



ACTIVITY Collecting Cafeteria Data

The reasons students don't recycle correctly and consistently are varied. Have students do this data collection exercise before the Recycling Monitor training so they can better understand the barriers to successful student recycling in the cafeteria.

Use this activity as:

- An opportunity for students to learn more about their school's recycling culture and gain more confidence as they transition into their roles as Recycling Monitors.
- Pre- and post-test tools to measure the effectiveness of your student Recycling Monitors.
- Part of a larger project-based learning exercise woven into core subject area curriculum.

ACTIVITY 1 Collecting Quantitative Cafeteria Data

Step 1: Students should use the *Collecting Quantitative Data* form while observing a full period in the cafeteria and categorize student recycling behavior based on categories:

"Zero Wasters": Successfully stop, contemplate and sort their cafeteria waste into the appropriate recycling bins.

"Contemplators": Take a moment to consider which bin to put their cafeteria waste but are not always successful.

"Dump & Runners": Place all their cafeteria waste in one bin, regardless of the contents.

"Deserters": Leave their cafeteria waste at the table when they leave.

Step 2: Make only one tally mark for each person they observe.

Step 3: Take notes about their observations in the "What are you noticing?" box.

Step 4: Calculate "Total #" and "% of Total" at the end of each observation period.

1	I
2	II
3	III
4	IIII
5	IIII I
6	IIII II
7	IIII III
8	IIII IIII
9	IIII IIII I
10	IIII IIII II

Optional: Break up observation and data collection into 10-minute intervals. Do sorting behaviors change according to the amount of time remaining in the lunch period? If so, how could you help affect behavior change?

ACTIVITY 2 Collecting Qualitative Cafeteria Data

Step 1: Students should use the *Collecting Qualitative Data* form to ask a random sample of students from each category above about their recycling behaviors.

Step 2: Analyze your data. What reoccurring trends or themes did you notice? What did students say would motivate them to recycle? Could changes in recycling station location, signage, announcements or education help encourage more successful sorting?

Step 3: Display results on a bulletin board or share in a newsletter.

Step 4: After 2-3 months conduct the exercise again and compare your results.



ACTIVITY Collecting Quantitative Cafeteria Data

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ School _____

Menu Items _____

There are 4 stages of sorters. Designate and make only one tally for each person you observe. Make notes about your observations.

"Zero Wasters": Successfully stop, contemplate and sort their cafeteria waste into the appropriate bins :)			
Make tally marks for number of Zero Wasters in the space below.	What are you noticing?	Total #	% of Total
"Contemplators": Take a moment to consider which bin to put their cafeteria waste, but aren't always successful :/			
Make tally marks for number of Contemplators in the space below.	What are you noticing?	Total #	% of Total
"Dump & Runners": Place all their cafeteria waste in one bin, regardless of the contents :(
Make tally marks for number of Dump & Runners in the space below.	What are you noticing?	Total #	% of Total
"Deserters": Leave their cafeteria waste at the table when they leave :o			
Make tally marks for number of Deserters in the space below.	What are you noticing?	Total #	% of Total
Note: Total # of "Deserters" / Total # of Students Observed X 100 = % of Total		TOTAL # of Students Observed:	100%



ACTIVITY Collecting Qualitative Cafeteria Data

Ask a random sample of students from each stage about their sorting behavior and fill in answers below.

“Zero Wasters” : Successfully stop, contemplate and sort their cafeteria waste into the appropriate bins :)	
Questions: Why did you take the time and effort to sort your waste? What would motivate you to continue to do so?	Total # of students interviewed
Answers:	
“Contemplators” : Take a moment to consider which bin to put their cafeteria waste in, but are not always successful :/	
Questions: Why didn't you take more time to accurately sort all of your waste? What would motivate you to do so?	Total # of students interviewed
Answers:	
“Dump & Runners” : Place all their cafeteria waste in one bin, regardless of the contents :(
Questions: Why did you put all of your materials in one bin? What would motivate you to sort your waste?	Total # of students interviewed
Answers:	
“Deserters” : Leave their cafeteria waste at the table when they leave :o	
Questions: Why did you leave your waste at the table? What would motivate you to take it to a recycling station?	Total # of students interviewed
Answers:	
TOTAL #:	