



School Green Team Meetings *Ten Sample Lesson Plans and Activities*

Below are some ideas and activities for running your own school Green Team! Each meeting is designed for a 30-minute period. Please feel free to modify and expand on these activities to best suit your group. Have more than 10 group meetings? See the final page for additional activity suggestions.

Green Team Meeting #1:

Materials: You will need 4 glass jars or clear containers with lids to hold the following resources: wood, sand, oil, and aluminum ore. These are for demo-use only. Vegetable oil and shiny rocks/crumpled aluminum foil can serve as good imitators.

- Introductions
 - Introduce yourself and why you are there
 - Have students introduce themselves and ask them why they are on the Green Team (what made them join?, what are they excited about?)
 - Optional: Bring a poster and have the students write down their reasons so you can hang it around the school
- Importance of reducing waste:
 - Introduction to the 5 R's
 - **Reduce-** limit the amount of waste you produce, don't use two pieces of paper when you can use one
 - **Reuse-** reusable water bottle etc.
 - **Recycle-** if you can recycle it and not reuse it, recycle it!
 - **Rot-** food becomes compost!
 - **Rethink-** before you throw something away think about it. Can it be put somewhere else? Can I reuse this?
 - Connecting to Natural Resources: Throwing waste in the landfill is wasting natural resources. When you throw something in the landfill, imagine that you are throwing it directly in a hole in the earth. Nothing is sorted when we throw it away, so it is extremely important that we sort properly. Let's think about where some of our commonly used goods come from:
 - What is glass made out of?
 - Sand
 - What is paper made out of?
 - Trees
 - What is plastic made out of?
 - Oil
 - What is aluminum / tin foil made out of?
 - Bauxite the rock
 - Do we want to keep cutting down trees/ using sand/ cutting into the earth to extract oil/ mining minerals to create these items?
 - What can we do to avoid this? (i.e. save trees, and protect nature)?
 - Practice our 5 Rs!

- Look at students' lunch items and go through items and talk about where they go (mini sorting lesson)

Green Team Meeting #2:

- In depth sorting training for Green Team
- Print out your local hauler receptacle posters for guidance
- Bring in items that are often found at school or have students find and bring in items
 - Go through each item and discuss which bin it goes into
 - Clarify any confusions
- Discussion on ways to avoid plastic pollution and plastic all together

Green Team Meeting #3:

- Review Green Team lunchtime monitoring responsibility!
- One thing we will do is monitor at lunch to make sure our friends are putting their things in the right spot
- Create monitoring teams- can do it by grade if that is easiest
 - Make a visual list that can be easily displayed near lunch, in a window etc.
 - Whiteboards/bulletin boards work great!
- Go through the monitoring duties and walk to lunch to show them what they will be doing
 - Be sure to specify all the steps to lunchtime monitoring and physically walk students through the process.
 - Do students need to arrange bins or signage before lunch?
 - What time does their monitoring duty start?
 - What should they wear? (e.g. gloves, pickers, vests etc.)
 - What happens when they're done?
- Start lunchtime monitoring

Green Team Meeting #4:

- Ask how sorting has gone, do students have any questions or need help with anything? What are common mistakes?
- Play Recycling Relay game: collect many common and some uncommon materials and have your 3 (or 4) bin system at one end and materials at another. Form teams and race to see which team sorts correctly first.

Green Team Meeting #5:

- Create a Green Team mural/poster or skit to showcase at school
 - The poster can be presented at an all-school assembly or hung up in a visible hallway
 - The skit can also be presented at an assembly to inform the school about the Green Team's hard work, or class by class

Green Team Meeting #6:

- If mural / poster is not finished, continue to finalize this project
- If the Green Team is planning on doing a school assembly or skit:
 - Theme: importance of sorting
 - Assign roles or have students choose roles (whichever is the easiest)
 - Have students practice and memorize their lines

Green Team Meeting #7:

- Decomposition Timeline Matching game
 - In this activity, students will match a time frame to an item to understand how long it takes for different items to decompose
 - After the game, share correct results with the students
 - Questions to ask students:
 - Why do you think it is important that we know this information?
 - Why do you think compostable items decompose faster than items that we recycle or put in the trash?
 - What did you learn from this game?

Green Team Meeting #8:

- Conduct a mini school waste audit
- Examine garbage bins from classrooms
 - Test group on what can be recycled and composted in the bin
 - Tally up and expand results for whole school
 - Based on your findings and observations, have students brainstorm solutions for improvements

Green Team Meeting #9:

- Announce that a school wide or class wide contest is being held to see which class can produce the least amount of trash over a designated period of time
- Have Green Team members create signs to promote contest as well as a recommendation list of ways that classes can reduce their waste

Green Team Meeting #10:

- Have students share their favorite moments as Green Team members
- Have Green Team members write letters to people they care about, telling them reasons why it is important to sort properly and care for our environment

End of Green Team

- Celebrate successes / end of semester or year party! Thank the students for all of their hard work

Additional Green Team Activities:

- Have students create a sorting video to be shared with the school
- Arts and crafts activities using recyclables
- Create a Green Team bulletin board at school, have students make decorations and posters for the bulletin board