



ASSOCIATION  
FOR SHARED  
LEARNING



**my** footprint  
voice  
choice

**“My fingerprint. My voice. My choice”**

Four projects for children and their role in the world



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voice  
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This project is co-financed by the European Union  
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**BRIDGE 47**



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## Dear colleagues,

What you are holding in your hands is a short guide with ideas for introducing topics related to global citizenship, sustainable consumption and environmental protection. You can do this either as part of the lessons or as extracurricular activities with your 3-7 grade students.

Our desire is to support teachers and school clubs' leaders through these four easy-to-implement projects to help you make your students:

- more sensitive to the worrying trends of the time we live in – pollution and destruction of the environment, overconsumption, unfair distribution of goods and resources;
- more critical of the information they receive, as well as more aware of the messages they are sending through their daily choices and actions;
- more active in supporting people and communities, who are currently unable to defend themselves or who need help.

The projects we have proposed and the way we have structured them aim to involve children as the heroes of the activities. They will engage them being researchers, ambassadors, storytellers, and designers of the desired change. Participating in learning-by-doing and in experiential

learning activities is important to children and brings them countless benefits – they see the connections between what they learn at school and the real life, understand new information more easily and remember it longer, because the experiences are full of emotions and they have come to the important conclusions on their own. Last but not least, their experience has been shared with trusted peers and adults.

This is exactly what we want to happen through the four projects that we offer you as the culmination of our project „My footprint, my voice, my choice“.

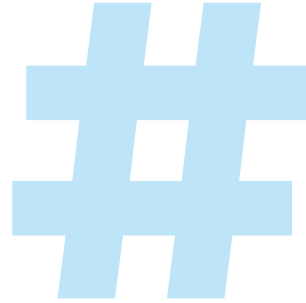
### Why „my footprint“?

We all leave our ecological footprint through the things we use in our daily lives or to practice our favorite hobbies. More and more people nowadays are choosing a shared trip, more and more people are considering what things to buy, refusing to use straws and plastic bags, collecting their waste separately or reusing packaging and items. It is the things that we use that will be one of the starting points in our conversations with the young people about what we leave behind and whether it is healthy for the nature and good for our own health.



## Why „my voice“?

It is now proved that young people learn best from their peers. We believe that the children who will participate in the projects will be able to pass on the messages for more sustainable living through their personal example. We believe that they will make their peers think about why it is important to use reusable bottles and rechargeable batteries, for example. However, children can also influence the adults around them since we live in a time when education and training no longer follow only the direction from older to younger, but flow in all directions. If a child can teach his parents how to use a phone and a tablet, then they can convince them to recycle at home. And how about a child persuading the principal of their school to make an herb garden in the school yard or to recycle all the paper used by the school? Of course, it is all possible – as long as the child believes that those steps are important, and as long as the school proves to him/her that children's opinions matter.



## Why „my choice“?

With the daily choices we make – while we shop, while we eat, while we throw out our garbage, we influence many more people than we can even imagine. If we refuse to use the plastic bag offered in the store every day, they



will soon stop offering us one. If we all carry reusable bags every day, plastic bags will become redundant. Often people think that nothing depends on them, but practice shows that good example and perseverance matter and that they serve as a good example for the people around. This change is the slowest to achieve, but it is the most crucial, because it really leads to a change in the circumstances we all live in.

**“I’m just one person”**

– 7.5 billion people

## More about the project

As we said, this guide is the end of the project, but what we haven't shared yet is that the project started twice. Yes, twice – once in January and for a second time in June, but this time it was altered as an online project.

We wanted it to be implemented through a student's camp, many meetings in partner schools, shared moments of creativity, exchange of experiences and ideas between the children. But the pandemic did not allow us to do all of this. However, we did not want to give up on hearing and seeing how children think about important topics such as environmental protection, responsible consumption, Fairtrade and volunteering, and we decided to hold an online contest for children's drawings and essays.

The „My fingerprint. My voice. My choice.” contest was held entirely online in June and July 2020 – a difficult year for the whole world, when our children learned from experience the meaning of people helping and protecting each other and that we are all connected.

In this guide you will see some of the children's works. And you can see all the essays and drawings on our project page <https://priobshti.se/category/proekt-moyat-otpechatuk>



**my** footprint  
voice  
choice



*Milla Racheva, 11 years old, Kazanlak*



*„My drawing reflects a time when volunteers and doctors in India are helping poor children by bringing them books, textbooks, tablets and food. This year, the coronavirus pandemic has affected many people around the world.*

*Thousands of volunteers and doctors continue to take part, helping people in need. They risk their health and lives to reach even the smallest village where there are people in need.*

*People who donate their work and time do not do it because they need money and fame. They do this completely voluntarily and out of kindness and care for all people in need. This is humanism.*

*People need not only food, but also knowledge and science. I realized that I should be grateful for everything I receive, that I should study harder, because this is not a boring obligation, but a priceless treasure.*

*I want to be a volunteer too.“*

*Bozhana Nikolova, 9 years old, Varna*

We sincerely believe that today it is more important than ever for every child to realize in their own way the wholeness of the world and to get more aware of their place and role in it. It is even more important that this happens not through fear, but through critical thinking, openness to the other's point of view, readiness to give and receive support in a way that respects the dignity and the rights of all people and all living beings, and in a way that protects nature.

