

Waste Reduction Week 2011



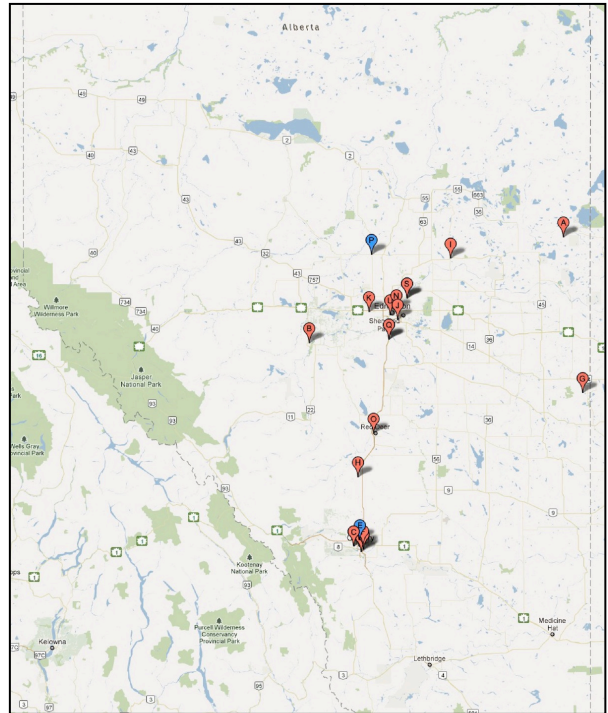
Grade 4 Waste Reduction Challenge

The Triple StaRs Waste Reduction Challenge was completed by 29 classes, impacting 1322 students from across Alberta (see map to the right, blue pins show prize winners).

Triple StaRs, offered in partnership between the Recycling Council of Alberta and Alberta Environment, was one of many efforts to help raise awareness of Waste Reduction Week in Canada, October 17–23, 2011.

Congratulations to this year's prize winners, each receiving a vermicomposting kit to continue with their waste reduction efforts!

- **Willow Park School**, Leduc
- **St. Mary School**, Westlock
- **Colonel Sanders School**, Calgary



Classes from the following schools submitted their results:

- Ardmore School, Ardmore
- Aurora School, Drayton Valley
- Battalion Park School, Calgary
- Barons School, Barons
- Bellevue School, Beaumont
- Colonel Sanders School, Calgary
- Colonel Walker School, Calgary
- Dr. Folkins Community School, Chauvin
- Ecole St. Cecilia School, Calgary
- Ecole Nouvelle Frontiere, Grande Prairie
- Ecole Olds Elementary School, Olds
- Edmonton Christian School (Northeast Campus), Edmonton
- H.A. Kostash School, Smoky Lake
- John Paul II School, Calgary
- Julia Kiniski School, Edmonton
- Millgrove School, Spruce Grove
- Sister Mary Phillips School, Fort MacMurray
- St. Bernadette School, Calgary
- St. Leo School, Edmonton
- St. Marin de Porres School, Red Deer
- St. Mary School, Westlock
- Willow Park School, Leduc
- Win Ferguson School, Fort Saskatchewan
- Windsor Park Elementary School, Edmonton

Our thanks to everyone that participated! We hope to see you getting your hands dirty again next year.

Program Overview

The goal of the Triple StaRs Waste Reduction Challenge was to help classrooms find practical ways to reduce waste during Waste Reduction Week and throughout the school year, and to promote classroom recycling. Small changes can make big differences in waste reduction.

The Challenge made effective use of class-time and was designed to fit easily into regular classroom planning. The three parts of the challenge are outlined in the following:

Part I.

Over a one-week period, classroom waste was collected in different containers for plastics, paper, glass, juice boxes, milk cartons and beverage containers, organic waste and garbage. At the end of the week the classes recorded the amount collected and decided how to reduce the amount of waste that will go to the landfill.

Teachers were encouraged to get parents to help transport recyclable materials to the appropriate recycling depot. Juice boxes, milk cartons and beverage containers were returned for refund – many classes save the deposit return money over a period of time and then use it for projects and field trips.

Of the materials collected during the Challenge from all schools, the table below shows the overall composition breakdown in each of the seven categories.

Material	Composition Breakdown
Juice Boxes, Milk Cartons, Beverage Containers	11%
Paper	28%
Cardboard	9%
Plastic	20%
Glass	0%
Organics	13%
Other	19%
Total	100%

Part II.

