

Recycling Relay: A Marine Debris Game

Ages 5-13 Years



This is a timed relay game where the participants race to remove marine debris from “a littered shoreline” and are encouraged to re-use it.

The game begins with the participants/team lining up at a designated area we will call the “shoreline” (race start line). This line is littered with various pieces of marine debris, all of which were collected locally. When the race begins, the participants will pick up one piece of debris and run it to one of 3 bins, drop it off, and run back to the “shoreline”. Then they (or the next team mate in line) will pick up another piece and do the same. The game finishes after two minutes or once all debris has been removed. The contents of each bin will then be counted and points awarded at the conclusion of the race.

- The closest of the 3 bins to the start line is the “trash bin”. For every piece of trash they deposit in the bin they will get 1 point. This low point total illustrates that although the debris will sit in a landfill it is still better than the shoreline.
- The second closest bin is the “recycle bin”. For each piece of debris deposited here they will get 3 points. This illustrates that they went a little farther to get rid of the debris, but there are still environmental costs to consider with producing recyclable materials.
- The furthest bin is the “re-user bin”. For each piece dropped here they will receive 5 points. This shows that although re-using trash may take creativity and a little more effort, it is the best way of dealing with waste already produced. Participants will have to explain why they put the item there to be awarded the points (example: “I can use this old bucket as a flower pot”).

The purpose of the game is not to finish first, but to have the highest amount of points. The take-away message is to encourage people to think of creative ways to re-use their trash, both on the shoreline and in their homes.

Web Resources:

- <http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/>
- <http://www.oceanconservancy.org/our-work/international-coastal-cleanup/>

Supplies:

- Trash, Recycle and Re-User Bins (x3)
- Marine debris
- Stopwatches
- Ribbon for shoreline