



# Green Schools Network

## ACTIVITY SHEET

August 2008

### Why talk about bottles?



When was the last time you had a bottled drink? Yesterday? Or perhaps the week before? Bottles - made of glass or plastic - are a necessary part of our lives, beginning almost at birth with the milk bottles a baby drinks from. A chilled bottle of a soft drink is so refreshing and available at every street corner. But have you thought of what happens to a soft drink bottle when we have drunk all its contents?

Plastic water bottles have invaded the market in India, as a replacement for conventional glass bottles. Only, around 50 per cent of current consumption of 6000 tons of plastic bottles used, are available for recycling. And what of all the glass bottles that go waste everyday? Is there room on our planet for so much waste that does not biodegrade?

Name .....

School Name .....

Class ..... Date .....

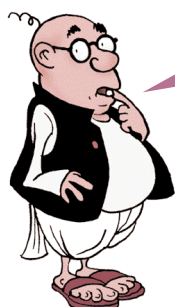
**Gobar Gyan:** The cry of the kabadiwallah or the raddiwallah is a familiar one as he rides slowly by on his cycle. The raddiwallahs – collectors of household waste – encourage people to sell them their recyclable waste, bottles, paper cloth etc. While they make a living collecting our waste, they also, perhaps unintentionally, make the most crucial contribution to the cycle of waste collection and recycling in the country.



Let us do what we can to reduce bottle waste in our home.

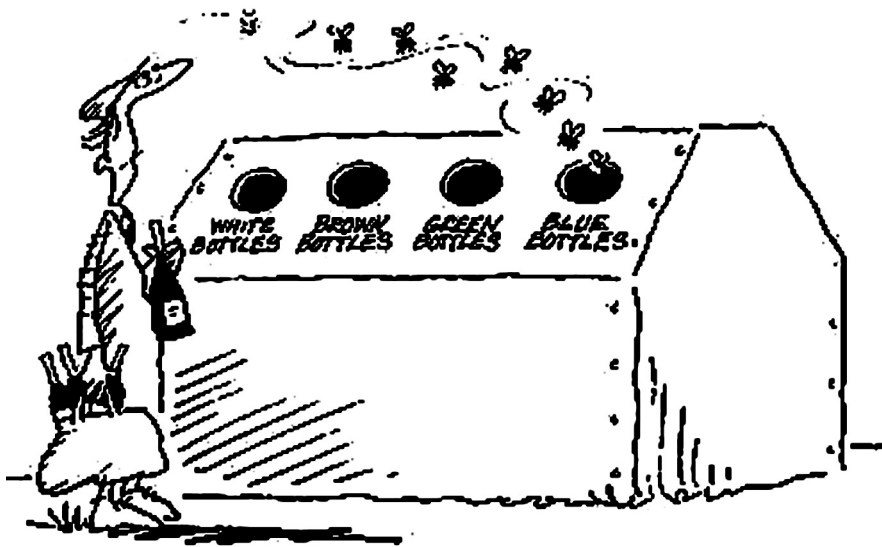
**Activity:** Make a list of all the different uses to which bottles are used in your everyday life. Specify as best you can how many of each you are using right now in your home. Some examples have been given to help you along.

USES OF BOTTLES	PLASTIC/ GLASS	NUMBER IN USE
Pickles and jams	_____	_____
Water storage	_____	_____
Medicine syrups	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
TOTAL NO.OF BOTTLES		_____



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## Gobar Gyan

The most commonly used material for making water bottles is polyethylene terephthalate (PET), which is derived from crude oil. Approximately 2.7 million tons of plastic are used to bottle water each year. Though PET is made for recycling, nine out of 10 such bottles end up in landfills – (in the United States this amounts to roughly 30 million a day) - where they can take up to 1000 years to biodegrade.

It is not known how long glass takes to break down, but it is so long that glass made in the

Middle East over 3,000 years ago can still be found today. Recycling reduces the amount of waste glass, which needs to be land filled.

**Find out:** What happens to all the empty bottles in your home? Can you suggest ways to re-use them?

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## Gobar Gyan

Recent studies have shown that plastic bottles release a chemical into the water, which is harmful for human consumption. It is advisable to use glass bottles to store water at home. In 2003, the recycling of glass saved enough energy to launch ten space shuttle missions!