The “My footprint, my voice, my choice” project is co-financed by the European Union and the [Bridge 47 project](#), which aims to bring together like-minded people who contribute to a fairer society through global citizenship education.

**Thank you for your trust  
and support!**

## More about the handbook and how to use it

The handbook consists of step-by-step guidance for implementing four projects, described and structured in such a way as to enable the students to learn through experience, learn through doing and learn through self-reflection.

The first three projects aim to prepare the students – in terms of skills and way of thinking, for the fourth project, which is the largest and most complex one.

### What are the main topics in the handbook?

The main domain of the manual is education for global citizenship, which aim is defined by UNESCO as follows: “encouraging and empowering people of all ages to become more active both locally and globally in their role as citizens who build more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and safe societies.”

The other leading topics in the manual are the sustainable use of resources, reusing and recycling of goods and packaging, Fairtrade, volunteering, initiating and planning a change according to the principles of a more sustainable and fair life.

### What is your role as an educator and a facilitator?

As we said, the children will have the leading role in the projects – they will be the ones to read and critically interpret the information in front of them, they will search for more data, they will discuss, they will work in teams, make decisions, send messages, plan events and share their emotions and thoughts in the course of this process. Your role will be to create the time and the space for this, as well as to create the preconditions for all this to happen in a safe environment and in a friendly atmosphere.

Of course, healthy competition is always useful, but make sure that the students always feel that this is not a competition, but rather a team experience in which everyone is important and valuable with their skills. Let them demonstrate in practice what is at the heart of global citizenship – respect and support.

### How long does a project last?

It depends entirely on you and your students as well as on your other engagements at the time. Each group will go as deep in each topic as it feels right for them. Our recommendation is to follow the pace and level of interest of the children when implementing the projects. Do not make a strict schedule in advance, but take more time or shorten the pre-

planned time depending on how the children respond and how much they engage with each activity. One topic may grab them more and another may seem less intriguing for them. One activity may appeal to them and another may be less interesting. Try to be flexible.

It would also be good to leave a week or two for a proper “rest” between the projects, as the experience is intense and emotional, and the children will need the time to calmly integrate these emotions and the lessons learned.

### **What materials will be needed for each project?**

In most cases, you will need the usual materials for any school activities – notebooks, white sheets, colored pencils and pens. In some cases, it would be useful to have flipchart sheets and markers, but with imagination and adaptability you could do without them – by taping together a few white sheets, for example, and using felt-tip pens instead of markers.

It would be useful to have a multimedia projector and a whiteboard at hand so that you do not print everything. And when you need to print something, print it only once, and stick it on the message board in the classroom. Some of the activities will require old brochures, and magazines, old boxes, old notebooks, etc.

### **What does each project involve?**

Each project includes the following types of activities proposed in different order and with different intensity and duration:

- new information presented in an interesting way
- independent work
- work in groups
- work with the whole class
- presentation of the topic to public outside of the classroom
- self-reflection

### **What skills will the children acquire?**

In addition to new knowledge on the topics of the project, children will improve their communication skills, their teamwork skills, their skills for critical thinking, for presenting and for defending their opinions, for planning and for presenting.



Maybe not all topics and activities will make children feel like participating, but we hope that the variety of tasks and approaches will engage everyone at one time or another and will make them feel part of a community that is responsible to nature, to people and to oneself.

### **Two important things**

If possible, do not make participation in the projects about school assessment and grades. It is important for the children to have, above all, intrinsic motivation to participate and, on the other hand, that their participation is not overshadowed by disappointing grades. The topics are important and sensitive and we want the young people to approach them seriously and responsibly. Let their reward be the less garbage, the praise and gratitude of their relatives and classmates, their own satisfaction, the exciting experience.

We hope you also will feel satisfied at the end and will be happy with **your own footprint, your voice and your choice.**



**Thank you!**

## Project 1

### The path of my belongings

#### Main objectives:

- The children to obtain more information about some alarming trends regarding the production and consumption of things in our daily lives (overconsumption, non-ecological production, „production“ of garbage), as well as making sense of this information through personal experience;
- The children to find alternatives to these trends and arguments in support of those alternatives (ecological production, Fairtrade, recycling, reducing consumption);
- The children to learn how to communicate their important conclusions in an interesting way with their peers and meaningful adults.

#### Activities:

1. **“The life cycle of jeans” – what does the infographic tell us and why is it important?**  
Independent examination and discussion with the class
2. **What about my things?**  
Independent work in the form of essays, drawings, presentations
3. **The experience of others**  
Sharing students' works in class
4. **What have we learned so far and how did we feel?**  
Time for self-reflection through group conversations
5. **Let's reach more people**  
Presenting to classmates and friends, organizing an event

## Activity 1

„The life cycle of jeans“ – what does the infographic tell us and why is it important?

Independent examination and discussion with the class

Screen or print the infographic and give your students time to look at it. When they are ready, discuss it with the whole class in detail.

