



Green Schools Challenge December 2018:



Life Cycle Analysis

As the holiday season approaches, many of us are beginning to think about “stuff” - what’s the latest “cool stuff,” what’s the stuff we’d like to have, and what’s the stuff we’d like to give. In the month of December, millions of products are purchased all over the world. But what’s underneath all that shiny new packaging? Have your students ever thought about what went in to manufacturing all those holiday gifts, and what will happen to them when they are no longer used? The assessment of the life of a product is called life cycle analysis, and this month there are a few suggested activities to help your students begin to think about this important topic.

Life cycle analyses take into account the raw materials needed to make a product, the energy used in refining and manufacturing, the emissions associated with the manufacturing and transportation of the product, whether the product can be recycled or reused at the end of its life, and where it ends up if not, and whether any pollution would be created from its waste.

1. **Design Your Own Activity**

Do you have an idea about how to analyze the life cycle of a particular product at your school? Maybe your students have an idea for a product they would like to research. Or maybe you could create a game where students try to guess the raw materials that went in to certain products, and how far they had to travel to end up in a local retail store, and what happens when their use is over. Feel free to create an activity that works for your school, and earn credit for it.

Example Activities For Your Green Team

1. Have a class or a group of students complete one more activities from the workbook, [The Case of the Broken Loop](#). This workbook contains crosswords, word scrambles, code deciphering and other fun activities to teach kids about product lifecycles. This is a great option for younger students.
2. Show your class the handout, [The Life of a Soccer Ball](#). (You could show it on screen instead of printed to save paper.) This handout, ideal for older students, describes what it takes to create a soccer ball from raw materials to landing in a store. It also guides students to think about reusing items, transportation issues, and how to make more informed purchasing decisions.
3. [Watch The Story of Stuff](#) video with a group of students. This 20-minute, animated video gives an easy-to-understand overview of the environmental costs of the “stuff” we buy. This video, released in 2007, has now been watched over 40 million times, and includes discussion of the public health impacts as well as the environmental impacts of our consumptive lifestyle. You can also reference this [Story of Stuff fact sheet](#).
4. **Submit Photos**
Take photos of your Green Team engaging in your activities, and email them to gogreen@kearneycats.com. You may see your submissions on the Green Schools Challenge photo site, or in the sustainability newsletter!

Let Us Know What You Did!

Report your progress and earn recognition for your school. [Fill out the Activity Reporting Form](#) to let us know which activity you did for this month!

Questions?

We're here to answer any questions you may have, talk through ideas or provide further resources. Just email gogreen@kearneycats.com.

RECOGNITION LEVELS

All KPS schools have the opportunity to earn recognition for their participation in the Green Schools Initiative each year. The more activities you complete, the more recognition you receive! For 2018-2019, the following three levels of recognition are available:

- **Level 1 (Green Performance)** - Participation in 5 activities during the year. Schools receive a framed certificate of recognition, \$50 for Green Team Activities next year, and \$100 for the Principal's budget.
- **Level 2 (Green Achievement)**- Participation in 6 - 9 activities during the year. Schools receive \$150 for Green Team activities next year, an award banner, and \$200 for the Principal's budget
- **Level 3 (Green Excellence)** - Participation in 10 or more activities during the year. Schools receive \$300 for Green Team activities next year, a large award banner, and \$400 for the Principal's budget. In addition, all schools that achieve Level 3 participation are placed into a raffle; the selected school receives \$450 to spend on district-approved items. Approved items could entail smart power strips, vending machine energy misers, native landscaping/trees, rain barrels, native plants for classrooms, and indoor/outdoor recycling containers. All items must be approved by the district office prior to purchase.