

Upcycle Your Stuff

Overview

Repurpose an old or unused item and share the story of its new life. Explore how creative reuse reduces waste, sparks innovation, and gives everyday objects a second chance.

Learning outcomes

- Understand the value of reuse and upcycling in reducing waste and avoiding new purchases.
- Apply creativity to give new life to discarded materials.
- Reflect on the environmental and social benefits of second-hand items.

Proof to submit

- Photos or videos* of repurposed items, plus short descriptions of their new purpose
- Optional: drawings of upcycled items are valid if students can't physically make them

**Important: Please ensure that any videos submitted as proof do not include student names or clearly identifiable faces.*

Curriculum Connections

- Art: Creativity, design, materials, visual expression
- Science: Materials, waste, resource use, environmental impacts
- Technology / Design: Design thinking, problem solving, innovation
- Social Studies: Consumption, sustainability, responsible resource use

Materials

- Old, unused or broken items (e.g., toys, household goods, craft materials, furniture, decor)
- Basic crafting tools or supplies
- Optional: camera for before/after photos or videos

Activity

Grades K to 6

Students, in groups or individually, repurpose a broken or unused item (e.g., turning a jar into a pencil holder). They share its "before and after" story with the class through a drawing or short explanation.

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Grades 7 to 12

Students, in groups or individually, upcycle or repurpose an item (e.g., furniture, decor, electronics) and create a short reflection or visual showing its new use and why reuse matters for sustainability.

Accessibility: Students do not need to find or bring an old or broken item from home to participate. Classes can:

- Use a common object provided by the teacher.
- Work in groups to share materials.
- Design or draw an upcycled item without physically making it.
- Create a plan or prototype showing how an object could be given a new purpose.

Resources for teachers

Visit the [Live Net Zero Classroom Challenge website](#) for additional resources and information.