

# Ruling Out Litter

This activity has been adapted for Columbus City Schools from "Windows on Waste" activity 15, Ohio Department of Natural Resources (1988). This activity meets current Ohio 3rd to 5th grade social studies standards.

**Objectives:** Students will be able to :

(1) identify and explain the purpose of rules and sanctions against littering; (2) make rules and sanctions to prevent littering by choosing from alternatives. Students will improve their abilities to cooperate with others and to solve problems.

**Method:** Following a discussion of rules and sanctions and litter laws in Ohio, the students investigate and collect information about littering habits in their own classroom and school. They establish model community councils to vote on rules and sanctions for the class to abide by the rest of the school year. Students write about their feelings and construct an illustrated booklet about their classroom litter laws and sanctions.

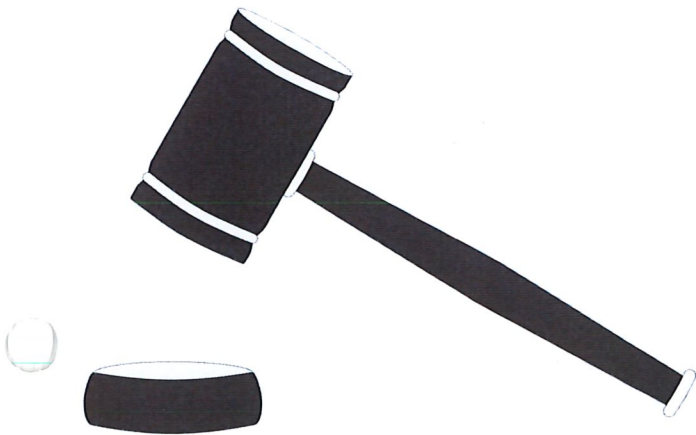
**Duration:** initially, four to five class periods followed by yearlong participation at select times.

**Setting:** Classroom and School

**Handouts:** *Classroom Litter; School litter;*

## Procedures:

1. Make plans for your classroom to become a littered neighborhood for three days to one week. During this time waste items (that are not a health hazard) are NOT to be deposited into trash containers but rather left on the floor or around the room. Following the period of littering, record data by using the handout, **CLASSROOM LITTER**. Discuss answers and have a cleanup party. Then have students identify a place in or around the school where litter exists by filling out the handout, **SCHOOL LITTER**.
2. Explain to students, and discuss the need for **RULES** and **SANCTIONS** at home, at school, and in the community. Identify the need for rules and sanctions about littering. Read the resource **OHIO LITTER LAWS** to students. Discuss illegal dumping as a serious form of littering that can be harmful to human health. Explain that littering is punishable by as much as a \$500 dollar fine and/or sixty days in jail and that some forms of illegal dumping can be punishable by harsher jail sentences and steeper fines. Have students complete the handout, **LITTERING IN OHIO**, and discuss.
3. Discuss with students how communities make ordinances and states make laws to prevent littering. Litter ordinances and laws are really **RULES** given formal sanctions. Tell students that rules are also needed in classrooms and that by setting up a model community in the classroom, classroom rules can be made democratically and enforced.
4. Create a model classroom community to make and pass rules and sanctions about







A. Establish one Classroom Community Council and various Classroom Neighborhood Councils to submit proposals to the Community Council. The Community Council could be created by classroom nominations and voting to choose 5 students to make up the council. The rest of the class could be divided into the Neighborhood Councils associated with various places in the classroom (learning centers, lockers) and school (library, lunch room, gym, playground, etc.) Allow students to choose which neighborhood councils they want to be on, but limit the numbers for each council to the size of the neighborhood and potential to be littered. You may also wish only to create neighborhoods within the classroom to simplify procedures which follow.

B. Have each Neighborhood Council recommend (after meeting in groups) some rules and sanctions for classroom (and school) littering behaviors based on the neighborhood area which each represents. The handouts completed in step one should give students ideas regarding what type of litter problems exist in their areas. Some examples of rules might be the following:

- When cutting paper during art projects, put reusable pieces in the "art scrap box."
- When a task is completed at a learning center, put all items in the proper place.
- Put trash found on the floor into a trash container.