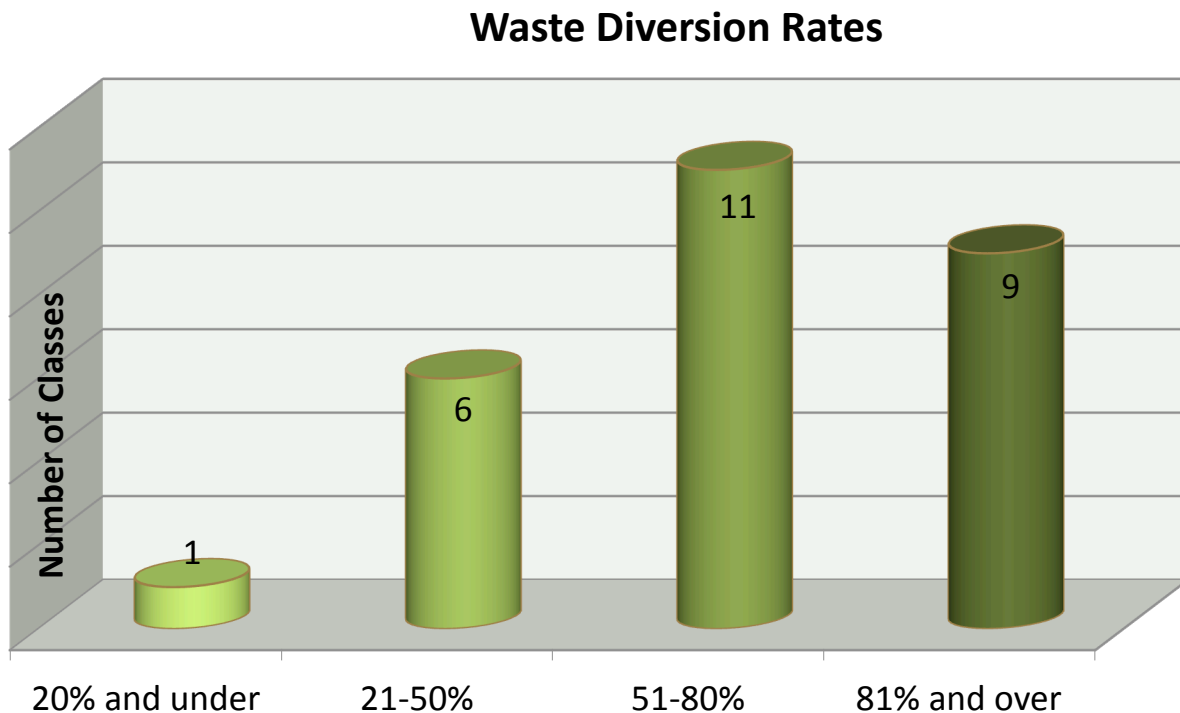
After the waste sort, the classes examined their results and discussed four questions related to the waste they had collected in their classroom.

1. How much total waste did your class produce?
2. How much material were you able to divert from landfill?
3. Based on your results for one week, how much waste would your class produce in a year?
4. Based on your class's results for one year, determine how much waste all the classes in your school would produce in one year.

The questions were designed to make students think about the impact of their waste over a full year, not just for their own class, but also for their whole school.

Teachers were encouraged to discuss waste reduction options with their classes as well. Most classes experienced much lower landfill waste amounts the next week, when students brought their lunches in reusable containers and avoided individually wrapped snacks.

Most classes identified a huge potential for reducing the waste they send to landfill. The average diversion rate for the week from all the 29 classes was 67%! Here is the breakdown of achieved diversion rates:



Part III.

Classes chose actions they will commit to do for the rest of the school year that will reduce the amount of waste the class produces and sends to landfill, including:

- Recycling plastic lunch containers
- Recycling paper
- Recycling cardboard
- Recycling plastic
- Using both sides of the paper before recycling
- Using classroom worm bin for organics
- Packing and promoting waste-free lunches
- Using reusable containers for lunches and recess snacks (no plastic baggies)
- Using only one paper towel to dry hands
- Using reusable drink containers and water bottles
- Using cloth napkins in lunches
- Using cloth bags for purchasing groceries for lunches
- Sorting and keeping recyclables out of the garbage
- Participating in a Leadership Recycling Team to inform and challenge other classes in the school to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle
- Making sure beverage containers are put in the bin in the hallway
- Using our bokashi pail for organics
- Having a litterless lunch every Wednesday

- Eating more of our lunch rather than throwing it away
- Presenting Triple StaRs Waste Challenge results to the school at an assembly
- Making suggestions to the school administration on how to reduce solid, water and electrical waste
- Turning off lights when no one is in the room
- Writing a letter to school administration requesting the purchase of recycling bins for our cafeteria
- Sharing our knowledge with our parents
- Keeping a classroom tally of how often we empty our paper/cardboard recycling and see if we can reduce it
- Using our compost “tea” to nourish our classroom plants and playground bulb flowers in the spring
- Reducing photocopying
- Having students ambassadors man the garbage station in our lunchroom
- Having clearly marked containers for recycling, bottle collection and composting in our lunchroom
- Keeping a chart of waste-free lunches and providing prizes for students who bring the most waste-free lunches

