

## ACTIVITY 7

# The Horrible History of a Plastic Bag

### Suggested Learning Intentions:

#### To encourage pupils to:

Become aware of the decomposing period of plastic.

### Connected Learning Opportunities:

**KS3:** Environment and Society: History

**KS3:** Literacy and Language

**KS3:** Learning for Life and Work: Local and Global Citizenship; Personal Development

### Thinking Skills & Personal Capabilities:

Managing information, Thinking, Problem-Solving and decision making.

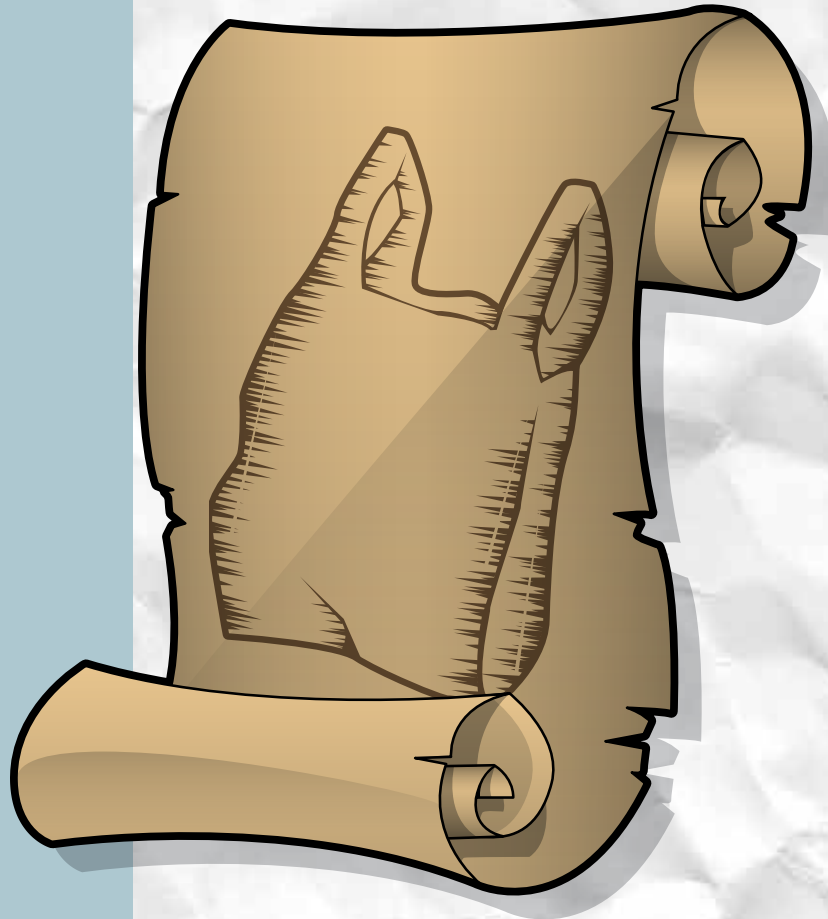
### Cross-Curricular Skills:

Communication, Using ICT.

### Eco-Schools

This activity can link to the topic of waste. It may allow pupils to suggest initiatives to deter the use of plastic bags in schools e.g. pupils carrying lunches in them and throwing them away. Pupils may rethink how they bring their lunch and help move towards promoting a waste free lunch.

 Reduce &  Reuse Activity





## **Class activity:**

Ask the class to estimate how long it takes a plastic bag to break down and record their answers.

### **Give the pupils this information:**

- If a plastic bag is exposed to air and sunlight it will take about 20 years to break down.
- In a landfill site it will take a plastic bag up to 1000 years to break down.
- Plastic bags do not biodegrade. They slowly become smaller pieces of plastic and eventually end up as plastic dust.

**Allow pupils to discuss this. How does this compare to their estimates?**



## ACTIVITY 6 - THE HORRIBLE HISTORY OF A PLASTIC BAG .....

### Individual activity:

#### Create a historical timeline.

A thousand years is a long time and hard to imagine. To make it easier for pupils to grasp they will draw a historical timeline from 1000 AD to 2000AD. The teacher should explain and demonstrate what a timeline is.

Pupils can use their IT skills to research historical events and characters. The timeline can either be drawn in notebooks or on computer.



### Finally:

Pupils can compare the timelines they have created. Which historical events and characters did they choose to include, and why?

Ask the pupils to imagine over that period of time plastic bags were being dumped in landfill sites. What do they think the world would be like?

It is estimated that supermarkets hand out around 10 billion plastic bags each year. Can the pupils then imagine what the world will be like in the year 3000 AD if we continue to dump these plastic bags?

# The life and times of a plastic bag

