

Activity – BREAKDOWN GAME

Session 7 – IMPRINT+ Training course



IMPRIINT+



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

2015-1-PT01-KA201-012976

Activity: Breakdown Game

Learning goals: Explore how long rubbish and litter take to breakdown through a visual and hands-on activity. Understand the impacts that litter can have on our natural environment and identify what we can do to ensure we leave no trace in the outdoors

Background information: Identification of different species and recognition of the same objects in an area is a key skill for ecological studies but also for any activity outdoors. Such as identifying tracks, signs and edible foods and plants.

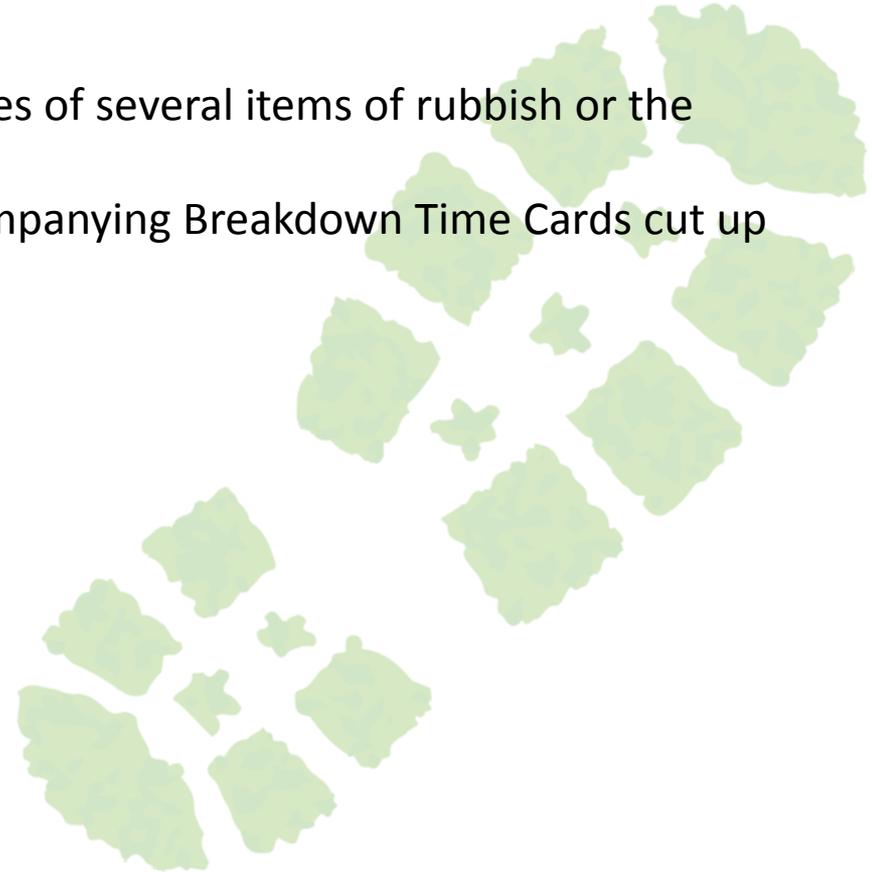
Prior Knowledge Needed (*For the facilitator*): the facilitator should be comfortable with the local plants and animals in the area.

Duration: 30 minutes



Room organization: You will need an outdoor natural area to carry out this activity.

Support material: Pictures or real life examples of several items of rubbish or the actual items of rubbish, the list of breakdown times included below and a copy of the accompanying Breakdown Time Cards cut up individually



Instructions:

1. Discuss with the group about how litter and waste breakdown.
2. Spread the time cards throughout the class, either on desks or stuck to the classroom walls.
3. This can be carried out individually or in pairs depending on how many images or items of rubbish you have.
4. Give each student or pair of pupils an image or a piece of rubbish.
5. Ask them to walk around the class and look at all the time cards.
6. They need to guess how long their piece of rubbish takes to breakdown and stand beside that card.
7. Walk around the class and ask pupils why they chose that breakdown time. If they are incorrect tell them the actual breakdown time and ask them to go stand by the correct time card.
8. When they finish, it would be nice to have them line up in order from the shortest to the longest time.
9. Discuss as a group what they thought about the results. Were they surprised at how long some items take to breakdown? Now imagine this litter in the outdoors, what impacts could this litter have on the environment?

Reflection:

How does rubbish end up as litter in the outdoors?

Who is responsible for keeping areas litter free?

What can we do to ensure we Leave No Trace in the outdoors?

Ask the class for ideas on how each piece of litter could be reduced, reused or recycled instead

Further Investigation:

Complete The Breakdown Game Quiz to wrap up the lesson it can be found at www.leavenotraceschool.org. A great follow on experiment is to bury different types of waste in the school grounds, leave them for a month and then dig them up. Pupils can predict rates of decomposition and record the extent of decomposition of different items of rubbish.

For more information on the Dispose of Waste Properly principle and the other Leave No Trace principles visit: www.leavenotraceireland.org