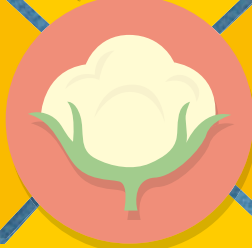
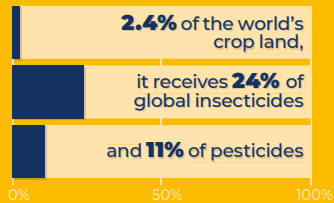
To structure the discussion and to help them reach important conclusions, you can use the following guiding questions:

- Is it healthy for nature to grow cotton for clothes around the world? Let's think about the agricultural land, the amount of water, the amounts of pesticides and herbicides.
- Is it healthy for nature to produce jeans? What happens with the paint and bleach that is used?
- What can be done during jeans production to reduce the damage to the environment and to the people who live in the production areas?
- Who benefits from the production of jeans?
- What do you think Fairtrade is?
- What can be done to ensure a fairer income for people who produce the raw materials for jeans - cotton, fabrics?
- What can each of us do to reduce the environmental damage from our jeans?

## What are jeans made of?

**Cotton is the most widespread non-food crop in the world.** Its production provides income for more than **250 million people worldwide**<sup>1</sup>

Denim production involves the use of chemicals<sup>2</sup>. Even though cotton takes



of the world's cotton is produced by smallholder cotton farmers, among the poorest and most vulnerable in the world<sup>2</sup>

Fair-trade can assure better income for the farmers



## How far do jeans travel?

The production of each pair of jeans has a significant carbon footprint. After each phase of production, the cotton, the denim cloth and the jeans themselves travel hundreds or even thousands of kilometers to reach our market.



## What can I do with my jeans, when I outgrow them or they wear out?

I can keep them for my younger siblings to wear them.

I can donate them for families who can't afford buying clothes at the moment. There are numerous charities that collect clothes for families in need.



I can donate them via the clothes containers in my city. From there the jeans go to second-hand shops – mainly in poor countries. For example, 81% of all clothes sold in Uganda are second-hand.<sup>6</sup> Скъсаните и захабени дрехи от контейнерите се рециклират. Дънковият плат е много подходящ за преработка.

I can grant my jeans a second life by making a denim bag from them.

## What is the denim capital of the world?

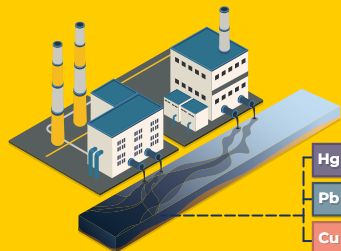
**Xintang, China, is known as the world's denim capital**<sup>5</sup>



1 of every 3 pairs of jeans sold globally has been produced there.

Most jeans are cheap because their price doesn't include any expenses for environmental care.<sup>3</sup>

**By 2013 Xintang's rivers ran a deep blue, a result of manufacturers dumping chemical-laden wastewater directly into local waterways**<sup>3</sup>



Unsafe amounts of toxic metals like **mercury, lead and copper** have been found in the water.

After dyeing, fabrics are repeatedly treated and washed with a variety of chemicals, like **bleach**.

This was extremely dangerous for the local people who rely on the rivers for drinking water and water for everyday needs.<sup>3</sup>

Under public pressure, between 2016 and 2018, measures were taken. Some factories were closed and some companies utilized production techniques that significantly reduce water usage or recycle water.<sup>3</sup>



## What happens to the jeans thrown away in the garbage?



They are taken to the garbage disposal depots or are burned in the incinerators. Those practices are both **harmful for nature and for human health**.



This project is funded by the European Union and the Bridge 47 project

<sup>1</sup><http://www.worldwildlife.org/industries/cotton>

<sup>2</sup><http://cottonupguide.org/why-source-sustainable-cotton/challenges-for-cotton/#1518784631393-54125774-71fd>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.ecowatch.com/denim-jeans-environmental-impacts-2640134256.html?rebellitem=1#rebellitem1>

<sup>4</sup><http://www.transparency-one.com/how-ethical-denim-supply-chain>

<sup>5</sup><https://dieworkwear.com/2018/11/15/dying-for-meaning/>

<sup>6</sup><http://www.clothingpoverty.com/jeans>

## Activity 2

### What about my things?

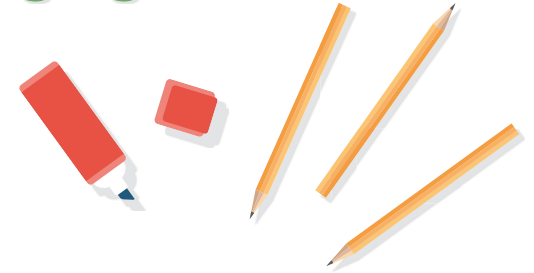
Independent work in the form of essays, drawings, presentations

Print the assignment to the students and give them a week or two to think about it and to complete it. You decide if everyone will write, draw or make a presentation. Or everyone will choose on their own how to approach it. Encourage them to research what their belongings are actually made of, under what circumstances, and what can really be done with them when they tear out or break, or when they become old-fashioned. Also encourage them to work based on their own experience and to consult with their parents/teachers.

