Story of Litter

Litter Pickup Planning Checklists

Coordination Considerations

Coordinate with participating teachers, your school's administration, custodial staff, and anyone else who may be involved at least 1 month before your litter pickup. Things to consider:

- ☐ What is the date and timeframe for the event? We recommend 1-hour maximum including introductory remarks, a student safety briefing, a mandatory water break halfway through, and end of event procedures.
- ☐ Where on your school grounds will you hold the pickup?
- ☐ Are there any safety concerns to be aware of?
- ☐ Determine your desired adult to child ratio and ensure each adult will have a list of students that they will keep track of.
- ☐ If rain is not in the forecast, can custodians avoid picking up litter outside for a few days prior to your event?
- ☐ Would you like to invite parents to the event?
- ☐ Will you need to send permission slips home?
- ☐ Have a plan for disposing of the trash after you have completed any extension activities.
- ☐ Determine if your students will complete an activity before the litter pickup such as drawing a map of their school grounds and marking predicted hot spots.

Before the Event

- ☐ Check the weather forecast 2-3 days before. If inclement weather is in the forecast, we recommend deciding to cancel or postpone your litter pickup at least 24 hours in advance.
- ☐ Ensure you have all the materials you need including gloves, trash bags, etc.
- ☐ Ensure you have a source of potable water nearby, whether that's a water fountain, cooler, or bottles on hand.
- ☐ Define the pickup boundaries with cones.
- ☐ Do a quick walkthrough of your pickup area to look for any hazards such as fire ant mounts or holes. Put a marker by any hazards and make sure students know to avoid those areas.
- ☐ Notify custodians of your plan and ask if they can hold off on removing litter for a few days prior to the litter pickup (as long as rain is not in the forecast!).
- ☐ Ensure you know which adults will be working with you and that they are aware of the plan.

Materials Checklist

- ☐ First aid kit (consider adding umbrellas to your kit to provide shade on a hot day)
- ☐ Clipboards
- ☐ Student handouts
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Trash bags
- ☐ Gloves
- ☐ Hanging scale and batteries
- ☐ Disinfecting wipes
- ☐ Optional extension activity materials

During the Event

- ☐ Ensure everyone knows where first aid materials are located.
- ☐ Ask adults to keep an eye on the students at all times.
- ☐ Give students a safety briefing including (but not limited to):
    - Stay hydrated.
    - Stick with your team.
    - Do NOT pick up anything sharp! Alert the nearest adult and make sure custodial staff are aware so they can safely remove the item.
    - Be aware of your surroundings. Don't disturb stinging insects, poison ivy, or wildlife if you encounter it.
    - This is NOT a race! Be *safe* and think about how each piece of litter has its own story.
- ☐ Just before you begin, have students recite the litter pledge and remind them why it's important to take care of the land. *Because clean land equals clean water!*
- ☐ Remind students and adults to stay hydrated several times throughout the litter pickup. Take a mandatory water break about halfway through.
- ☐ Take pictures before, during, and after the event! We especially recommend taking a group picture at the end of your event where all the students pose with their trash bags full of litter. This will be an impactful event to reflect on, and seeing proof of their work will motivate students to continue stewardship on their own.

After the Event

- ☐ Make sure all participants wash their hands!
- ☐ Inform teachers, administrators, and custodial staff that your pickup has concluded.
- ☐ Weigh your trash bags and report the total to the River Authority to see how your litter pickup compares to other area schools!
- ☐ Use the trash you removed for any extension activities and properly dispose of the items when you have finished.

Thank you for preserving and protecting your local waterways!

SAN ANTONIO RIVER AUTHORITY