



SAN ANTONIO

RIVER AUTHORITY

CAMPUS CLEANUP
Lesson Plan

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STUDENT OBJECTIVE

- Students will be able to define what litter is, make predictions about litter on their school grounds, safely collect litter, analyze their findings, and take action.
- Science TEKS 5.1B and 5.2C (this lesson can be leveled up or down as needed)

MATERIALS

- Provided by the teacher: gloves for each student, trash bags, scale
- Provided by the River Authority: Campus Cleanup slide deck, student data sheet, class data sheet

PROCEDURE

1. [Using the provided slide deck](#), discuss what litter is, where it comes from, where you might find it, how it gets into the river, why it is harmful, and how everyone can help (**be sure to download the slide deck to your computer**).
2. Ask students to make predictions regarding where they might find litter on their campus.
3. Go over ground rules for collecting litter (please visit this [website](#) for more safety information)
 - a. Wear gloves and closed-toe shoes.
 - b. Do not touch anything sharp.
 - c. If you are unsure of what something is, leave it alone and tell an adult.
4. Split the class into small groups where one student records data on the data sheet, one student holds the trash bag, and the other students identify and pick up the litter.
5. Wearing gloves, have student groups collect litter from a designated area on the school grounds, documenting as they go.
6. Return to the classroom and weigh each trash bag. [Record the total weight of all litter collected and report this number to the River Authority here.](#)
7. Update the class data sheet with the information that each group provided on their student data sheet (optional).
8. Dispose of the items properly.



OPTIONAL EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- While your students are collecting litter, ask them to photograph and tag the litter using the [Litterati app](#). This can also be done using a digital camera and connecting it to a computer following the litter cleanup activity.
- Lay out large pieces of newspaper on the floor and sort the litter by type. Ask students, “Do you notice any patterns?” and, “Which of these items can be recycled instead of thrown away?” Refer to the City of San Antonio’s [recycling guidelines](#). Dispose of the items properly.
- Educate and inspire other students and teachers on your campus by using this data to create an educational campaign. You may wish to create a bar graph that compares the number of items collected in each category, a poster, or even a skit. The sky is the limit!
- Have students determine how many schools are in their district. Multiply the total weight of the litter by the number of schools in your district and approximate the number of pounds of litter we could potentially keep out of our creeks and rivers if every school in your district picked up litter on their campus. What could you recommend that would solve this problem? Ask students to write a letter to their superintendent with their suggestions.
- Expand on the activity above by having students calculate the amount of litter that could be collected by every school in your city and/or county. Ask students to write a letter to the appropriate city and/or county official with their recommendations.
- Have students make a map of their school grounds and mark the locations where litter collects. Ask students, “Why is litter collecting in that location?” Have students write a letter to their principal with their solutions.
- Ask students what they can do in their own homes to reduce waste.

Take a photo of the litter you collected with your students and post it to social media to inspire others to do the same! Be sure to tag us (@sanantoniorever) and use the hashtag #BeRiverProud

