

Name : _____

Group : _____

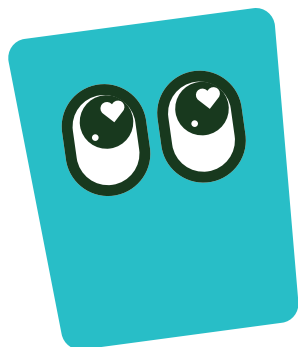
The following activity is part of "Gère tes matières", a collaboration between the Monique-Fitz-Back Foundation and Québec'ERE. Its goal is to make you, your staff and your school's administration aware of the important role that the school environment can play in the sound management of residual materials (RMM) in Quebec. Visit the ["Gère tes matières" website](#) for more information.

MOM, DAD, I'VE ELIMINATED SOME TRASH!

TEXT COMPREHENSION

Talk about a healthy diet for our planet!

My teacher Dominique, being a lover of nature, flowers and animals, often talks about the importance of protecting our environment. She always keeps an eye on the stuff we toss in the garbage to see if it can be reused or recovered rather than thrown away. Last week, Dominique had a surprise for us. She was with one of her friends: Madame Dionne, a specialist in environmental education.



Madame Dionne had a huge garbage bag filled with all sorts of stuff such as cans, glass bottles, containers, fruits, used clothing and old toys. On the table, we could see several containers, which we assumed were possible alternatives to the garbage bag she had.

The **1st container** was a recycling bin, just like the one we have at home. If used adequately, this bin could cut down our trash by more than half. Quite something, right? And that's not all. Did you know that all the items in recycling bins are sorted in sorting facilities and that each item is sent to a processing plant to be recycled into new products?

The **2nd container** was a small can crusher. Madame Dionne explained that some items can be returned to convenience stores or grocery stores in exchange of money. Soft-drink bottles and beer cans are recyclable, while beer bottles are usually not. They are most often washed and refilled for the next customer to enjoy. That said, all returnable containers can be thrown in the recycling bin; however, if you do that you won't get any money back in return.

The **3rd container** on the table was a funny-looking small cube made of wood. Dominique told us it was a miniature composter. Usually, a composter is a type of plastic or wooden container, a little bigger than a dustbin, that we see in a person's backyards. Composters are filled with suitable organic materials, such as fruit and vegetable peels, tea bags, coffee beans, or dead leaves. As these items decompose, they turn into a dirt-like fertilizer or what we call compost. We can then use this fertilizer for our houseplants and gardens. Composting is a highly effective way of reducing waste since compostable materials account for around a third of the contents of our garbage bins. It can also cut down carbon dioxide greenhouse emissions by 50 %.

The **4th and final container** was a miniature bin for reusing clothes. Toys, clothes, books, and sports equipment that are still in good condition can be placed in this container. Charitable organizations collect clothing and other products for resale at low prices to the underprivileged, or to people who wish to reuse rather than buy new. The money raised from the sale enables the organizations to help many needy families, who often lack food. Clothes that are not sold at the end of the season are sometimes packed up and shipped to developing countries.

Some students told Madame Dionne that their parents often give clothes that no longer fit them to their younger siblings or cousins. Some of my friends, meanwhile, donate their clothes to local charities or sell them at flea markets.

When Madame Dionne finished her explanations, we all picked up several items from her large garbage bag. We placed each item in the most appropriate container: the recycling bin, the can crusher, the composter, or the miniature bin for reusing clothes. Dominique and Madame Dionne then checked to see if mistakes were made. Only one teen magazine had been placed in the recycling bin and should have ended up in the reuse container.



Activity 1 – Reading comprehension & Exercise – MOM, DAD, I've eliminated some trash!

Indeed, anything that can be reused should be reused before it ends up in the recycling bin.

After the game, there were still items left in the bag. In fact, despite all our efforts to reduce the amount of waste we produce, there will always be a little left over. The important thing is to leave as little as possible. This way, we all help protect our environment, and Dominique, my favourite teacher, will be very proud of us.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TEXT

1. By how much will the contents of our garbage bin be reduced if we use our recycling bin properly?

2. What happens to soda bottles and cans we take back to the grocery store?

3. Why does composting constitute an effective way to reduce waste?

4. Why do charities resell used clothing rather than donate it?

5. Why should we go out of our way to restrict our garbage's "diet"?



EXERCISE

Using the table below, sort the products to make the best possible choice for effectively reducing the contents of our garbage bins. You have 4 options to choose from: the recycling bin, the convenience store or grocery store, the composter, and donations to charitable organizations. All you must do is place an "X" in the right spot.

Products	Recycling bin	Convenience or grocery store	Compost bin	Donations to charitable organizations
Newspaper				
Pickle jar				
Apple core				
Old toys				
Soda bottle				
Withering flower				
Cereal box				
Ketchup bottle				
A T-shirt that is too small				
Shampoo bottle				



Products	Recycling bin	Convenience or grocery store	Compost bin	Donations to charitable organizations
Lettuce leaf				
Old books				
Soda can (or tin)				
Potato skins				
Tin can				

Une initiative de



Partenaires