Prepare the students that with their consent you would like everyone to present their work to their classmates and that you will then think together about how to present their experiences and messages to more people - the class next door, the school, the school website, etc.

We offer as examples an essay and a comic made by participants in the contest „My footprint. My voice. My choice.“, which you could also print and hang on to the message board in the classroom. You can find more examples from the which took part in Bulgaria in June and July, 2020, on the project page <https://priobshti.se/category/proekt-moyat-otpechatuk>

## And what is the life-cycle of your belongings?

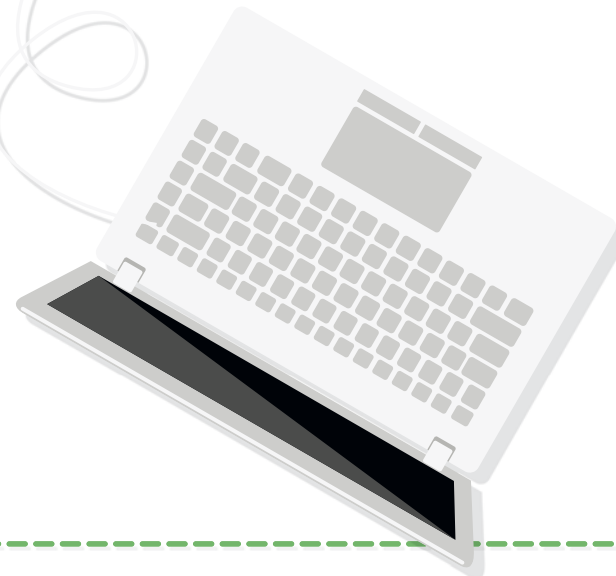
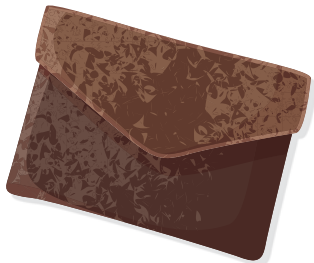


### **STEP 1: LOOK AROUND YOU**

What are your favorite clothes, gadgets, accessories or everyday items? **CHOOSE ONE OF THEM.**

### **STEP 2: GRAB A SHEET OF PAPER OR YOUR COMPUTER**

Tell us **BY WORDS** or **BY A DRAWING** about it. Where do you get it from? Who produced it and where, and from what? Or maybe someone made it especially for you? What will happen to this item if it breaks, or if you buy a newer one?



## „The inspiring pen“

by Yoana Markova, 11 years old, Kazanlak

A few years ago, my little sister gave me a pen as a gift because I enjoy writing. It was the color of a watermelon, and had a red heart hanging on a tiny chain. I had never seen such a pen before, so I was very happy to have it. I was writing mainly with it and so I was a little afraid that it might run out of ink, and you know that when the pens run out of ink, they go in the trash. I didn't want to throw it away, and I wouldn't feel good if I threw away the gift from my little sister, who had looked for something interesting and useful to surprise me. Luckily, I discovered that pens can actually be used for a very long time. My mother told me that fillers for them could be found in bookstores, and I bought a few.

It's been a long time since my sister gave me that pen, but I still use it. Because I like it and I take care of it, it looks as if it is new. I have written a lot of stories, essays and poems with it, but the fact that the ink would eventually run out does not bother me. I've known for a long time now that there's a way to reload it instead of throwing it away.

Thanks to this story, I thought about the life-cycle of my things. I managed to „save“ many things from just being thrown away. My sister likes wearing the clothes, which I

have outgrown, and enjoys playing with my old toys. In this way we save money, protect nature and learn not to make waste, which is one of the most dangerous things in our time.

How much can you learn from a pen!



Еми... какво да направя с тези стари дънки? Аха, сетна си!



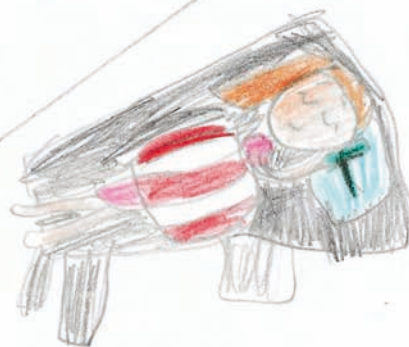
ще си направя калъфка за възглавница...



На която ще направя и тешена буква от старата блуза!



готово!



"Hm, what should I do with those old jeans? I have an idea!  
I will also put a letter on top of it made by an old blouse."

I will make a pillow case.  
Here. It's ready."

Теодора Стоянова, 8 г., гр. Пловдив



### Activity 3

#### The experience of others

Sharing students' works in class

Allocate two or three hours so that all students can present what they have been working on. Make sure that the atmosphere during the presentations of the essays and the drawings is positive and supportive and that each child feels comfortable sharing what they have been working on.

Allow 1 or 2 questions or comments from classmates after each presentation. This will help the children to listen more carefully and to find a common ground between what they hear or see and their own experiences.

