



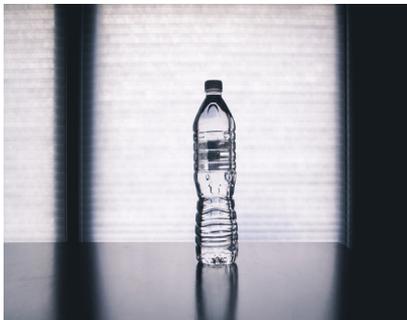
## Thinking Focus: Plastic

Manufactured oil and plant-based materials shaped and used in many ways; now causing environmental damage.

### Curriculum Focus

Since Bakelite was developed in the early 20thC., increasing amounts of various plastics have been produced, used, sometimes recycled, but ultimately thrown away. Plastic's production has doubled every 10 years. It is an important issue for pupils to understand so they can make choices about how it affects their future. Key issues are: uses, alternatives, waste and environmental damage.

*I hate plastic bottles.*  
Philippe Cousteau, Jr.



### Knowledge, Skills & Values

Thought and action around plastic require knowledge of its uses and impact; the skills of considering conflicting needs and priorities; ability to examine causes and connections; plus a willingness to take responsibility for daily choices. The issue also offers pupils the opportunity to become involved with leading change and inspiring others.

#### Text

[kids.britannica.com/kids/article/plastic/400149#intro](http://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/plastic/400149#intro)

*Summarise each of the 4 sections into a newspaper headline*

#### Data

[bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-42264788](http://bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-42264788)

*For each chart, what is the most surprising fact?*

#### Map

[plasticadrift.org/](http://plasticadrift.org/)

*Drop your plastic duck in the ocean and watch where it ends up years later*

## 1. Basic Learning Tasks

What is plastic?

What is plastic used for?

Find, research and present:

- 5 surprising facts about plastic
- 4 worrying facts about plastic
- 3 historical facts about plastic
- 2 predictions about plastic
- The most important fact about plastic

Make something (very) useful from used plastic.

## 2. Deeper Learning Tasks

Describe the life of a plastic bottle - going as far back in time, and as far forward in time as you can:

Choose how to present this -

- Using only simple diagrams and single words
- RSA-style  
([youtube.com/watch?v=Ack535QRaGA](https://youtube.com/watch?v=Ack535QRaGA))
- Formal presentation to audience
- Podcast/interview
- Song/Poem/Narrative from the bottle's POV

## 3. Long-term Learning Tasks

Research action on plastic and research how human habits are formed. Commit to one plastics action and keep it up for at least 6 months.

Connect/compare your learning about plastics to:

- 3D printing
- Rainforest disappearance
- The use of wood

*My obsession is plastic packaging. It makes me sick, all the waste. Everything about it disappoints me.*

Theo James



### Books

Kids Fight Plastic by Martin Dorey

Captain Green and the Plastic Scene by Evelyn Bookless

What a Waste by Jess French

### Watch

Where plastic comes from:  
[youtube.com/watch?v=w4VG-7ZFvDM](https://youtube.com/watch?v=w4VG-7ZFvDM)

..and where it goes to:  
[youtube.com/watch?v=vrPBYS5zzF8](https://youtube.com/watch?v=vrPBYS5zzF8)

### Act

[kidsagainstplastic.co.uk](https://kidsagainstplastic.co.uk)  
[static-forms.tectonicinteractive.com/bbc/index-bbc-plastics.html](https://static-forms.tectonicinteractive.com/bbc/index-bbc-plastics.html)

### Extend

[preciousplastic.com/en/videos/build/index.html](https://preciousplastic.com/en/videos/build/index.html)

*Think what if? Innovate. Stretch and extend thought and action.*

*Be inspired.*