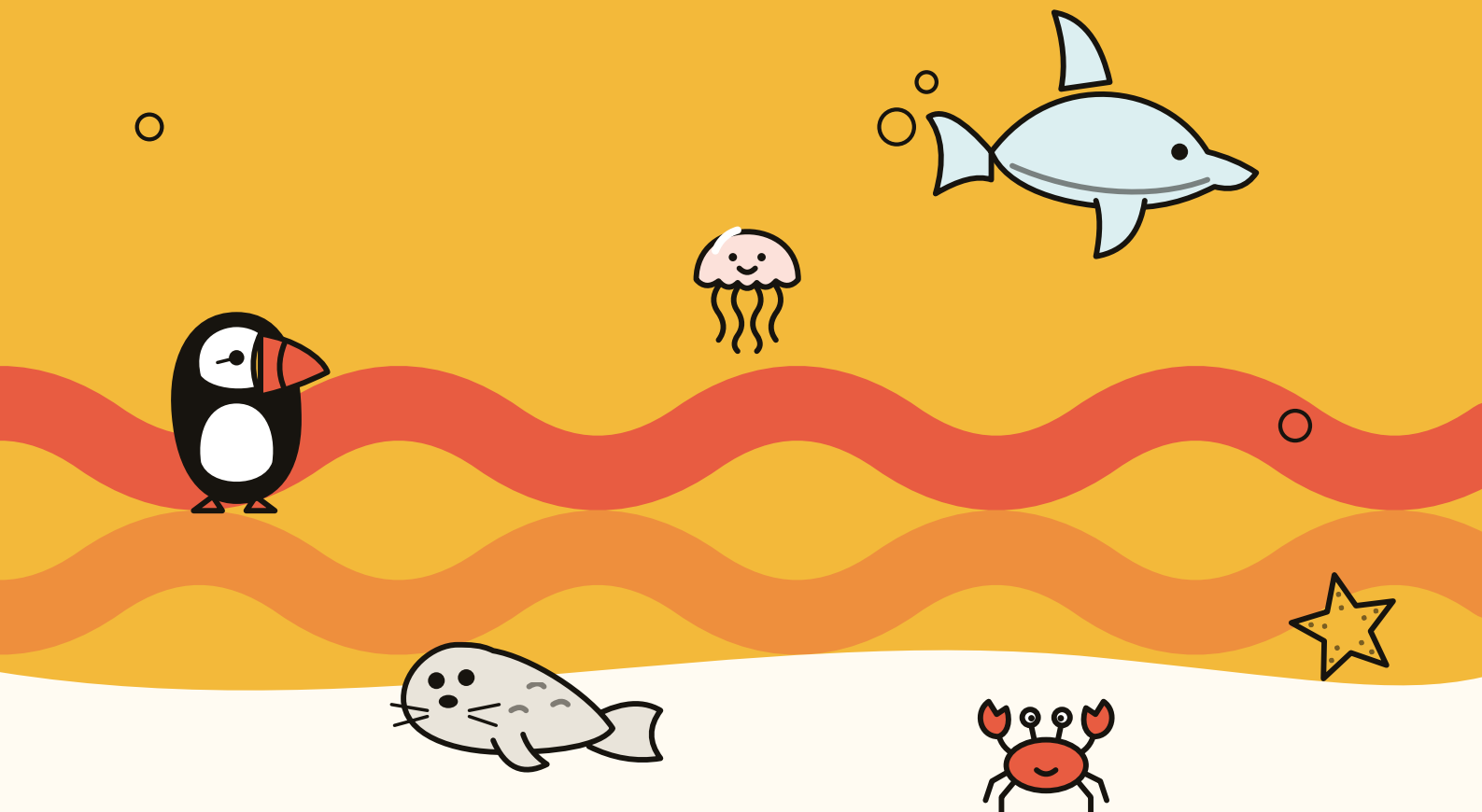


A SAVE OUR SEAS ACTIVITY BOOKLET

Ocean Heroes

Puzzles, facts and challenges to help you fight plastic pollution — at school and at home.



