
Face the Plastic Challenge!

Preliminary assignment - Finland

— Äänekoski, 20–26 Jan 2020 —

Drink bottles - what happens to them?

Helmi, Ilona, Anni, Katri, Lenni

Drink bottles are recycled in Finland.

One gets money for recycling bottles. By returning the empty bottles, you'll get the amount of money back that is informed in the label of the bottle. Logically, the more bottles you return, the more money you get back. The bottles are then taken to the recycling centre, where they are kibbled into a plastic crumb and then used for example to make rain coats and new bottles.

If drink bottles are thrown into the garbage, they can be used again. If the trash is useful, then it is used again, but if it isn't, it'll be burnt for energy.

What about plastic packaging material?

Saana, Inari, Artturi, Ida, Eerika

1. Other sorts of plastic packaging material have been collected in Finland since 2016.
2. In Äänekoski, plastics can be taken to take-back points at K-Citymarket and Lassila & Tikanoja in Äänekoski and at K-Supermarket Suosikki in Suolahti.
3. In Finland, about 1.4 kilograms of plastic is collected to be recycled per year per person (2018).
4. The collected plastic is refined by Fortum in Riihimäki. Their refinery, opened in 2016, is the first one in the Nordic countries.
5. If this type of plastic is thrown into the garbage, it will be burned or buried into the ground.

What about other objects made of plastic?

Emmi, Noren, Kiia, Sivi, Viivi

1. In Finland, most of the plastic waste ends up in incineration with mixed waste.
2. Plastics other than packaging material waste or plastic bottles are not recycled.

What kind of bags do supermarkets offer?

Emmi, Noren, Kiia, Suvi, Viivi

1. Supermarkets have normal plastic bags, plastic bags made mostly of recycled plastic, and plastic carrier bags that you can use for many years.
2. Many supermarkets also offer paper or canvas bags.
3. Each bag usually has a separate price.

What are the best uses of plastic?

Topi, Tiina, Nellamaria, Liisa, Essi, Jasmiina

1. Plastic is good because, compared to many other materials, it lasts for a long time. In “normal” conditions, it doesn’t get weaker, so it can be used, for example, in wastewater systems.
2. Plastic can be used to store and freeze food like liquids or berries. Other materials like glass or cardboard could either break or they would not last long. Plastic is also a more hygienic option to store food.
3. The plastic is flexible and easy to shape. Plastic is also light material and so it is used for example cars and planes.

How about the Finnish group's plastic diary?

Number of items thrown away:

- **The average daily average: 3.37** items or pieces of plastic rubbish.
 - There was a lot of variation between the students, the daily averages ranging between **0.86** and **8.14 items**.
- **The average weekly average: 23.59** items
 - The record was **6 items a week**, and in the other extreme we have **57 items a week**.

Weight (not many managed to weigh their plastic waste):

- **The average daily average: 21.90 g** of plastic waste
- **The average weekly average: 153.29 g** of plastic waste

How about the Finnish group's plastic diary? (2)

Weight:

- The smallest weekly amount of plastic waste produced by a student (**90.5 g**) is like this smoothie for babies or this bag of chewing gum!
- The biggest weekly amount produced by a student (**258 g**) is like this old Nokia mobile phone or this bottle of mustard!

