

CIRCLE THE NUMBER THAT APPLIES TO YOU

Do you:

	<i>never</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>often</i>
1. Consider the amount of packaging on an item before you buy it?	3	2	1
2. Consider the recyclability of an item before you buy it?	3	2	1
3. Consider whether you really need something before you buy it?	3	2	1
4. Think about what will happen to a product or a package when you no longer have any use for it?	3	2	1
5. Try to reuse things you already have instead of disposing of them and buying new things?	3	2	1
6. Wash out and reuse plastic bags in your home?	3	2	1
7. Consider what pollution and wastes were created in the manufacture of the things you buy?	3	2	1
8. Take advantage of the opportunities to recycle in your area?	3	2	1
9. Use dishcloths, sponges and cloth napkins instead of disposable paper products?	3	2	1
10. Avoid items such as disposable diapers, razors, lighters and pens when longer lasting alternatives are available?	3	2	1
11. Avoid eating in places which wrap your food in lots of paper and plastic or ask that less wrapping be used for your order?	3	2	1
12. Compost kitchen scraps and other compostable matter?	3	2	1
13. Talk to store managers about stocking bulk items or avoiding packaging?	3	2	1
14. Buy items in bulk?	3	2	1
15. Read consumer information articles to find out about the quality and durability of products you buy?	3	2	1

Totals for Each Column:

Add Column Totals for the Grand Total:

Complete this chart. In the first column, list your estimate for the time that each item of trash might take to break down in a landfill. Use a range, for example, 3-5 weeks. Then work with your group to agree upon an estimate of time based on time ranges provided by your teacher. Next, number the items in order as agreed upon. Complete the final column at the direction of your teacher.

Your Own "Best Guess" Decomposition Times	Item of Trash	Group Consensus Decomposition Times	Decomposition Order (Shortest to Longest, 1-13)	Decomposition Times as Estimated by "Garbologists"
	aluminum can			
	banana			
	cigarette butt			
	cotton rag			
	glass bottle			
	leather boot			
	paper bag			
	plastic 6-pack rings			
	plastic jug			
	rubber sole of boot			
	Styrofoam cup			
	tin can			
	wool sock			