This booklet belongs to _____

WELCOME

Welcome, Ocean Hero!

Every week, UK households throw away around **1.7 billion** pieces of plastic packaging. Some of it ends up in rivers and seas. The good news? Lots of small changes add up to a big difference — and this booklet is full of them.

My Ocean Hero ID

DRAW YOURSELF AS AN OCEAN HERO

Name _____

Age _____ Class _____

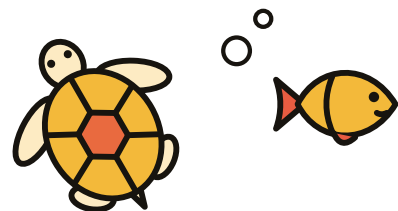
Hero name _____

Favourite sea animal _____

My superpower _____

What's inside

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Teachers: These activities suit children aged 7 to 9 working alone, in pairs or as a class. Answers and teaching notes are on page 20. Source for the 1.7 billion figure: Greenpeace & Everyday Plastic, The Big Plastic Count (2024).

SCIENCE

What is plastic?

Plastic is a material made mostly from **oil and gas**. It is strong, light and waterproof — that's why it is so useful.

But plastic does not **rot** away like food or paper. Instead it breaks into smaller and smaller pieces. Pieces smaller than 5 mm are called **microplastics**.

Single-use plastic is plastic we use just once before throwing it away.



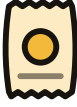
1. Fill the gaps

oil light rot microplastics once waterproof

- Most plastic is made from _____ and gas.
- Plastic is strong, _____ and _____.
- Plastic does not _____ away like an apple core.
- Tiny pieces smaller than 5 mm are called _____.
- Single-use plastic is used only _____ and then thrown away.

2. Once or again?

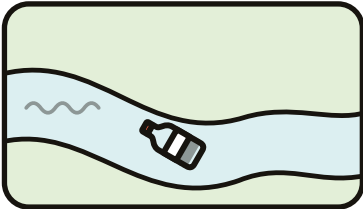
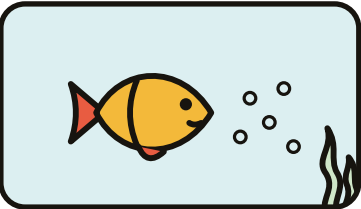
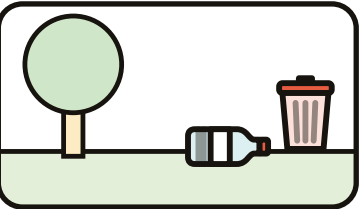
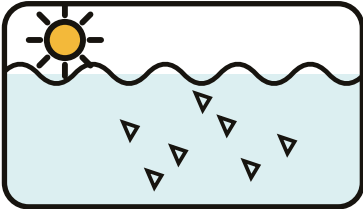
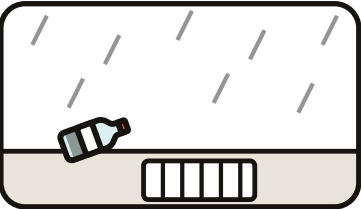
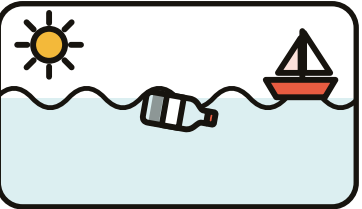
Tick whether each thing is usually used **once** or used **again** and again.

 plastic straw ☐ once ☐ again	 lunchbox ☐ once ☐ again	 crisp packet ☐ once ☐ again	 metal water bottle ☐ once ☐ again
 plastic knife & fork ☐ once ☐ again	 cloth bag ☐ once ☐ again	 takeaway cup ☐ once ☐ again	 thin plastic bag ☐ once ☐ again

GEOGRAPHY

A bottle's journey

Plastic dropped far from the beach can still reach the sea. These pictures are mixed up! Write **1-6** in the boxes to put the story in order.

