



**KENT COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC WORKS**

## THE 3 R'S

(sourced from Roger Tory Peterson Institute)

**Objective:** Identify ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle that can be practiced in your own life

**Grades:** 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 1-2 class periods

**Vocabulary:** Reduce, reuse, recycle

**Materials:** None

### **Lesson:**

We've all heard how important recycling is, and that's true, but recycling is only part of the answer! It's a matter of priorities! The 3-R's are REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE. By reducing the amount of material we consume, by using fewer goods and services, we automatically decrease our environmental impact in the maximum way possible. Similarly, reusing something keeps it from entering the waste stream and also decreases our environmental impact.

Your students can discuss this as a class or form groups to see what kind of ideas they can think of that will help them reduce, reuse, and recycle personally or with their families. It may take a bit of thinking for the students to come up with 3-R activities, but once they begin, they'll have all kinds of ideas. Students need to be cautioned to keep the ideas practical – if the idea isn't practical, it won't be practiced. Students will have a much greater impact if they can encourage their entire family to participate as well so be sure to point this out. To get the students started, begin by asking them to come up with some of the everyday or weekly activities their family engages in and then see what they can do to apply the 3-R's to these.

Example: Grocery bags

**REDUCE** – Take your own, cloth grocery bags for groceries rather than take those offered in the store.

**REUSE** – Instead of getting new grocery bags each time one goes to the store, reuse the bags from previous visits until they wear out.

**RECYCLE** – Recycle all used grocery bags (many areas can recycle both paper and plastic).



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**Extensions:**

Have each student or group of students make a poster displaying their 3-R's to hang somewhere for the rest of the school to see.

Have students bring in recyclables from home and during the next 1-2 class periods, have them brainstorm and make a craft project or piece of artwork using those recyclable items. This is a creative example of reuse for something that would otherwise enter the waste stream!