

RETHINK

REFUSE

REDUCE

REUSE

RECYCLE

COMPOST

LANDFILL

The Waste Hierarchy (over page) is a guide to minimise waste which ranks actions and practices to obtain the maximum benefit from materials and resources. It's similar to healthy eating guidelines where we want to do more of what's up the top and little or none of what's at the bottom!

Rethink: Stop! Think about what you are doing/buying/consuming.

Can you do it in a more sustainable way? Do you need it at all? A good opportunity to discuss wants and needs, and current social consumption behaviours. A great follow up activity is to explore the history of shopping/packaging. Students can interview older relatives about shopping, packaging, clothing, games and entertainment.

Refuse: Learn to (politely) say no to unnecessary things.

SA's plastic bag legislation is an example of government policy working to support behaviour change.

Reduce / Avoid: Reducing material sent to landfill.

When making purchases, think about (if you do really need it) whether the item or its packaging can be repaired, reused, recycled or composted at its end of life.

Reuse: Reuse items as many times as possible.

This applies to clothes, books, furniture, and everyday items. Garage sales, second hand shops and hand me downs are all great examples of reuse.

Recycle: After Reusing items as much as possible, many can be recycled via council or special collections for certain items. Purchasing recycled items is also important to close the recycling loop, so try to buy recycled items as much as possible.

Compost: Nature's Recycling System.

Anything that was once living (organic) can be composted and used to return nutrients to the earth to grow more. You can compost at home, school, or via council or commercial collections that take any organic materials (including meat, bones, etc) to commercial composters to be made into compost, mulch and soil products.

Landfill: The last resort!

Once something has gone to landfill, it's likely to stay there for a **very** long time, where it will generate methane (a Greenhouse Gas). Sending material to landfill is becoming **VERY** costly because landfills are now managed carefully to reduce negative environmental impacts. Most landfills are located well away from housing, so transportation costs and road impacts are another issue.