 ☐ The drain water flows into a stream, then a river.	 ☐ A fish swallows some of the pieces, thinking they are food.	 ☐ A bottle is dropped on the grass in the park.
 ☐ Waves and sunlight break the bottle into tiny pieces.	 ☐ Rain washes the bottle into a drain by the road.	 ☐ The river carries the bottle out to sea.

Break the chain!

Pick one step in the story. What could someone do to stop the bottle getting any further?

Did you know?

In many places, the drains in the street carry rainwater straight to streams and rivers — not to a water treatment works. Anything dropped near a drain can be washed away.

Only rain down the drain!

Draw a sign to paint next to a drain to remind people.



SCIENCE

How long does it last?

When litter is left outside, some things break down quickly and some last for hundreds of years. Draw a line to match each item to how long it might last.



Newspaper



about 200 years



Apple core



about 6 weeks



Plastic bag



about 600 years



Drinks can



about 2 months



Plastic bottle



about 450 years



Fishing line



about 20 years

These are estimates — how fast things break down depends on sunlight, water and temperature.

Put them in order

Write the items in order, from the one that lasts the **shortest** time to the **longest**.

1

2

3

4

5

6

Maths challenge



A plastic bottle was dropped in **2026**. If it lasts 450 years, in which year might it finally be gone?

Answer: _____

WORD SEARCH

Sea word search

Find all 12 words. They go across, down or diagonally. Tick each word when you find it.



- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| ☐  PLASTIC | ☐  OCEAN | ☐  TURTLE | ☐  RECYCLE |
| ☐  REFILL | ☐  REUSE | ☐  PUFFIN | ☐  SEAL |
| ☐  BEACH | ☐  LITTER | ☐  WAVE | ☐  CRAB |

NATURE

Meet UK sea animals

You don't have to go to a coral reef to find amazing sea life. All of these animals live in the seas around the UK.



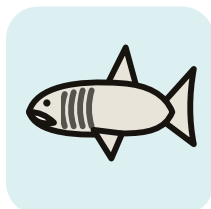
Grey seal

About a third of all the world's grey seals breed around the UK. Seals can sleep floating upright in the water, which is called "bottling".



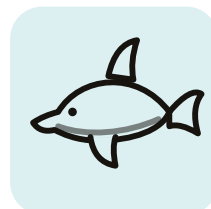
Atlantic puffin

Puffins spend the winter far out at sea. In spring they come to UK cliffs to nest, and can carry lots of small fish in their beaks at once.



Basking shark

The second-biggest fish in the world! It is gentle and eats tiny plankton by swimming along with its huge mouth wide open.



Bottlenose dolphin

Groups of dolphins live all year round in places such as Cardigan Bay in Wales and the Moray Firth in Scotland. Each one has its own whistle, a bit like a name.

Make your own fact card

Choose another UK sea animal. Find out about it in a book or online with an adult.

Animal name

Where it lives

What it eats

Amazing fact

DRAW IT HERE



READING

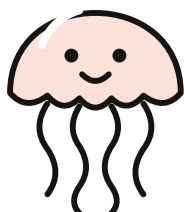
Why is plastic a problem for sea life?

Sea animals can get **tangled** in things like old fishing nets, rope and the plastic rings from drinks packs. Once they are caught, it can be hard for them to swim or find food.

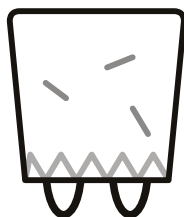
Some animals **eat plastic by mistake**. A floating plastic bag can look a lot like a jellyfish, which is food for some sea turtles. Seabirds can mistake bright pieces of plastic for food too.

Plastic in an animal's tummy can make it feel full, so it doesn't eat the real food it needs. That's why keeping plastic out of the sea matters so much.

