

Reuse and be creative

Learning the environmental effects of paper and clothing and creating original designs for napkin rings.

Years Middle Years (3 - 9)

Time 40 minutes for each part

Overview Students discover the different ways that cloth and paper Napkins (serviettes) affect the environment. They practice reuse by creating original designs for napkin rings using reusable items.

Materials

- Sample cloth napkin and napkin ring
- Board
- Markers (for teacher)
- Scrap paper and pencils (for students)
- Reusable items (as determined by students)
- Art materials (as determined by students)
- Poster paper, pencils, markers and / or crayons (for students)

Procedure **Part 1**

Teacher Prep: Before having students create their own designs for napkin rings, make one of your own using the diagram on the following page as a guide, Create a chart with the following three columns:

1. REUSABLE ITEMS
2. METHODS
3. TOOLS AND MATERIALS

You will post this chart later on the Board when asking the students to come up with their own ideas for how to make napkin rings from reusable items.

Warm-up: Remind the class what they learned About the importance of reusing.
What kinds of messages have you seen about reusing? Tell them that you are going to explore a fun way to encourage reuse.

Ask the class, "Which do you think is better for the environment, using cloth or paper serviette?" Get responses and probe to find out why the students answered the way they did.

Show the class a sample cloth napkin in a napkin ring and comment on how nice it can be at a table instead of using a paper napkin. Also explain to the class that a cloth serviette doesn't need washing after every meal. To prevent the spread of germs, people can separate their napkins from others by using personalized napkin rings.

Post the chart with the three columns that you created earlier. Tell the class, "We are going to come up with designs for making serviette rings out of reusable objects. Can anyone suggest possible items that we can reuse to do this?" If they need help,

you can suggest using toilet paper tubes and show the sample you made to the class. Make a list of the students' responses under the column, REUSABLE ITEMS.

Ask the class, "How would we go about making serviette rings using the items you suggested?" Get responses from the class for all of the reusable items listed and write them down under the METHODS column.

Then ask students, "For each method, what kinds of tools and materials would we need to make the napkin rings?" Write their suggestions under the TOOLS AND MATERIALS column.

Divide the students into groups and have each group choose a reusable item from the list on the Board Give each group scrap paper and pencils. Tell the class, "We are now going to create instructions for how to make napkin rings using the reusable item and method that your group chose. To do this, imagine the different steps involved in creating napkin rings and try to draw each one. Add simple instructions to go along with your drawings. You should also include a list of materials and tools that you will need." If students need help, you can show them the diagram above.

Have each group present their designs and ask them the following questions:

- What steps are most clear?
- What steps are confusing?
- What other steps should be added?
- What other items need to be added to the list of materials?
- What shapes do you see in the various drawings? How do they differ from each other?
- How are the various designs similar? How are they different?

Wrap-up: Explain to the class that they will now make the napkin rings that they designed. Revise with the class the materials and tools they will need to make their designs come to life. Discuss with the class ways to gather the necessary items.

Part 2

Teacher Prep: Make sure that all the necessary materials have been collected.

Warm-up: Tell the class, "We are now ready to make napkin rings using our designs as a guide. As you work, see if you need to make any changes to your original designs."

Provide students with the supplies they need and divide them into the same groups as before. Tell them that they can make napkin rings for their family members. Have each student identify their napkin rings with their initials when they've finished.

Once their work is completed, tell them, "Now that you have finished making your napkin rings, go back to your original designs and make any necessary corrections. Make a final poster of your designs that we can display them for other classes." Take photographs of your creations to be placed on the KESAB website, and send in a story about your class's great re-use project!

Wrap-up: Explain to the students that eventually they can take their napkin rings home to show their families and use at home. In the interim, display the napkin rings next to the appropriate design posters in the classroom or around the school for others to see. Discuss with the class ways that designs can be grouped and duplicated so that students can have copies to take home.

Homework: When you are ready to take down the display, have the students bring home copies of their designs along with the napkin rings they made. Ask the students to see if their family members can make their own napkin rings using the students' designs as a guide. Students can also make cloth napkins at home or school as an extension activity. (Ask them to bring in an old tablecloth or other fabric. Once they have the fabric, they can cut it into 15 cm squares to make cloth napkins for their families to use.)

ENDNOTES:

1 Activity adapted from the brochure, Litterbugs-Habitats-Activities, Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences, Woodstock, VT.

2 <http://idt.net/~jbertles/aboutbtt.htm>

