

CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC IN THE CLASSROOM

Article 'Trash Nation'
Issue May/June 2017



Lesson Overview:

Students will use the article “Trash Nation” and its photos to dive deeper into how we manage our garbage.

Grade levels:

7-12

Materials:

- Image Analysis BLM (1 per student)
- Copies of the article “Trash Nation” (May/June 2017 issue)
- Article Analysis BLM (1 per student)

Lesson Activity:

1. To introduce the topic, display the images from the article on a whiteboard or give students one of the images from the article to look at. Have them analyze the image using the Image Analysis BLM. As a followup, one of the boxes in the analysis will have them discuss how the image connects to the article.
2. Have students read the article independently and analyze it using the attached Article Analysis BLM. Students can pair up and share their thoughts before opening the discussion to the whole class about how garbage is managed in Toronto. Questions to start the discussion: What is the main issue? How are we currently handling this issue? Go over the students’ responses from the Article Analysis BLM. Record ideas using the whiteboard/poster paper. Another option is to have the teacher or student type the responses and to display them on the screen in the classroom. This way, students can add to their own answers.

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Extension Activities:

1. Where does your garbage/recycling go? In the article, you learned about what Toronto does with its garbage and recycling, but what about your own city? Do some research either online or by contacting your city officials. Present your findings to your class/community/elected officials.
2. How much garbage do you produce? Keep track of what you throw out in an hour/day/week. What are some ways you can reduce what you throw out? How can you pass this advice on to others?
3. The article refers to some housing as “tear-downs.” Can you find examples of this in your neighbourhood? Are there certain areas of your city that have seen the effects of “tear-downs”? Construct a pro/con sheet or have a debate about the effects of “tear-downs” on a city or neighbourhood.
4. Document the trash/recycling in your school or neighbourhood. Using your devices, take pictures of classroom garbage/recycling areas. Analyze these pictures over a couple of weeks. If possible (and safe), do a garbage analysis. What ended up in the trash today? Could it have been recycled? How much did it weigh? If you notice a trend of more items ending up in the trash rather than in the recycling containers, develop an awareness program in your school. This could be done through the combination of announcements, videos, demonstrations, etc. Follow up on your message. Was it successful? You might have to do another trash analysis to find out.
5. Think about the history and future of garbage. The article talks about the capacity of some of the garbage dumps in the area, as well as some of the changes that have taken place over time in the development of what we do with garbage. Conduct an inquiry into how your city/town/area has dealt with waste over time and what they are planning to do in the future.
6. How are recycled products making their way back into retail consumption? Conduct an inquiry project to determine how companies are using recycled products in the construction of new products. How successful has this been?

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ARTICLE ANALYSIS

Title:	Date, author, source:
Issue(s) discussed in the article:	Summarize the main point of the article in one sentence.
Who is the intended audience for this topic/issue?	
List five facts mentioned in this article. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	
What is the author's opinion on the issue? Support this with evidence from the article.	

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What is your opinion on the issue? Explain and support your opinion with specific details from the article.

Is this issue important to our society right now? Why or why not? Support your answer with details from the article.

Can you relate this article to something you have studied in class? Explain.

Develop a followup question to this topic or article.

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IMAGE ANALYSIS

What type of image is it (e.g., cartoon, photo, drawing)?

When was the image produced?

Who produced the image?

Who is the intended audience? Provide detail(s) from the image to support this.

Briefly describe the image. What is happening?

How does the image connect to the article? Explain.

What is your response to the image? Did it shock you? Excite you? Make you think? Explain.