

DROWNING IN PLASTIC

Plastic in our oceans is a worldwide problem that needs solving.

This session uses fun practical work and discussion to investigate: looking at why, where and what we can do about it.



KS4+



Geography &
Citizenship

OBJECTIVES

Understand why plastic is such a widely used material and that we cannot stop using it

Understand why plastic builds up in certain places in the oceans

Understand how plastic enters the oceanic food web and how it is already being ingested by us

Investigate recycling plastics, those that can and those that can't

LEARNING SESSION CONTENT

This workshop begins by discussing the structure of plastic, showing how tough and resilient it is by jumping on coke bottles and explaining how the long polymer chains do not break up but a piece of plastic just splits up into smaller and smaller tough bits.

The currents in the oceans collect plastic waste in certain areas, because it floats. These gyres can be called 'garbage patches'. Using visuals and the globe, the way the plastic collects into a plastic 'soup' is explained.

Then the recycling of plastic is explored, using examples of everyday plastic that can be recycled, can't be recycled and is biodegradable.

The recycling symbol and numbers are explained.

With pictures to help, the effects of plastic on animals in the sea is discussed.

Please note that this does include positive uses as well as negative.

Finally, some current ideas about reducing our usage of plastic and cleaning up our oceans are given.

The different ways the Deep is trying to reduce plastic use are included.

If time permits, the students will be asked to think of ways to reduce plastic use in everyday life, what materials could be used instead.