



# A Plastic Problem

Key words:

Decompose, pollution, litter

School Plastics Challenge  
Week One

# What is plastic?

A **material** made in factories from oil, coal, gas and chemicals.

We use plastic every day.

Can you spot anything around you that is made from plastic?





How many plastic items can you count here?



**Plastic is all around us!**

School Plastics Challenge  
Week One

# A plastic question:

Is plastic ...

Expensive and very  
delicate?

OR

Cheap, strong and  
long-lasting?



# What's good about plastic?

- It's lightweight
- Can be made in any colour
- Cheap to make
- Long-lasting
- Tough and strong

**Can you think of any more good qualities?**



School Plastics Challenge  
Week One

# What's bad about plastic?

- When we throw plastic away it does not disappear.
- It does not **decompose** or **rot away** unlike more natural materials like paper.



# What's bad about plastic?

- If you leave an apple on the ground it **rots away** in a few months.
- If you leave plastic on the ground it **does not rot**.
- In time it may crumble but it will still exist in little pieces, we call these pieces **micro-plastics**.



Rotting  
apple

# A plastic problem

- Plastic pollution often finds its way into rivers and canals.
- Can you think of any **problems** that it could cause?





# A plastic problem

- Danger to animals
- Damages boats
- Damages locks
- Litter looks horrible
- Litter can end up in the ocean



# Time for a decomposition experiment

- Decide what materials you will investigate.
- Put each material you are going to investigate into separate jam jars.
- Cover each item with water.
- Record your **observations** every week for 4 to 6 weeks.



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