At the beginning, you can talk to students about how we give feedback. For example:

1) We start with something positive: „Yana’s essay on decorated pencil-holders made by jars was very interesting“, „Ivan has made the effort to put pictures in his presentation, which helped me see more clearly what he was talking about.“

2) We connect it with our own experience: „something similar happened to me once“; „I understand why Lily was sad and I also felt upset when...“

3) We give additional ideas or recommendations (they can be on the form or on the content): „next time you can use pastels or paints, not pencils, so the colors will be more vivid“; „Another idea for reusing old jars is to take them to the village for making cans“

It is important that the feedback is given with respect and that it builds on the ideas that others have shared. Children may or may not accept the feedback of their classmates and this should also be accepted calmly.



Georgi Iliev, 10 years old, Varna

## Activity 4

### What have we learned so far and how did we feel?

Time for self-reflection through group conversations.

It will take 3-4 weeks from the beginning of the project to the time for self-reflection. The children will need this time for self-reflection to calm their emotions and to organize in their heads what they have experienced and what they have learned so far. Remember that for them it was a rich experience, so do your best to create an atmosphere for self-reflection, which makes them feel safe while thinking and sharing.

Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5 and give them cards with the following three questions. They open the first card with the first question and everyone in the group answers it, then everyone answers the second question, and so on.

- 1) What are the two most important things I learned during the project?
- 2) What will I change in my behavior as a result of the project and how does it make me feel?
- 3) What do I want to say to others – relatives, friends?

## Activity 5

### Let's reach more people

Presenting to classmates and friends, organizing an event

There are many possibilities here and you can let each child choose in which particular activity they want to participate in or to facilitate a process in which the whole class chooses a common approach. Here are some ideas:

- Make an exhibition in the school lobby – to make it bigger and more colorful, check if other classes have worked on the same project (or make sure you arrange in advance with your colleagues to work in parallel).
- Upload the children's works on the school social media and the school's website – of course with their consent and the consent of their parents.
- Make presentations in the classroom next door or in the classes of first graders – this will inspire them to also think about the topic.

## Project 2

### Single-use plastic – pros and cons

#### Objectives:

- The children to gain better understanding through more information and personal experience of the extent to which single-use plastics are used and the harms of this;
- The children to send messages for reducing consumption and increasing plastic recycling.

#### Activities:

- 1. Single-use plastic: pros and cons**  
Critical reading and discussion
- 2. “Plastics hunters”**  
Data collection (independent work)
- 3. The amounts of plastics “caught” and possible alternatives**  
Discussing the findings from the plastic hunt
- 4. The destiny of single-use plastic**  
Developing thematic posters (group work)
- 5. Sending the message forward**  
Organizing a poster exhibition

## Activity 1

### Single-use plastic: pros and cons

Critical reading and discussion

Give each child the opportunity to read the text in advance (shorten it slightly for younger students if necessary). Encourage them to work in pairs or groups, if they want, advise them to look for the meaning of unfamiliar words, to ask questions about the text to you and to their parents. Along with the text, give them a few questions to answer as they read it.

After the students have read the text and have answered the questions, invite them to discuss it together in class. Divide the white board in two halves and write „pro“ on one side and „against“ on the other side - fill in this table with the conclusions that the children have made and with some examples they had come up with.

Encourage each of them to formulate a final conclusion on the information from the text in one sentence only and to write that sentence on a piece of paper. Finally, collect the sheets of paper and make an exhibition of them on the message board in the classroom so that everyone can read the conclusions of the others.

These conclusions can be:

- factual and evaluative – for example: „The fact that plastic is cheap and affordable is not an excuse to pollute the environment with it.“ Or „In some cases,

single-use plastic is useful – for example, in the work of doctors, but we must limit its use to this only.“

- Evaluative and calling for action: „Plastic is harmful and we must all be careful not to use it.“
- Pledges to oneself: „I realized I had to cut down on the plastic I use or at least to recycle it.“

Let the children choose which direction they want to take.



*Karina Spasova, 13 years old, Dupnitsa*

## Single-use plastic: pros and cons

- In which cases single-use plastics and other synthetic products are important and should be used to protect human life and health?
- Why do manufacturers choose plastic packaging for their products like take-away foods and beverages, yogurt, waffles and croissants, etc.?
- Why don't we often notice the plastic things we use?
- What happens to the plastic after we throw it away?
- Where should we dispose our packagings?
- For whom plastic is harmful?

## Single-use plastic

Put simply, single-use plastics are goods that are made primarily from fossil fuel-based chemicals (petrochemicals) and are meant to be disposed of right after use—often, in mere minutes.

A straw with our iced coffee, a plastic bag to carry our takeout, a wrapper on a candy bar: taken individually, each seems harmless. These modern conveniences are so ubiquitous—and so quickly thrown out—that they hardly register in our minds. But single-use plastics come with a steep environmental price—one that we'll be paying off for millennia. Our plastic addiction is having a devastating impact on our oceans, our wildlife, and our health.

Though plastic—a chain of synthetic polymers, essentially—was invented in the mid-19th century, it wasn't until the 1970s that its popularity skyrocketed. Manufacturers began replacing traditionally paper or glass staples with lighter or more durable and affordable plastic alternatives; plastic jugs replaced milk jars, for instance. Since the 1950s, 8.3 billion metric tons of plastics have been produced, and half of that in the past 15 years alone.

