



## Opinion Writing Performance Task

## Teacher Version

Grade	4	Title/Subject	Should we continue to recycle, yes or no?
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The following sections are included in this Teacher Version:

- **Process: Day 1, 2 and 3**
- **Teacher Directions for Scoring Rubric**
- **Student Prompt and Articles**

## Overview

On Day 1 students will engage in a shared reading and note-taking activity using a texts to learn about whether or not we should continue to recycle and why. On Day 2, after the group activity, they will be directed to plan, and begin to draft an opinion writing piece about whether or not to recycle utilizing the information they read in the text as well as notes they took during the shared lesson. On Day 3 students will finish their drafts, revise and edit their writing, and type a final copy.

## Process

**DAY 1: Shared Reading and Note-taking:** Up to 60 minutes**Step 1: Connect to Background Knowledge** ~ 5 minutes

Provide an introduction to the classroom activity by indicating that after this activity, students will be writing an opinion piece focused on the topic of recycling. Ask students to share their opinions orally. Possible questions could include:

*“Do you think recycling is good? Why? Do you think it helps our environment? Why?”*

Have students list their ideas on individual white boards. Next have them discuss their choice with a partner. Finally, have students share out their ideas and list them on a piece of chart paper. Be sure to encourage them to state WHY they think their choice is best.

**Step 2: Accessing the Information** ~ 20 minutes

1. Explain: *“Now we will read about the pros and cons of recycling. You will be writing an opinion paper to your teacher about whether your think recycling should be continued and include information from the articles provided in your reasons.”* Use the information from the texts to supply your reasons. Point out important facts and features (pictures, captions, etc.) Use ONLY the sources provided in this prompt packet.
2. Lead a whole class discussion about the sources. You may take notes next to the text and/or make a word bank.
3. Take a Stand: Have students write on a white board “pro” if they are for continuing recycling and ‘con” if they are against continuing recycling. Next have them list 2 or more reasons why they think this. Have students literally stand up and bring their boards with them next to two signs: “Pro” and “Con”. Allow students to take turns orally stating their position and reasons with the whole class. Students may move to the other side if convinced by a classmate.



## Opinion Writing Performance Task

**DAY 2: Planning and Writing a Draft:** Up to 60 minutes**Step 3: Clarify Expectations for the Writing Task:** ~ 5 minutes

**Explain:** *"In a few minutes you will have a chance to look at the sources, plan, and write a draft to explain to me whether you think communities should continue to recycle or not. Tomorrow you will have a chance to change and edit your work from today or add more details."*

Review the student directions and checklist for the writing assignment and give each student a sheet of blank paper for planning and lined paper for writing.

**Step 4: Planning and Drafting:** ~ 35 minutes

Tell students to begin planning their writing on the blank sheet of paper. You can remind them of planning strategies you have taught in your classroom such as outlining, lists, webs, or drawing. Don't provide a plan yourself just remind them of the strategies for planning.

After 10 minutes suggest to students that they begin writing their drafts.

Collect all materials from Day 2.

**DAY 3:** Up to 60 minutes

1. Allow students to access the sources, their notes, the classroom activity charts/key word lists, and their draft.
2. Direct students to re-read their draft from Day 2. Review the task using the student checklist poster. Suggest to students to add reasons and information to their opinion statement about recycling.
3. Students may opt to type or handwrite their final draft in grade 4.
4. Collect all student writing materials.

**Teacher Directions for Scoring Rubric:**

Use the attached rubric to score the writing. Students receive two scores: one for opinion writing and another for conventions. Enter these scores into School City.



