

EDPB Secondary - 507 Science Methods
A Story of Away - Teacher Resource

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q0bydKQhuhU&feature=youtu.be>

This film is an exploration of throwing something away. The film traces a piece of garbage from a home to landfill in Victoria, British Columbia to find out where “away” is. The viewer will take a virtual trip to the Hartland Landfill through a variety of video footage and images. They will gain an understanding of how the landfill works, including environmental management strategies. The fact that landfills have finite space will be identified along with potential ways to extend that lifespan through various diversion programs. Final thoughts will sum up why this is important and why people should care.

Classroom Application – Potential Learning Activities

* Note that potential disciplines that these activities could be applied to are listed following the brief activity summaries.

1. After showing the film in the class students can be tasked in groups to research where there “away” is. There could then be a school trip to the local landfill or dump if possible. Or perhaps a staff person from the site could come to the school if the local landfill is not set up with an educational facility. (Social Studies, Science)
2. The Story of Stuff is an excellent resource that highlights the linear design of the materials economy. The Story of Stuff could be shown in class (www.storyofstuff.org) and a corresponding lesson on consumerism. Group discussions of personal decisions in relationship to the linear materials economy along with how to make changes so it is more of a closed-system could occur. This would relate back to the film *A Story of Away* because by changing the linear system you would also be diverting waste from the landfill. (Science, Social Studies)
3. Students could mimic the exploration in the film by following one of the products that is now diverted from the landfill, and look at what that lifespan looks like. This could be assigned as a research project where groups of students trace different items that are prohibited from their local landfill due to alternative programs. For example where does a recycled tire go and what is its story? (Science, Math)
4. Students could do a waste analysis of the school, similar to the waste composition discussed in the film. They could create categories of waste and by weight figure out the percentage of each type. They could then write reflections on this process and explore what could have been diverted and identify possible programs that the school could consider. (Science, Math, Global Geography)
5. If access to the local landfill is possible contact could be made and a chemical analysis of the leachate could be performed with a corresponding assignment

that outlines what would cause the different chemicals found in the leachate.
(Chemistry)

6. Younger grades could be tasked with writing down five words that they do not know the meaning as they watch the film. Following the film they can then go on a hunt to find the meanings and then choose one to present back to the class.
(English Language Arts, Science)
7. A Senior Science or Math class could research the energy that the process of landfilling something takes. This could then be compared to the energy that would be put into the same item being recycled. (Math, Science)