There are many uses for plastic that are not only reasonable but important, such as surgical gloves, or straws for people with disabilities. But these cases make up a small fraction of single-use plastic.

Single-use plastics are a glaring example of the problems with throwaway culture. We produce 300 million tons of plastic each year worldwide, half of which is for single-use items. That's nearly equivalent to the weight of the entire human population.

Although single-use plastic pollution accumulates most visibly on our streets, in fact our water suffers even more. Alarmingly, scientists estimate that there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean by weight in 2050. Not only is plastic estimated to kill millions of marine animals and seabirds each year, but it's also contaminating seafood that humans have relied on for millennia.

Plastic pollution impacts vulnerable communities first. Even if plastic doesn't end up in the ocean, recycled plastic is often exported from high-income countries to developing countries to process. But the sheer amount of plastic waste inundates communities until they are drowning under thousands of tons of plastic trash.

Not only does the waste destroy the land itself, but when plastic is incinerated (as is the case for unrecyclable plastic at some illegal facilities) its toxic fumes quickly become a health hazard for residents.

Reducing plastic use is the most effective means of avoiding this waste (and the impacts linked to plastic production and use). Carrying reusable bags and bottles is one great way to avoid single-use plastics in our day-to-day lives.

A whopping 91 percent of all plastic isn't recycled at all. Single-use plastics in particular—especially small items like straws, bags, and cutlery—are traditionally hard to recycle because they fall into the crevices of recycling machinery and therefore are often not accepted by recycling centers.

In many countries around the world legal and community actions have been initiated to ban and reduce single-use plastics.

Source: Single-Use plastic, Courtney Lindwall,  
<https://www.nrdc.org/stories/single-use-plastics-101>

## Activity 2

### “Plastics hunters”

Data collection (independent work)

The purpose of this activity is for children to really notice the plastic, which we generally ignore, and to see how much it is in fact and what happens with it after we use it.

Here are the tasks of the activity step by step:

1. Set two days in which the children will be “plastic hunters”.
2. Explain to them how to make a table in their notebooks with the following columns: “What?”, “Where?”, “For how long?”, “Where did it end up?”.

Their task is to observe themselves and the people around them (at home, in class, on the street, in their neighborhood, etc.) and to record how long a person has been using something plastic (plastic cups and bottles, straws, packaging, plastic bags) and what they did with it afterwards. For example:

What?	Where?	For how long?	Where did it end up?
Drinking straw	In the cake shop	10 minutes	Trash bin
Take-away box	At home	2 evenings	Trash bin
Cigarette pack plastic wrap	On the street	–	On the street

3. Ask the children to observe without commenting and making remarks, and of course not to quarrel or make fun of their classmates or the other people they have observed. Remind them that they are now only in the role of researchers, and researchers are impartial and register only the facts.

## Activity 3

The amounts of plastics “caught” and possible alternatives

Discussing the findings from the plastic hunt

At the beginning of the class, have each student say a sentence or a word about how they felt during the task.

Then select three or four volunteers to present their tables. But this time the challenge increases because, this time, the children have to discuss what could have happened to this plastic instead of what actually happened. For example: “One can carry a lunch box and ask the shop assistant to put the food in it.”, “You can drink your juice without a straw.”

The goal is that the children come up with alternatives to reduce the use of plastic, or at least to increase the amount of plastic that is recycled. At first, some ideas will seem unrealistic or “not cool”, as children would call them - for example, to bring at school homemade lemonade or to bring a box to the supermarket to buy food. Remind them that it’s all a matter of attitude and a matter of the way of thinking. Behaviors will change faster for good, if they are accepted by the whole community and supported by its members.

Finally, let everyone say in a sentence or a word if something in their emotions has changed after discussing possible alternatives. Pay attention to whether children feel more hopeful and ready to change something in their habits. Discuss your observations with them.

## **Activity 4**

### **The destiny of single-use plastic**

Developing thematic posters (group work)

This is when everything your students have learned about plastic so far will sink in. Divide them into a couple of groups and give each group a task to make a poster on the theme of “The destiny of single-use plastics”, distinguishing between what is happening now and what they would like to see happen in the future. Let them draw or describe the steps for the alternatives becoming a reality.

## **Activity 5**

### **Sending the message forward**

Organizing a poster exhibition

Again, it is time for the children to share with others the good work they have done during the project and to send their messages. Make a poster exhibition in the school lobby. And why not, then turn it into a traveling exhibition and have it visiting other schools, community centers, the municipality?

Now is the time for the children to be ambassadors, and if they wish, they can also stand next to their posters and send their messages personally to their schoolmates. And why not to the school principal? Isn't it time to introduce separate waste collection at the school?

## Project 3

### Paper

#### Objectives:

- The children will learn more about paper recycling;
- The children will send creative and inspiring messages about saving and recycling paper.

#### Activities:

1. **What we (don't) know about paper?**  
Quiz and team work, self-correction and discussion
2. **Save a tree**  
Making message cards with a calling not to waste paper and to recycle it
3. **A message card to yourself**  
Activity for self-reflection
4. **You have mail**  
Giving the cards to relatives and friends



## Activity 1

### What we (don't) know about paper?

Quiz and team work, self-correction and discussion

We are starting the topic of saving and recycling paper with a quiz. Divide the children into teams and give them the questions (on the next page). Encourage them to consider each question carefully and to discuss the possible answers. They must reach a consensus and together to indicate an answer that they consider to be the correct one.