### Opinion Writing Performance Task

Grade		4			Opinion Writing Rubric		
Level	OPINION WRITING/PROCESS		LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS		WITH GUIDANCE and SUPPORT FROM ADULTS		
4 Exceeds	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations set forth in 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Document is well organized and connected <input type="checkbox"/> Both opinion and conclusion are clear and well stated <input type="checkbox"/> Reasons are well organized with appropriate details		<b>Mostly correct</b> use of language conventions, and some above grade level skills used, for example: <input type="checkbox"/> Meets all expectations set forth in 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Uses underlining, quotation marks, or italics to indicate titles of works <input type="checkbox"/> Recognizes and corrects inappropriate shifts in verb tense.		Guidance & Support Level of guidance and support from adults before writing:  Check off what was done before the student wrote the piece being scored.  <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Read aloud or shared reading <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing <input type="checkbox"/> Vocabulary word bank <input type="checkbox"/> Shared or interactive writing <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic organizer <input type="checkbox"/> Language frames		
	<b>OPINION WRITING (W1)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Introduces topic clearly and states an opinion <input type="checkbox"/> Creates organizational structure that groups related ideas to support writer's purpose (W1a) <input type="checkbox"/> Supplies reasons that support opinion with facts and details (W1b) <input type="checkbox"/> Links opinion and reasons with words/phrases such as <i>for instance</i> , <i>in order to</i> , <i>in addition</i> (W1c) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides a concluding statement or section related to the opinion (W1d)		<b>Adequate</b> use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example: <input type="checkbox"/> Produces complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons (L1f) <input type="checkbox"/> Correctly uses frequently confused words (e.g., <i>to, too, two; there, their</i> ) (L1g) <input type="checkbox"/> Writes fluidly and legibly in cursive or joined italics. (L1h) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses correct capitalization (L2a) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text (L2b) <input type="checkbox"/> Uses a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence. (L2c) <input type="checkbox"/> Spells grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed. (L2d) <input type="checkbox"/> Chooses words and phrases to convey ideas precisely (L3) <input type="checkbox"/> Chooses punctuation for effect (L3)				
	<b>WRITING PROCESS (W4-W8)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Uses clear and coherent writing in multi-paragraph texts that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience (W4) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>WGASFA*</b> Develops and strengthens writing by planning, revising, and editing (W5) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>WGASFA*</b> Uses a variety of digital tools to write and publish writing (W6) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>WGASFA*</b> Can keyboard/ type a minimum of one page in a single sitting (W6) <input type="checkbox"/> Takes notes, paraphrases, and categorizes information, and provides a list of sources (W8) <input type="checkbox"/> Draws evidence from text (W9)						
	<b>3 Meets</b>						
2 Almost Meets	<input type="checkbox"/> Opinion is clear but some reasons are unrelated <input type="checkbox"/> May not write multi-paragraphs <input type="checkbox"/> Planning for writing is limited <input type="checkbox"/> Provides few facts and details <input type="checkbox"/> Draws little evidence from text <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some linking words/phrases but ideas are scattered		<b>Limited</b> use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example: <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some punctuation correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Uses some sentence variety correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Spells most words correctly				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Provides few or no details or facts <input type="checkbox"/> Provides no concluding statement or is unrelated to opinion <input type="checkbox"/> Document is disorganized or incomplete		<b>Infrequent</b> use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage and spelling for grade level, for example: <input type="checkbox"/> Many words spelled incorrectly <input type="checkbox"/> Has many errors in capitalization <input type="checkbox"/> Writes few complete sentences or only simple sentences <input type="checkbox"/> Punctuation includes many errors or is missing				
1 Does Not Meet							

• **WGASFA:** "with guidance and support from adults"

This rubric was adapted from rubrics at [sbused.org](http://sbused.org) and information from Smarter Balanced Assessments ([www.smarterbalanced.org](http://www.smarterbalanced.org)) using the California Common Core Standards at [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov).



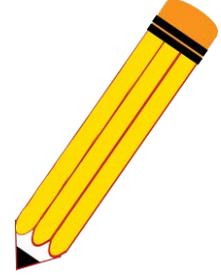


## Opinion Writing Performance Task

Student Version			
Grade	4	Title/Subject	Should we continue to recycle, yes or no?

### Student Prompt:

As you think about what you just read, write a multi-paragraph essay to explain to your teacher your opinion about whether or not communities should continue to recycle.



### Writing Tips:

- Be sure to introduce the topic and group related facts together.
- Use facts from the two sources to develop your ideas.
- You may want to include definitions and illustrations to help your teacher clearly understand what you learned.
- End with a conclusion.

### Reminders:

- You can look at the two sources and your key word list to help you with your writing.
- You might begin by making a plan or drawing a graphic organizer to help you with your thinking.
- Do not copy sentences from the sources.

### Step 1: Plan

- Make a plan on the blank paper for your writing.

### Step 2: Draft

- Write a topic sentence with your main idea.
- Write sentences with facts and details.
- Group information together as you write.
- Write a concluding sentence or paragraph.



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### Step 3: Reread and Revise

- Does it make sense?
- Is there missing information you want to add?

### Step 4: Edit

- Capitals at the beginning of sentences
- Capitals for proper nouns
- Punctuation: (end points) . ! ?
- Commas , quotation marks " "
- Spelling
- Complete Sentences

### Step 5: Final Draft

- Recopy and fix your mistakes.
- Use your neatest handwriting or typing.

