

Recycling, ‘Frogging’, and the Role of Charity Shops

Aims

To understand what charity shops do, to investigate recycling, and learn about ‘frogging’ – reusing wool from old jumpers.

Note: Use the **Blanket Knitting Campaign: Class or Assembly Script**, and/or the **Better Healthcare for Mothers and Babies: Understanding the Problem** lesson ideas to set the scene for this lesson.

Curriculum Links

England	Scotland	Wales
Literacy – Speaking; Listening and responding Citizenship – Preparing to play an active role as citizens (environmental sustainability) Geography – Respecting the environment, recycling Global Citizenship (from Oxfam’s Curriculum for Global Citizenship) – Our potential to change things; Empathy towards others; Belief that things can be better and individuals can make a difference.	English Language – Listening; Talking (talking in groups); Writing (imaginative writing) Environmental Studies – People and Place (social and environmental responsibility); Science (social and environmental responsibility). Personal and Social Development – Independence and interdependence Global Citizenship (from Oxfam’s Curriculum for Global Citizenship) – Our potential to change things; Empathy towards others; Belief that things can be better and individuals can make a difference.	English – Oracy; Writing Geography – Understand the individual’s responsibility for the environment, e.g. recycling Global Citizenship (from Oxfam’s Curriculum for Global Citizenship) – Our potential to change things; Empathy towards others; Belief that things can be better and individuals can make a difference.

What you will need

Some old jumpers or knitted scarves – you could ask children to bring some in from home, with parents' permission of course. Items that were originally hand-knitted are preferable.

What to do

Read the following script to the class. Tell them to listen carefully as they will have to answer some questions afterwards.

There are many thousands of charity shops in the UK. Charity shops are shops that people donate unwanted items to, and they are sold to other people to make money for charity. Oxfam has the most charity shops in the UK, with around 700 shops. Oxfam makes money to fund its work with poor people around the world and protecting people who are affected by disasters like floods or wars. Other famous charities that have shops you may have seen are Cancer Research UK, which raises money to help people with cancer, and Age Concern, which raises money to help make sure older people are treated fairly. Charity shops rely on the work of many volunteers to run the shops, and on the donated items that people give them. If they don't have donations, they don't have anything to sell, and they don't make any money.

Understanding

Check they have understood the vocabulary, then ask them to answer the following questions either as a class, or with children working in pairs or threes.

1. Can you name three charities that have charity shops?
2. How many shops does Oxfam have?
3. Have you ever given any items to a charity shop? What did you donate? Which charity shop was it to?
4. Do you think charity shops are a good idea? Why or why not?

Your school probably recycles things. Ask the children to name things that are recycled at school, and at home. Then ask them to think again about charity shops. Do they think that what charity shops do could be called recycling? Ask them to explain their answers. They should identify the idea that reusing things is a form of recycling – it stops so many things being thrown away, and helps other people get pleasure from things that we no longer want for ourselves. The fact that it also raises money for charities to work to help good causes is an added bonus!

Activity 1

1. Tell the children they are going to write a short story about their favourite toy. (NB. Some charity shops won't accept electrical goods that run off the mains for health and safety reasons – they aren't able to check that old electrical equipment is safe – so selling second-hand PlayStations or Wiis may not be an option!).
2. They should imagine they donate it to a charity shop, and write a story about the toy's journey to a new home. If you feel this is too advanced for your pupils, you could instead ask them to draw a comic strip or design a poster showing the journey of their toy.
3. They might like to think about how much they think the toy is worth and who might buy it – would it be someone like them, or a mum or dad looking for a birthday present for their son or daughter? What sort of home might it end up in? How would the person who bought it feel about the toy? How would they feel about raising some money for a charity in this way?
4. Ask them to spend 10–15 minutes writing (or drawing) as imaginatively as possible about their toy. If they finish writing early, they might also want to draw a picture of their toy sitting on the shelves with other charity shop items. You may want to ask for volunteers to read out their completed stories, or take them in to correct spelling and punctuation. If they have drawn pictures, you could use them to create a display.

Activity 2

1. If you have already covered the blanket knitting campaign, you can link the next part of the lesson to this blanket by saying that the finished blanket will eventually be broken into smaller blankets and sold through Oxfam shops (after it has been presented to the UK government). This again is a form of recycling. The blanket won't go to waste. NB Children might wonder why the blankets cannot be sent to children in poorer countries. This is because it costs a lot of money to send items around the world, and it is better for local people in those countries to be able to make and sell blankets themselves.
2. Recycling wool allows us to reuse wool to make new things. Show the old jumpers to the class, or ask them to bring their jumpers up to the front if you've asked them to bring their own.
3. Depending on how many jumpers you have, you may want to get the class into groups for the next activity. Tell the class that reusing old wool is called 'frogging' – this is because of the ripping (ribbit) that must be done – 'Rip it! Rip it!'. Children might also be amused to know that when you make a mistake while knitting and need to pull the wool back out to re-knit it, it's called 'tink-ing' – because 'tink' is 'knit' spelled backwards!
4. Allow children to have a go at frogging. They should cut the wool and then try and pull it out, winding it around their arm between thumb/forefinger and elbow as they go.
5. If the class are going to knit squares for the Oxfam blanket knitting campaign you may want to share out the wool they've reclaimed, to either take home to knit or knit at school. However, be warned that many modern jumpers are made using the 'cut and

sew' method, where parts are made from different lengths of yarn and then stitched together – so it's unlikely that children will retrieve long lengths of yarn from frogging. The wool strands can, however, be saved for future use at school.

Plenary

Ask the children to work in pairs to think about things that they have re-used in the past. It may be clothes handed down from a brother or sister, books or teddies that used to belong to their parents when they were little, or they may have used toilet rolls or cereal packets to make pencil holders or other craft items. Take answers from some of the pairs and remind the children that reusing things is even better for the environment than recycling.

Extension

You may wish to organise a class collection for a charity shop of your choice. You could see if any of the children have family members who volunteer at a nearby shop, perhaps, or ask them to do some research into a number of charities that have charity shops nearby, and vote for their favourite. You could run this as practice in debating or persuasive writing, and pupils could act as advocates for their chosen charity. If it's hard to reach agreement, collected items could be split between a number of favourite charity shops.

If you decide to arrange a collection, first check with your chosen shop(s) about what types of goods they are able to sell. Also, some charities will collect bulk items from you. Contact the shop to find out if this is possible.