a **household hazardous waste survey**. Use the chart on the next page to record the information you collect. Go through **each room** in your home. In your chart, list hazardous items that are in use, as well as hazardous waste. Hazardous waste includes empty, old, broken, or unused items that need to be disposed.

Part B

After completing your chart, find out how to **safely dispose** of all of your hazardous waste items. Call your local waste management company or find their website on the Internet. Most companies have a special collection day, or a special drop-off site, for household hazardous wastes. Ask your parents or guardians to help dispose of your household hazardous waste. Keep track of hazardous items in use so that you can dispose of these items safely when they are no longer useful.

Part C

Use what you learned in the activity to **make a pamphlet** to teach people how to safely dispose of their household hazardous waste. Ask your teacher to make copies of the pamphlet. Give copies to students in other classrooms, your friends, and your family members.

Toxic Waste

Television News Report

Imagine that you are a news reporter for your local TV news channel. In groups of three or four, you will create a news report on toxic waste in your community.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Do you regularly watch the news? If not, spend some time in the evening watching different news programs. Think about how the news reporters are presenting their stories. What tone of voice do they use? What kinds of information do they present? How do they use visuals to help viewers understand the story?

DO YOUR RESEARCH

Together as a team, research one type of toxic waste from the list below. Focus your research on the effects of this toxic waste on living things, including humans and wildlife. Find out where most of this type of toxic waste is produced, and also how to safely dispose of it.

batteries radioactive waste motor oil pesticides

WRITE YOUR NEWS REPORT

Based on your research, put together a 15 to 20 minute news report. Be sure to include the following in your report:

- An introduction, which gives an overview of the information you will present
- Information about why people should be concerned about the toxic waste
- How the toxic waste harms the environment
- The sources of the toxic waste in your community
- Recommendations about what people can do to help
- Photographs, diagrams, and other visual information that will help the viewers understand your presentation

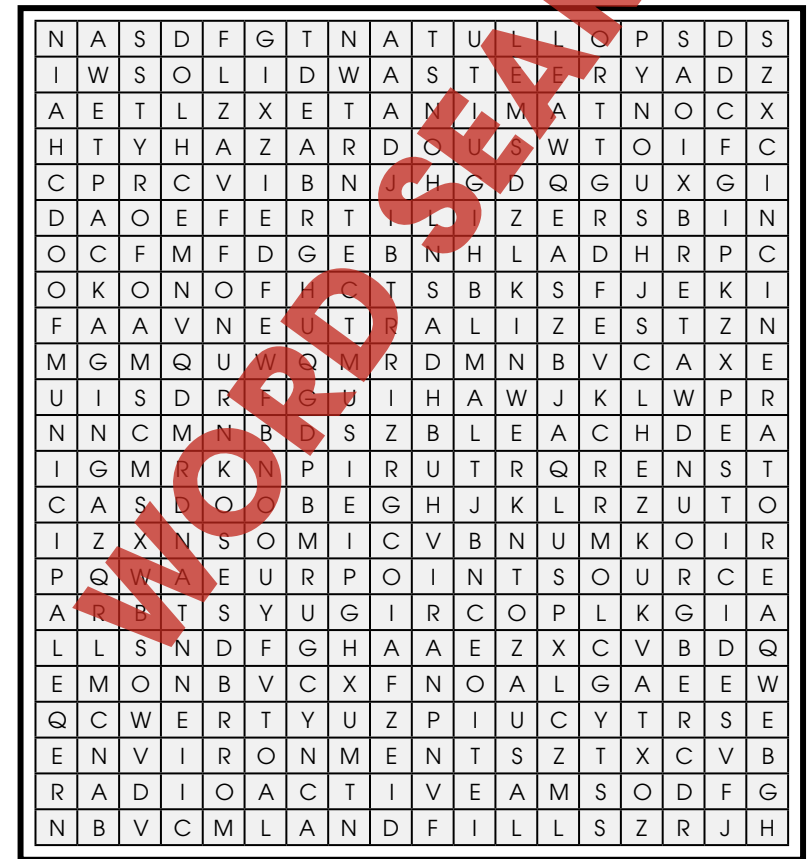
PRESENT YOUR REPORT

If you have access to a video camera, film your news report. Then, show the film in class. If you do not have a video camera, set up a table in your classroom and give your presentation live. Be sure to practice a few times first!