Good work!





Student Reading Text			
Grade	4	Title/Subject	Should we continue to recycle, yes or no?



### PRO/CON: Is it time to stop recycling our garbage?

By Tribune News Service, adapted by Newsela staff

01.04.16

Grade Level **4** Word Count **1,082**

#### PRO: Recycling is more expensive than it's worth

If you want to save the planet, please make sure your garbage is buried in a landfill. There is plenty of room.

People talk about “reduce, reuse, recycle.” It may sound like a good idea to those who want to prevent climate change or keep garbage from piling up. Climate change is caused by burning fuels like oil or gas.

The truth, however, is that recycling has a cost. A big cost.

#### It's Cheaper To Make New Things

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is a government department in charge of the environment. The EPA says that it only makes sense to recycle about one-third of our trash because recycling more than that is too expensive.

Recycling paper or aluminum does cause less pollution than making them from scratch.

It is not the whole story, though.

Paper companies pay for the trees they use. If it was cheaper to recycle scrap paper, they would be beating down your door to buy it. They are not doing that, though.

It is more expensive to recycle old paper than to make new paper.

Plastic is another problem. It is made out of oil and recently the price of oil has gone way down. Now, new plastic containers are cheaper to make than recycling old ones.

Also, it wastes water. Many people rinse their plastic containers with water before they put them into a recycling bin. If they use hot water, gas or coal is burned to heat that water.



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### Recycling Doesn't Really Save Money

Glass is even worse. You have to recycle a lot of glass to reduce pollution by just a little. Yet, there is more. The glass has to be collected from neighborhoods. The trucks that collect the glass also cause pollution. Recycling glass is more expensive than making it from scratch. New glass is made mainly from sand, and there is plenty of that.

Many cities pick up glass in recycling trucks. Then they just dump it at the local landfill.

Why are they pretending? Because people feel strongly about “reduce, reuse, recycle.” They learn it in school and hear it all over the place. Most Americans do not know the evidence about recycling.

City and state officials should think about the costs and benefits of recycling programs. They should get rid of programs that waste money and hurt the environment.

If recycling saved money, companies would be lined up to buy your trash. Do not bother looking because they are not there.

There is a true recycling test. Is someone actually willing to pay you to sort and save your trash? If they are not, what you have been told about recycling in the past is probably just garbage.

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This essay is available to Tribune News Service subscribers. Tribune did not subsidize the writing of this column; the opinions are those of the writer and do not necessarily represent the views of Tribune or Newsela.

**CON:** Americans still throw away too much garbage

We Americans use a lot and waste a lot. We dump far more trash than we need to into landfills. In fact, we make twice as much garbage per person as countries in Western Europe.

Since 1960, the amount of trash thrown out each year has tripled. In 2013, it totaled 508 billion pounds. On average, each person threw out 4.4 pounds of garbage every day.

We have gotten a lot better at handling garbage. People began recycling much more after the mid-1980s. Now, on average, Americans recycle about one-third of their trash.

### Look At Seattle's Recycling Program

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is a government department. It reports that we recycle two-thirds of all paper and half of all cans. However, we recycle less than half of electronics, like cellphones and computers. We recycle only about a third of glass and plastic bottles and jars.

We should be able to do much better than this. So why are we not? Some people just do not want to do it. Many people do not think recycling is easy. A number of states say that people have to recycle, but they do not make people follow their laws. In most cases, they do not offer people much reason to recycle.

Some states and cities do much better because they take recycling seriously. Cities such as Seattle, Washington, encourage recycling. They charge people money for throwing out garbage. The more garbage they throw out, the more they have to pay. It works.

In 2014, half the people in Seattle recycled their trash. The city is trying to get rid of the “maximum possible amount of waste.” Few other cities have set such a high goal.



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### How to Throw Away Less Trash

Some people see matters differently. They argue that recycling costs too much and is not effective. Some states seem to agree with them. They do not want to give money to help city recycling programs and say the cities should end their programs or pay for the cost themselves.

Is this the right action to take? Recycle only if enough good things come from it? Doing that would send exactly the wrong message.

Some experts believe that a good starting point is when a product is made. We should be careful to avoid waste. Then we should reuse and recycle what is left over. Only then should we throw out what cannot be recycled.

No one argues that the cost of recycling is not important. However, it is not a good enough reason to stop recycling.

We are in the early stages of an important change. It will cut down on garbage and pollution. It will also get people to change what they use and throw out. That is the way to go.

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