



This activity is the chance for students to share their knowledge about ways to cut out single-use plastics. These fun-to-draw portraits with speech balloons will inspire the whole school community to take up the [Plastic-Free for a Week Challenge!](#)

This Earth Rangers Classroom Activity Starter will get you and your class started on your next activity. Our “build-your-class-activity” tool will give you ideas – you take it from there!

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Recognize that celebrating and sharing ways in which people are cutting out single-use plastics contributes to environmental change
- NGSS: K-ESS3-3: Communicate solutions that will reduce the impact of humans on the land, water, air and/or other living things in the local environment

DURING THIS ACTIVITY, STUDENTS WILL:

- Draw portraits of themselves or others sharing how they are decreasing their use of single-use plastics
- OPTIONAL: Interview a friend, classmate or family member for the portrait
- Apply learning about symmetry, line, shape, color, texture and value
- Share their portraits with the larger community
- Encourage others to cut out single-use plastics

MATERIALS:

- Art materials ([see suggestions below](#))
- [Sample Plastic-Free Portrait](#)
- OPTIONAL: Background resource on [Plastics and Climate Change](#) (This could also be something students bring home to their family to share if they are interviewing a family member)



GRADE LEVEL: K-3, 4-6

**SAMPLE
PLASTIC-FREE PORTRAIT**

Set it up

1. Ask students what they already know about why people are trying to use less plastic. Ask students what ideas they have to stop using plastic. If needed, share 3 reasons:

1. Making plastic puts gases in the air that harm us and animals and adds to greenhouse gases.
2. Plastic doesn't break down well and we're running out of places to put our trash.
3. When it does break down, it makes microplastics and these can harm people and animals.

PICK A PORTRAIT SUBJECT

- self
- classmate
- friend

2. PREPARE FOR THE PORTRAIT

If students are interviewing and drawing others, they will need:

- a good photo of the face of the subject and permission to use it, or a time to complete a sketch face-to-face
- a quote from the subject about how they are cutting out single-use plastics
- if interviewing to get a quote, have students:
 1. Ask, "What do you know about how plastic harms the Earth or animals?"
 2. Ask, "How will you cut out one type of plastic in your life?"
 3. Write down the action the person they interviewed will take and bring this back to school.
- OPTIONAL: a photo of the alternative the subject is using (e.g. their reusable cup, their lunch containers, etc.)

3. SELECT ART MATERIALS

The type of paper and drawing materials depend on the size and style of portrait.

You could provide students with:

- face templates: a cardboard cut-out of a basic face shape that students can trace onto their paper
- pre-made speech balloons

4. PICK A LOCATION FOR THE COMPLETED PORTRAITS

- one or more bulletin boards
- an entire wall
- a slideshow for an assembly or a digital display (e.g. in the school lobby)
- a yearbook

Start it up

5. GET READY

You may wish to use a video to teach your students how to draw portraits or [self-portraits](#). Here are just a few possibilities:

- [How to Draw a Self-Portrait](#) (8 minutes) (Grades K-6)
- [How to Draw a Face for Kids](#) (3 minutes) (Grades 4-6)
- [Romero Britto-Inspired Self-Portraits](#) (27 minutes) (Grade 1+)

6. DRAW

There is no one right way to make a plastic-free portrait; however, for inspiration, here is an example of a [Plastic-Free Portrait](#).

Keep it up

7. PLASTIC-FREE FOR A WEEK CHALLENGE

Changing our relationship with single-use plastic starts by changing our habits. In [this challenge](#), students try to adopt as many plastic-free habits as possible.

8. OTHER TYPES OF WASTE

This same activity could be repeated later in the year with different types of waste that also contribute to climate change, like food waste, energy waste or items we throw away that we could repair, swap, donate or not buy.

9. ADD EXCITEMENT

- [The Plight of Plastic](#): Learn more about how you can reduce your use of single-use plastics
- [Eco-Activity: Bee-ing Eco With Beeswax](#): Learn how to make your own wrap instead of using plastic wrap.

10. ADD AN EARTH RANGERS MISSION FOR HOME

- Mission: [More Plastics More Problems](#)

Resources

[How Long 'Til it's "Gone" Quiz \(Earth Rangers\)](#)

This interactive Earth Rangers quiz gives students the chance to think about how long it takes for plastics to breakdown into microplastics.

[Journey of a Plastic Bag \(Earth Rangers\)](#)

Plastic bags might seem convenient, but they have a lasting impact on the environment. This Earth Rangers info sheet outlines the environmental cost of a plastic bag.

[Plastic-Free For A Week Challenge \(Earth Rangers\)](#)