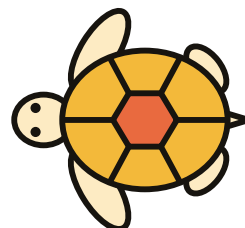
Look closely: can you see why a turtle might get confused?



jellyfish



plastic bag



1. Why might a sea turtle eat a plastic bag?

2. Write two ways that plastic can harm sea animals.

3. Old fishing nets are sometimes called "ghost nets". Why do you think that is?

4. What is one thing you could do this week to help?

QUIZ

True or false?

Read each sentence and tick **true** or **false**. Most of the answers are somewhere in this booklet!

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 1 | Plastic is made mostly from oil and gas. | ☐ True ☐ False |
| 2 | Plastic rots away in a few weeks. | ☐ True ☐ False |
| 3 | Microplastics are pieces of plastic smaller than 5 mm. | ☐ True ☐ False |
| 4 | Only plastic dropped on the beach can end up in the sea. | ☐ True ☐ False |
| 5 | The basking shark is the second-biggest fish in the world. | ☐ True ☐ False |
| 6 | Some sea turtles can mistake plastic bags for jellyfish. | ☐ True ☐ False |
| 7 | Recycling means using something once and throwing it in the bin. | ☐ True ☐ False |
| 8 | A refillable bottle can be used again and again. | ☐ True ☐ False |
| 9 | Puffins spend the winter far out at sea. | ☐ True ☐ False |
| 10 | Balloons let go into the sky can end up in the sea. | ☐ True ☐ False |

My score

_____ / 10

Quiz a friend

Write your own true or false sentence to test someone else:



SWAP SHOP

Make the swap

Swapping one single-use thing for something we can use again is one of the easiest ways to help. Write a better swap for each item using the word bank.

Word bank: a refillable bottle a tote bag beeswax wraps or a lunchbox
no straw, or a reusable one refillable glue sticks refillable pens

Instead of...		Try...	At school	At home
 Plastic glue sticks	→	_____	☐	☐
 Throwaway plastic pens	→	_____	☐	☐
 Cling film	→	_____	☐	☐
 Bottled water	→	_____	☐	☐
 Plastic carrier bags	→	_____	☐	☐
 Plastic straws	→	_____	☐	☐

Tick where you could make each swap.

Invent a swap

Think of something plastic in your classroom that isn't on this list. What could you use instead?

Did you know?

Save Our Seas started in 2022 with a simple idea: cut single-use plastic from schools and homes **before** it ever reaches the sea. Swaps like these are how.



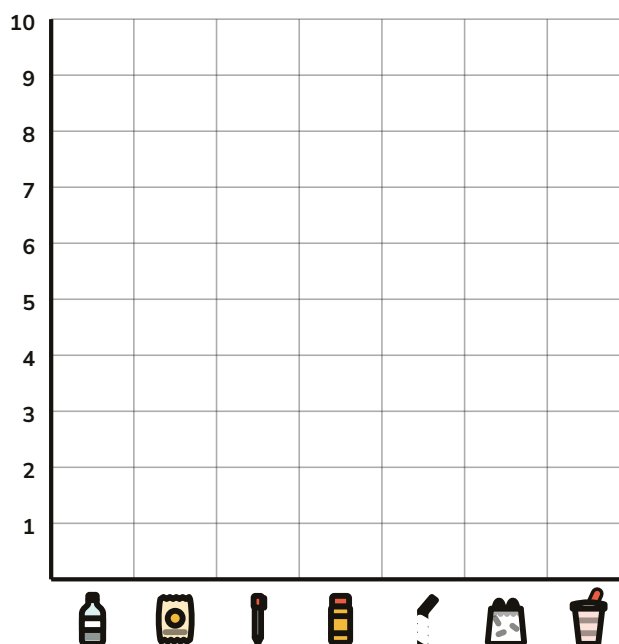
MATHS

Classroom plastic detectives

With your teacher, look in the classroom bin at the end of the day (wear gloves!). Keep a tally of the plastic you find, then draw a bar chart. If you find more than 10 of something, make each square worth 2.