When everyone is ready with the answers tell them the correct ones:

Q1 – indicate the correct answer according to what is true about your country.

Q2 – the correct answer is B) No. Unfortunately, greasy paper and paper with food on it can't be recycled.

Q3 – the correct answer is B) 13 trees

Q4 – the correct answer is C) 32 litres

Q5 – the correct answer is C) 5-7 times

Q6 – the correct answer is A) Yes. But just to be sure, check with your local regulations

Discuss the following questions with the whole class:

1. Which answer surprised me the most and why?
2. Which answer was I absolutely sure of and why?
3. Does it make sense to collect the paper separately and why?

## What do we (not) know about paper?

1. In what color is the container for paper collection for recycling?  
A / Blue  
B / Yellow  
C / Green  
D / Other
2. Can dirty paper be recycled – for example a greasy pizza box?  
A / Yes  
B / No
3. How many trees does 1 ton of recycled paper save?  
A / 5  
B / 13  
C / 28
4. How many liters of drinking water does each kilogram of recycled paper save?  
A / 8  
B / 24  
C / 32
5. How many times can paper be recycled?  
A / only once  
B / 3-4  
C / 5-7
6. Is it true that the price for recycling a paper package is included in the price of the product, which is packed by that paper?  
A / Yes  
B / No

## Activity 2

### Save a tree

Making message cards with a calling not to waste paper and to recycle it

For this workshop you will need old boxes, old notebooks (from which you will use the covers), old magazines and brochures. Ask each child to make a few cards on which to write a message about why it is important to save and recycle paper. The cards can be made by gluing and drawing. Remind them that they can use the information they have learned from the quiz –

for example, that 1 ton of recycled paper saves 13 trees. Also encourage them to draw trees and the recycling symbol so that their messages are easy to understand. Last but not least, encourage the children to exchange ideas for slogans (messages) and images, that way they will be working together and enriching each other's ideas and experience.



*Maria Koleva, 7 years old, Yambol*



*The symbol for recycling*

### **Activity 3**

#### **A message card to yourself**

Activity for self-reflection

Have each child choose a card of their own or made by a friend and write a message to themselves - in the form of a promise. For example, "I will recycle all my old and unnecessary notebooks."

This activity will help children to really relate to the topic and regard it as their personal cause.

### **Activity 4**

#### **You have mail**

Giving the cards to relatives and friends

This is the moment when the children will send their messages to relatives and friends by giving them the cards they have made.

It is a good idea also to arrange a stand from which children from other classes can take a card. And why not to have the children make a special workshop for their schoolmates, during which they can make their own cards. So the idea will be spread even further, to many more people.

And will it reach the school principal as well? Is it possible that all the paper used in the school gets recycled? If everyone is involved in the cause and supports it, of course, it is quite possible.

## Project 4

### Volunteering is important for everyone

#### Objectives:

- The children will discuss the benefits of participating in volunteer initiatives;
- The children will be engaged in a deeper reflection on their own experience and attitudes towards volunteering;
- The children will initiate a volunteer project at the school.

#### Activities:

- 1. Volunteering is important for everyone**  
Presentation and discussion of an infographic
- 2. “Good is within us and we give it to others”**  
Students’ independent work
- 3. Good is inspirational**  
Sharing drawings and essays in class
- 4. A place for good deeds**  
Group work
- 5. A new beginning**  
Initiating a volunteer project

## Activity 1

### Volunteering is important for everyone

Presentation and discussion of an infographic

Introduce the infographic to your students.

Talk about the importance of volunteering and the personal qualities of volunteers.

*“Volunteering is not valuable, it is priceless. No matter who we help and when we help: a teacher, a classmate, a friend, mom, dad or some relatives, it's always worth it, even a little ant is worth helping.”*

*Teodora Stoyanova, 8 years old, Plovdiv*



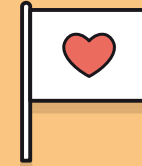
## Everyone wins

People who do volunteer work develop the communities which they are supporting. By doing this, the volunteers also improve their own skills and personal characteristics.



## We share values

Volunteering helps us share common values such as mutual respect and mutual support.



## Our communication improves

97 % of the EVS participants have learned to get along better with people of a different cultural background.



## New ideas evolve

74% of the EVS participants have improved their competences in developing a good idea and putting it into practice.



## We improve our teamwork

85 % of the EVS participants have learned how to cooperate better in a team.

Source: [http://europa.eu/youth/sites/default/files/evs\\_factsheet\\_and\\_impacts\\_apr\\_2016.pdf](http://europa.eu/youth/sites/default/files/evs_factsheet_and_impacts_apr_2016.pdf)

## Activity 2

“Good is within us and we give it to others”

Students' independent work

This is the activity for students' independent work and exploration of one's own thoughts and feelings regarding selfless good deeds.

Give the children this worksheet and ask them to tell or draw about their experiences.