### ***Try these out using empty bottles:***

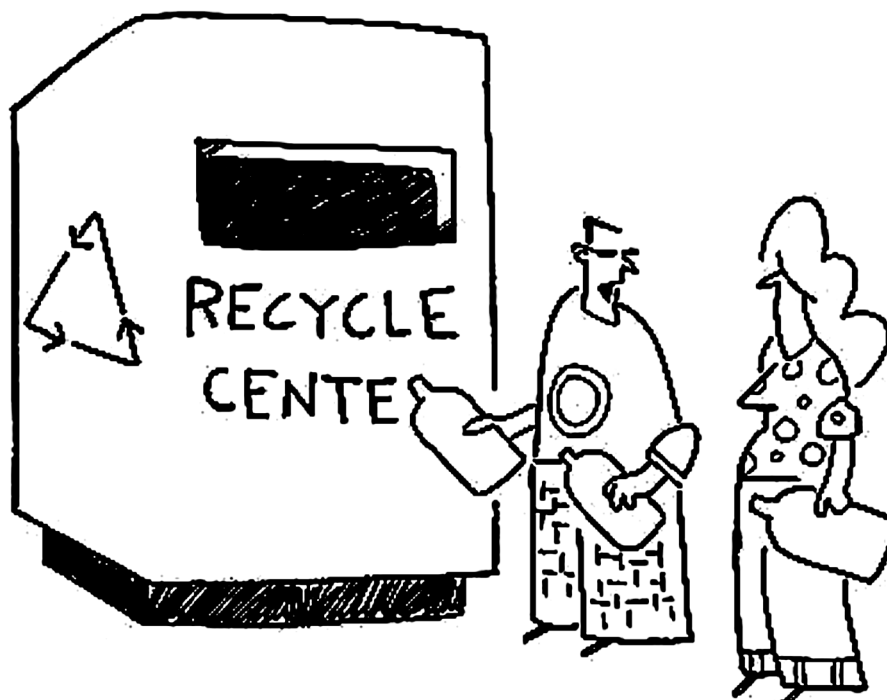
- *Store seeds inside the bottles and then label the bottles according to the seeds they hold. Seeds that need to be kept cold can easily be placed inside the fridge in these bottles.*
- *Glue several bottles next to each other and use the glued collection on your desk as a storage system for all your tiny things: rubber bands, paper clips, hair pins, needles, nails, bolts, screws, matches, etc. Or just place some fresh flowers inside to brighten up your room.*
- *If you need a coin holder to place in your purse or your car, place your loose change in the bottles. No more looking everywhere for change especially if you need to pay the toll.*
- *Donate your empty bottles to your local vet, animal shelters or free dispensaries. They can be reused for dispensing syrups.*

***Can you think of any other ways to use empty bottles? Use your imagination!***

## Gobar Gyan

Recycling reduces the demand for raw materials. There is no shortage of the materials used, but they do have to be quarried from our landscape, so from this point of view, there are environmental advantages to recovering and recycling glass. For every tonne of recycled glass used, 1.2 tonnes of raw materials are preserved.

Taking part in recycling the waste we produce makes us think about the effect we are having on our environment



**"Why do I get deja vu everytime I come here?"**

and enables us to contribute towards a greater level of sustainability

**Activity:** Get together with your friends and organize a bottle collection drive in your school or your locality. Put up posters informing your friends and neighbors of the dangers of using plastic bottles and the ways in which bottles can be reused and recycled. Donate the bottles to a recycling plant.

### ***Funky Facts***

- Glass can be recycled indefinitely as part of a simple but hugely beneficial process, as its structure does not deteriorate when reprocessed. In the case of bottles and jars, up to 80% of the total mixture can be made from reclaimed scrap glass
- Recycling two bottles saves enough energy to boil water for five cups of tea

**Remember that you could always send your empty coke/  
beer bottles back to the dealer for refilling.**



If you found the activity sheet interesting, E-mail us at [eeu@cseindia.org](mailto:eeu@cseindia.org) or write to:  
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New Delhi-110062 or Call 29955124 Extension 219