Plastic	Tally	Total
 Bottles		
 Wrappers		
 Pens		
 Glue sticks		
 Straws		
 Bags		
 Other		

Bar chart



1. Which kind of plastic did you find the most of?

2. How many pieces of plastic did you find altogether?

3. Choose one kind of plastic. What swap could your class make to find less of it next week?

Teachers: Only look through general classroom rubbish, never bins with food waste, tissues or anything sharp. An adult should handle the bin, and everyone should wash their hands afterwards.

CODE BREAKER

Crack the secret message

Use the code key to work out which letter each sea animal stands for. Write the letters in the boxes to reveal a message.

Code key



= R



= E



= F



= I



= L



= N



= O



= T



= A



= D







What does it mean?

"Landfill" is a huge hole in the ground where rubbish is buried. What do you think the message is telling us to do?

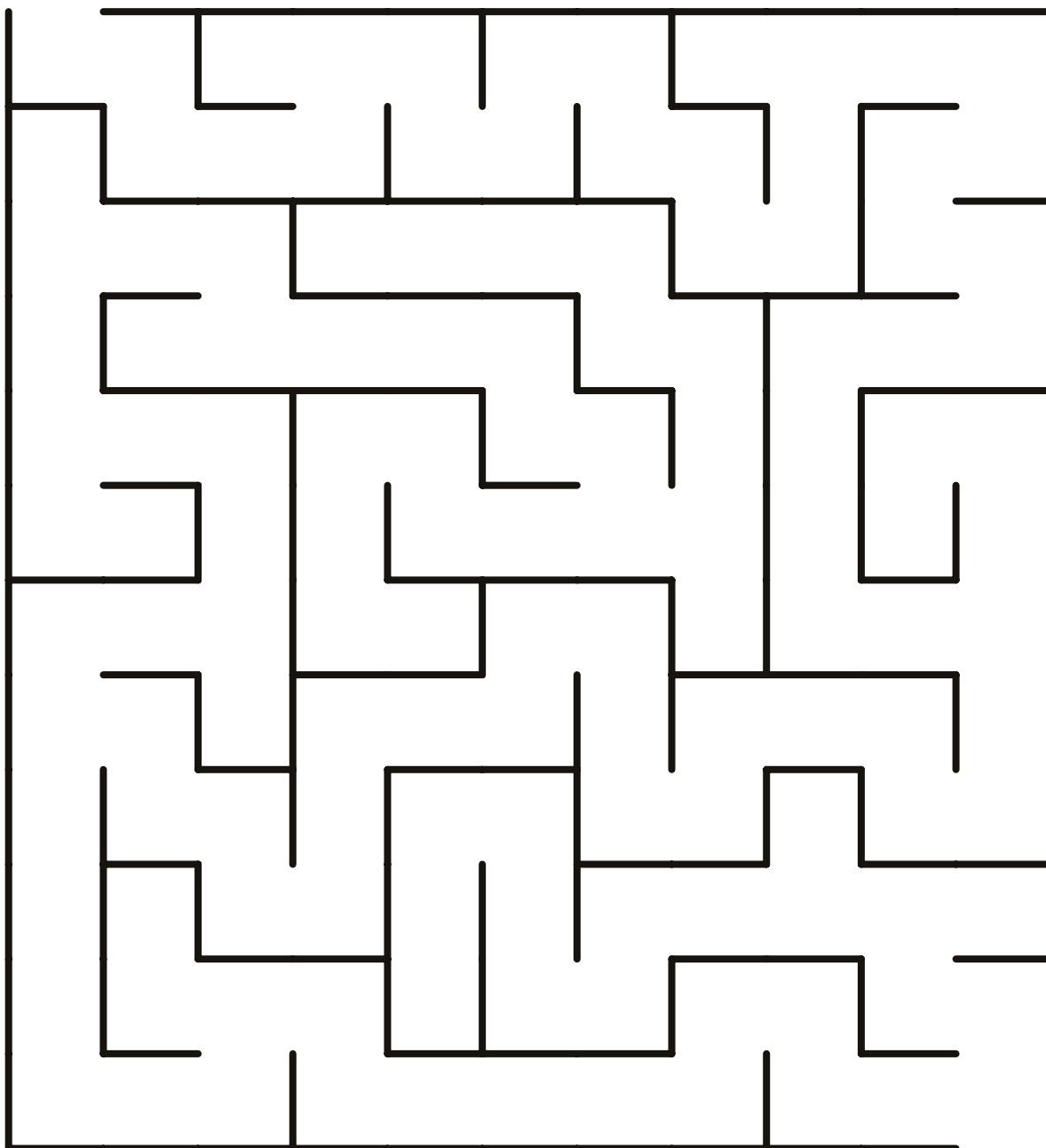
MAZE

Get it to the recycling bin

This bottle has been dropped. Find the way through the maze to the recycling bin before the wind blows it away!



Start



Finish



MATHS

Beach clean maths

A class went on a beach clean and made a pictogram of what they found. Use it to answer the questions.

Key:  = 2 pieces of litter  = 1 piece

 Plastic bottles	   
 Bottle caps	       
 Crisp packets	     
 Pieces of rope	  
 Cotton buds	    

These are made-up numbers for practice.

1. How many pieces of litter did the class find altogether?

2. How many more crisp packets were found than pieces of rope?

3. Four friends shared out collecting the bottle caps equally. How many did each friend pick up?

4. Each rubbish bag holds 10 pieces of litter. How many bags did the class fill?