*“Good is within us and we give it to others. Doing good costs nothing. But it means a lot. We live in a world full of malice and envy. Isn't it better to do good, to help a person in need – sometimes a kind gesture and advice is a lot. Good is like light. If you open the window, you can have as much light as you want. You can be good at any time.”*

*Slaveya Avelska, 10 years old, Montana*



## **Did you know that WE WERE ALL VOLUNTEERS at one time or another?**

YES – although we haven't always called ourselves that – each of us has been involved in cleaning the garden in front of our home or cleaning a park or a forest.

Each of us has made or donated something for the school bazaar. And have you already participated in a charity concert?

VOLUNTEERING is what we do for others without expecting any payment or reward. We do it simply to help and because we believe it is IMPORTANT.

And because after we clean the garden near our home, we find it NICER that way. We feel HAPPY and SATISFIED that we have made someone happy with our work and talent. While volunteering, we meet other good people with whom we become FRIENDS.

That is why we say that VOLUNTEERING IS VALUABLE AND IMPORTANT FOR EVERYONE!

Sometimes the people who want to volunteer get involved in volunteer camps and volunteer projects. Those projects can happen in our school, in our city, or somewhere in nature. Many people decide to travel and help people abroad as well as foreigners come and do volunteer work in our home countries. Many organizations and

initiatives help them to do this – the European Voluntary Service is one of them. The information included in the infographic is from an EVS research.

Look at the infographic again and remind yourself of your own good deeds. Tell us about them with an ESSAY or in DRAWING – did you plant flowers with your classmates in the yard of a kindergarten or did you participate in a concert for the elderly? Did you and your family clean up around your home, or did you and your friends collect books for the community center? How did you feel after that? What did the other people tell you?

Whatever act of kindness you have done,

**Thank you!**

### Activity 3

#### Good is inspirational

Sharing drawings and essays in class



*"I love nature and I often observe it. Animals of the same species help each other, they are united and that makes them stronger.*

*My mother told me that there are animals that live separately and then have to rely only on themselves.*

*But we, humans, are not like them. We can be compassionate and ready to lend a hand."*

*Lea Victoria Emil Dangova, 7 years old, Sofia*

### Activity 4

#### A place for good deeds

Group work

Divide the class into several teams and give them the task to draw a map of the school – with the yard, the places to eat, the places to rest. Encourage them to mark the important places for them – the gym, the library, the football field. For this activity, it is good to have flipchart sheets or you can join together several ordinary sheets.

Then, the students' task is to write down the problems they or other children encounter in these places - perhaps the younger students fail to buy breakfast because the older ones get in front of the queue? Or the girls are afraid to go to the toilet? And is the backyard accessible for the children who use wheelchairs to move around? Do the children like what the gardens look like? Are the playgrounds in a good condition? Are there enough books in the library? How can the school hallways become nicer?

The purpose of the map is to help children visualize each place of the school one by one and think about what is bothering them about that place and how they could change it.

Usually, children put a lot of energy into this activity and may stop listening or talking effectively to each other. On

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continued on the next page

this day, it will be difficult for them to continue their work productively, and this is normal. Stop the activity after 30-40 minutes of work, talk about what you noticed and let them share how they felt. Put the maps aside for a while and ask the students to keep thinking about the topic until the next time when you will discuss it again. This break will allow them to distance themselves a little and think more carefully, to see the problems and any possible solutions more clearly. That way they will be able to defend their opinions with more examples and arguments the next time they talk to their classmates about this.

When you meet again for this activity, give each team 2 sticky notes and ask them to describe two problems and the solution they envision to each problem. Then ask them to stick the notes on the appropriate place on their map.

## **Activity 5**

### **A new beginning**

Initiating a volunteer project

At the next meeting, each team will present the problems they have identified and the solutions they have offered. The purpose of this activity is for the class to decide on a volunteer project which to initiate in the classroom, the school, or in the school yard.

During the discussion, encourage the students to think about what resources and help they will need for each proposal. How much time they are willing to devote, what support they could count on, what resources they will need? How long they think completing the project will take, how they envision to motivate other children to get involved, what will be the benefits. Who will benefit most, is it worth making these efforts?

Children will see from experience that making an informed decision is not an easy task, and they may ask for some additional time to gather more information and to do some research.

Give them this time – after all, this is their new beginning – a volunteer project that they initiate and organize themselves – an initiative in which they will have the leading role and which they will complete.

## Final thoughts

The projects that the children will decide to implement will be different from each other and there is no one single recipe for their implementation. However, it is important that they complete them with great enthusiasm and to be able to maintain their motivation and good team spirit throughout the whole project.

Saying “goodbye” in this guidebook, when reaching a “new beginning” seems strange and unnatural, but the children have already come a long way to take their first step in this new endeavour.

They have already learned so much about the world and about themselves. All this time they have looked and listened to themselves and others to see those **specific and valuable footprints** that we all leave behind – the echo of our laughter, the touch feeling left after a high five, the encouraging words that someone has said to us, and which we repeat to ourselves in our minds in difficult times.

They have already heard **their voices**, which are convincing, motivating, inspirational, supportive.

They have already made **their choices** to participate voluntarily in an initiative that will benefit not only them, but others as well.

And what could be better than that!





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