Word Search

Find all of the words in the Word Search. Words are written horizontally, vertically, diagonally, and some are even written backwards.

toxic	pollutant	point source	neutralizes
disposable	fertilizers	radioactive	landfill
algae	raw materials	runoff	bleach
manufactured	consumer	bioreactor	styrofoam
nondurable goods	contaminate	hazardous	ground water
pesticides	packaging	municipal	microorganisms
solid waste	environment	incinerator	food chain



Comprehension Quiz

Part C

Answer each question in complete sentences.

1. What is the difference between **pre-consumer waste** and **post-consumer waste**? Give an example of each.

2. Describe two reasons to choose products with the least amount of **packaging**.

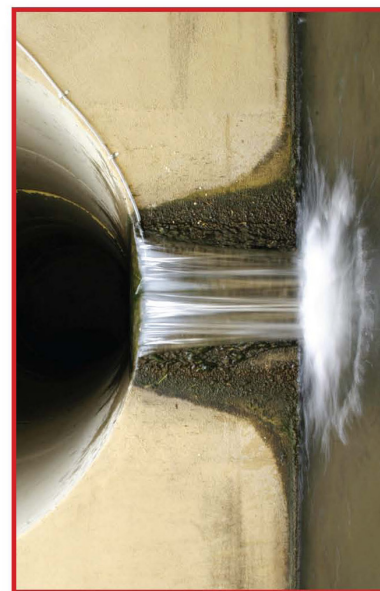
3. Describe what **toxic waste** is. Give two examples of toxic waste that you might find in your home, and tell how to dispose of them safely.

4. What is the difference between **point source** and **nonpoint source** pollution? Give an example of each.

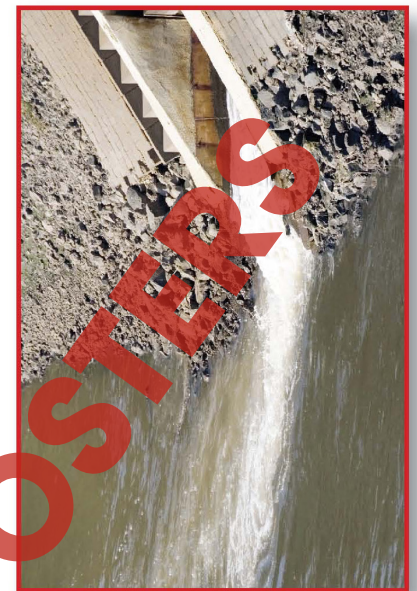
5. Explain how living things in the ocean are harmed by **pollution** made by people on land. Give two examples to support your answer.

SUBTOTAL: /16

Point Sources of Pollution



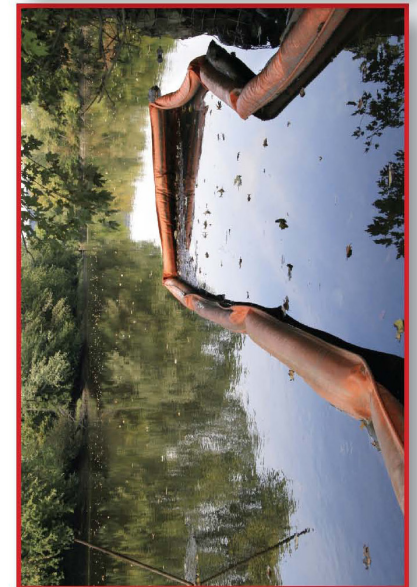
Factory Waste



Sewage Waste



Chemical Waste



Hazardous Waste



After You Read

NAME: _____



Toxic Waste



3. Explain how fertilizers can harm natural habitats.

4. List three things you should do to safely handle toxic wastes in your home.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

Extension & Application

5.

Part A

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Go through **each room** in your home. In your chart, list hazardous items that are in use, as well as hazardous waste. Hazardous waste includes empty, old, broken, or unused items that need to be disposed.

Part B

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Part C

Use what you learned in the activity to **make a pamphlet** to teach people how to safely dispose of their household hazardous waste. Ask your teacher to make copies of the pamphlet. Give copies to students in other classrooms, your friends, and your family members.

3.

By causing the growth of unwanted organisms such as algae

Answers will vary

13

4.

Answers will vary

Answers will vary

14

5.

Answers will vary

Answers will vary

15

11

16



EASY MARKING ANSWER KEY