5. Which item was found the most? Why do you think that might be?

ART & DESIGN

Design a campaign poster

Make a poster to persuade people at your school to use less single-use plastic. Where could your class put it up?

MY POSTER

Great posters have...

- A big, bold title that grabs attention
- One clear message
- A picture people will remember
- Tell people exactly what to do

Slogan ideas

"Refill, not landfill"
"Bring it back, don't throw it out"
"Our sea, our choice"

My slogan



MAKE IT

No-sew T-shirt bag

Turn an old T-shirt into a strong shopping bag — no sewing needed.

You need: an old T-shirt • fabric scissors (for an adult) • a ruler • a pen or chalk

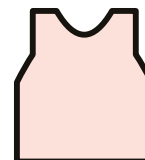
1

Find an old T-shirt that nobody wears any more. Ask an adult to cut off the sleeves and cut a bigger neck hole.



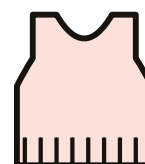
2

Turn the T-shirt inside out. The shoulder straps will become your handles.



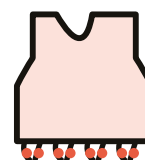
3

Ask an adult to cut strips about 8 cm long along the bottom, through both layers.



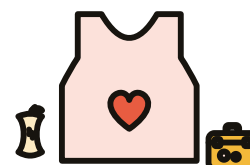
4

Tie each front strip to the back strip below it with a double knot. This closes the bottom.



5

Turn it the right way out. You have a bag that saved a T-shirt and needs no plastic!



Grown-ups: Fabric scissors are sharp, so an adult should do all the cutting. Thicker cotton T-shirts make the strongest bags.

ENGLISH

Write a sea poem

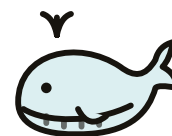
An **acrostic** poem uses the letters of a word to start each line. Here's one to get you going.

Example

Sparkly waves roll in and out,
Every fish needs a home that's
 clean,
All of us can help, no doubt!

