

# Bin Systems Assessment Learning Experiences

Suitable for Middle Years (Year 6 - 9) students

*Recommended time: 100 - 120 minutes*

## Learning Outcomes

- Explain why assessing bin infrastructure is useful.
- Examine the existing bin systems and record relevant information.
- Analyse information gathered from a Bin Systems Assessment (BSA) and apply this to make improvements.

## Suggested Learning Experiences

### Introductory Phase

- Have an open discussion on bins, using the following prompting questions:
  - Why have bins? What purpose do they serve?
  - What would happen if we had no bins?
  - Are all bins the same? If not, what makes them different?
  - Why might we look at bins/ what might we learn by looking at bins?
  - How is looking at bins relevant to school?
  - How is looking at bins relevant to home/ life?
  - Do you think looking at bins is important? Why or why not?
- Explain that assessing the bin systems at school can help identify opportunities to reduce waste to landfill.
- As a class, or in groups, list the different collections that occur in the school and discuss:
  - Where these systems are found in the school (eg paper/ card in classrooms, 10c collection near canteen, etc).
  - The type of bin/containers used for each system (eg bins for landfill, containers for paper, and 10c containers).
  - How well the systems work (or don't work) and why this might be the case (eg students might notice that not many 10c containers are collected).
  - Who manages each system (eg grounds staff, student groups, cleaning staff, enviro team etc).

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### Body of Lesson

- Divide the class into small groups of 2-4 students (*this activity can be done as a whole class but it is dependent on your class size. If you have more than 15 students, split them into groups*).
- Allocate an area/s of the school to each group (e.g. courts, classroom block, canteen area, ovals, library etc.)
- Provide each group with copies of the *'Bin Systems Assessment: Area/Room Assessment Template'* to complete in each area allocated.
- Send groups to their area to conduct the assessment. The time required for this process is dependent on the number of areas allocated to each group.
  - If possible, ask the students to photograph their systems/ what's inside each bin as well as any signage.
  - Students to note anything interesting.
- Students return to class and share information.
- As a whole class, discuss and add information to the *'Bin Systems Assessment: Whole Site Assessment'* document.
- Prompt further discussion, with the following questions:
  - Overall, what conclusions can we make about current bin systems in the school?
  - Do you see any issues with any of the systems? What are the issues? Why might there be issues?
  - Do you think any current systems could be improved?
  - Do you think we could add any new systems?
  - What would encourage you and others to use the bin systems more effectively?
- Provide groups with a copy of *'Bin Systems Assessment: Best Practice examples'*.
  - Students assess different systems and make comments on consistencies/ similarities between the systems.
  - Students list the pros and cons of each system.
  - Students consider which system(s), if any, could work in their school.
  - Students comment on why these systems might work.

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### Concluding Phase

- Review the information collected from the Bin Systems Assessment (BSA). Ask students to select an identified issue which they believe could be addressed.
  - e.g. students may note that several classes do not have paper recycling containers, even though there is an onsite collection.
- Students can work in small groups to develop an action plan. Consider:
  - How could the system be set up?
  - Who would manage it? (eg on call collection, regular pick ups)
  - What happens to the collection?
  - Effective signage refreshed regularly.
  - Bin placement.
  - Education of the school community on new systems.
  - Assessment of effectiveness of new systems.
  - Celebrating success and modifying where necessary.