Some examples of sanctions for these rules might be the following:

- Lose privilege to participate in one art project.
- Lose 5 minutes of recess.

**Evaluation:** Have students write about their positive and negative feelings concerning the rule-making experience. Their work can be consolidated in a class booklet with illustrations that highlight the rules and sanctions they created.





## Classroom Litter

**Directions:** List litter found in the following places and answer the questions below.

Desk

Locker Area

Shelves

Other (Describe Place)

1. How did you feel working in a littered classroom?

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2. What would happen if we kept littering our classroom?

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## School Litter

**Directions:** List litter found in the following places.

Desk

Locker Area

Shelves

Other (Describe Place)





## Litter in Ohio

**Directions:** Circle the letter of the correct answer/answers to each question.

1. Under Ohio Law, litter is:

- A. A pop can thrown in the yard
- B. A chair falling from a pick-up truck
- C. Tires in a river
- D. A broken doll in the creek
- E. A trashcan in the park

2. Name three other examples of littering.

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Does a person break the law when they litter?

- A. Yes
- B. No

4. If a police officer sees a person littering, can that person be arrested?

- A. Yes
- B. No

5. When a person is caught littering they may have to:

- A. Promise not to litter again
- B. Pick up the litter
- C. Pay a fine
- D. Spend time in jail

6. What can happen to people that dump waste where it is not to be dumped?

- A. Lose their driver's license
- B. Pay a fine
- C. Spend time in jail



# Ohio Litter Laws

## 3767.32 Littering.

(1) No person, regardless of intent, shall deposit litter or cause litter to be deposited on any public property, on private property not owned by the person, or in or on waters of the state unless one of the following applies:

(1) The person is directed to do so by a public official as part of a litter collection drive;

(2) Except as provided in division (B) of this section, the person deposits the litter in a litter receptacle in a manner that prevents its being carried away by the elements;

(3) The person is issued a permit or license covering the litter pursuant to Chapter 3734. or 6111. of the Revised Code.

(B) No person, without privilege to do so, shall knowingly deposit litter, or cause it to be deposited, in a litter receptacle located on any public property or on any private property not owned by the person unless one of the following applies:

(1) The litter was generated or located on the property on which the litter receptacle is located;

(2) The person is directed to do so by a public official as part of a litter collection drive;

(3) The person is directed to do so by a person whom the person reasonably believes to have the privilege to use the litter receptacle;

(4) The litter consists of any of the following:

(a) The contents of a litter bag or container of a type and size customarily carried and used in a motor vehicle;

(b) The contents of an ash tray of a type customarily installed or carried and used in a motor vehicle;

(c) Beverage containers and food sacks, wrappings, and containers of a type and in an amount that reasonably may be expected to be generated during routine commuting or business or recreational travel by a motor vehicle;

(d) Beverage containers, food sacks, wrappings, containers, and other materials of a type and in an amount that reasonably may be expected to be generated during a routine day by a person and deposited in a litter receptacle by a casual passerby.

(C)

(1) As used in division (B)(1) of this section, "public property" includes any private property open to the public for the conduct of business, the provision of a service, or upon the payment of a fee, but does not include any private property to which the public otherwise does not have a right of access.

(2) As used in division (B)(4) of this section, "casual passerby" means a person who does not have depositing litter in a litter receptacle as the person's primary reason for traveling to or by the property on which the litter receptacle is located.

(D) As used in this section:

(1) "Litter" means garbage, trash, waste, rubbish, ashes, cans, bottles, wire, paper, cartons, boxes, automobile parts, furniture, glass, or anything else of an unsightly or unsanitary nature.

(2) "Deposit" means to throw, drop, discard, or place.

(3) "Litter receptacle" means a dumpster, trash can, trash bin, garbage can, or similar container in which litter is deposited for removal.

(4) This section may be enforced by any sheriff, deputy sheriff, police officer of a municipal corporation, police constable or officer of a township, or township or joint police district, wildlife officer designated under section [1531.13](#) of the Revised Code, natural resources officer appointed under section [1501.24](#) of the Revised Code, forest-fire investigator appointed under section [1503.09](#) of the Revised Code, conservancy district police officer, inspector of nuisances of a county, or any other law enforcement officer within the law enforcement officer's jurisdiction.