Top tips

- Say what you can see, hear or feel at the sea.
- Include a sea animal.
- Finish with something people can do to help.



My acrostic poem

O

C

E

A

N

Or try a rhyme

Save Our Seas shares rhymes like this one on its website:

**"I will not drink smoothies when they're in plastic cups,
 And I'll try my hardest to eat the wooden box stuff."**

Write your own two-line rhyme about a plastic swap:

TAKE ACTION

My plastic promise

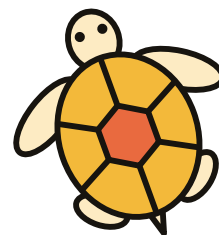
Choose **three** promises (or make up your own). Colour a star each day you keep them.

- ☐ Bring a refillable water bottle to school
- ☐ Use a lunchbox instead of wrappers
- ☐ Take a bag with me when we go shopping
- ☐ Put litter in the right bin, even if it isn't mine (with gloves!)
- ☐ Say no to a straw when I don't need one
- ☐ Tell my family about a swap we could make
- ☐ My own idea: _____

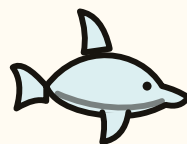
My week	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Promise 1 _____	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
Promise 2 _____	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
Promise 3 _____	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆

How did it go?

Which promise was the easiest to keep?
Which was the hardest, and why?



Signed



SAVE OUR SEAS CERTIFICATE

Ocean Hero

This certificate is proudly awarded to

for learning about plastic pollution and taking action to protect
our seas and the animals that live there.



Signed

Date

FOR TEACHERS & PARENTS

Answers & notes

What is plastic? (p.3)

a) oil b) light, waterproof c) rot
d) microplastics e) once.

Used once: straw, crisp packet,
plastic cutlery, cup, carrier bag.

Used again: lunchbox, refillable
bottle, tote bag.

A bottle's journey (p.4)

Reading across the rows, the
boxes should say: 3, 6, 1, 5, 2, 4.

How long does it last? (p.5)

Newspaper 6 weeks · apple
core 2 months · plastic bag 20
years · drinks can 200 years ·
plastic bottle 450 years · fishing
line 600 years. Maths challenge:
2476.

Times are rough estimates for
litter in the sea, from US
government marine debris
guides (NOAA / EPA). Real
times vary a lot with sunlight,
water and temperature — and
plastic breaks up into smaller
pieces rather than truly
disappearing.

True or false? (p.9)

1 T · 2 F · 3 T · 4 F · 5 T · 6 T · 7 F
· 8 T · 9 T · 10 T

Secret message (p.12)

REFILL NOT LANDFILL —
reuse things instead of
throwing them away to be
buried.

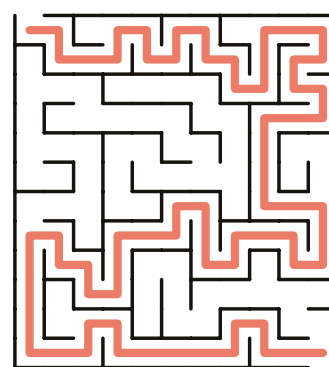
Beach clean maths (p.14)

1) 50 2) 7 3) 4 4) 5 bags 5)
bottle caps.

Word search



Maze



Curriculum links

- **Science:** properties and uses of everyday materials; living things and their habitats.
- **Geography:** the water cycle, rivers and seas.
- **Maths:** tallies, bar charts, pictograms, calculation.
- **English:** reading for information, poetry, persuasive writing.
- **PSHE:** caring for the environment.

Staying safe

Litter picks and bin audits need adult supervision, gloves and litter
pickers. Never touch sharp objects, needles or broken glass — tell
an adult.

About Save Our Seas

A UK campaign started in 2022 to cut single-use plastic from
schools and homes before it reaches our seas. Every year on **16
April**, Marine Wildlife Day celebrates one sea animal.

saveourseas.org.uk · info@saveourseas.org.uk