Program Implementation

Participating teachers integrated the Triple StaRs Waste Reduction Challenge into the “Waste and Our World” curriculum, taught in Grade 4 science across Alberta. While the curriculum focuses on teaching about waste, the information does not always result in a change in behaviour in terms of reducing waste or finding alternative ways for dealing with waste once it is produced.

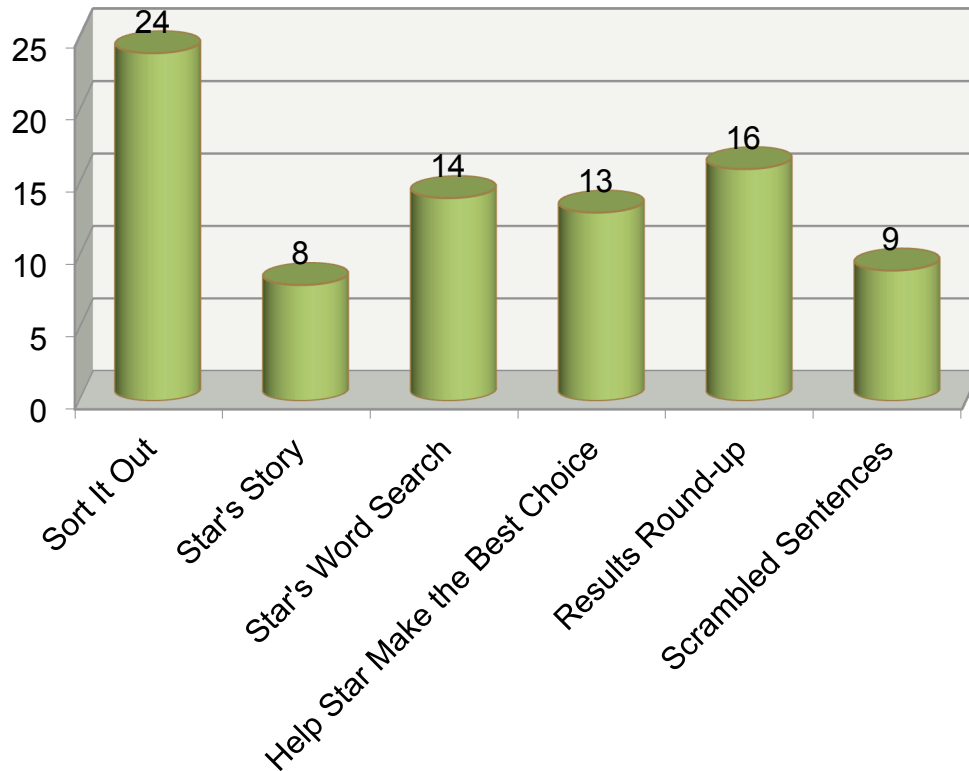
Many teachers commented that the Challenge was easily incorporated into their teaching and did not require a lot of extra effort on their part to participate. They were pleased to see concepts and topics in the “Waste and Our World” unit transferred into “real life” experiences. Teachers commented that the hands-on component of the Challenge helped to bring meaning to the unit they were teaching and that the action-oriented challenge would most likely become part of the student’s everyday behaviour. Many classes chose to share this program with the rest of their school, encouraging all classes to reduce waste.

As part of the Challenge, teachers were given access to six activity sheets to help them implement the challenge.

1. Sort It Out – students decide into which of the seven containers each identified item should be placed.
2. StaR’s Story – students use their creative writing skills to write about StaR, the dog, the Program’s mascot.
3. StaR’s Word Search – word search contains the vocabulary of the challenge.
4. Help StaR Make the Best Choice – students decide which choice StaR can make that is better for the environment.
5. Results Round Up – students total all the waste gathered during the week.
6. Scrambled Sentences – students unscramble lists of words to create sentences.

Teachers were very supportive of these optional activity sheets.

Which Six Activity Sheets did you use?



2012 Triple StaRs Waste Reduction Challenge

We are hoping to offer the challenge again in 2012. Invitation emails will be sent to school administrators. Individual teachers who would like to be added to our mailing list directly can let us know by sending an email to wrw@recycle.ab.ca. Mark your calendars for the next Waste Reduction Week - October 15–21, 2012.

Remember to make every week Waste Reduction Week!