

What's Our Plastic Footprint?

Teacher/Group Lead Instructions for Community Art Project

Overview:

In conjunction with the exhibition *Kalliopi Monoyios: Patterns of Consumption*, the Littleton Museum is organizing a community art project to draw attention to how much single-use plastic we use. We are looking for students and groups of individuals to collect single-use plastic and piece them together into quilt-like banners which we will combine to create a large-scale public art piece that reflects our plastic footprint. We will display the artwork at a community event on June 15, 2022.

Time Requirement: 1-3 weeks of plastic collection & preparation at home, class time to piece together banners

Classroom Materials: scotch tape, masking or painter's tape, ruler or tape measure, scissors

Due Date: April 15, 2022

Step-by-step Instructions:

We created a video tutorial showing the best way to wash and prepare the plastic, as well as how to piece together the plastic into modular quilt banners:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T9ADeQWnpQQ>.

1. Students collect plastic to be used as material for the quilt banners (collection should occur for a specific amount of time: 1-3 weeks depending on what works best for your group of students). Any type of single-use plastic packaging that can be cut easily with scissors and laid reasonably flat is acceptable. Examples include: chip bags, granola bar wrappers, Ziploc bags, frozen food bags, cereal & cracker bags, plastic Amazon envelopes, plastic grocery & produce bags, bubble wrap, Pokemon card wrappers, Lego numbered bags, etc. The idea is to capture as much single-use plastic waste as possible in a given amount of time.
2. Students wash and prepare the single-use plastic for use in the quilt banner construction. *Please note that unwashed plastic will not be accepted.* This is necessary to protect the museum from pests attracted to remaining food particles on the plastic.
3. Students work together in small groups to design and construct as many 2' x 6' quilt modules as they can with the materials collected. Each module will be a collage of all the smaller pieces of collected and washed plastic cut and taped together. Students and participating individuals are encouraged to get creative with how they design their 2' by 6' banners. For example, they can group their plastic by colors or cut the plastic into various shapes in a more puzzle-like assembly that combines to fit the rectangular format.
4. The taped quilt modules will be collected at the museum where they will be sewn together for a stronger hold.

5. Once the banners are all taped together, schools/groups should contact mcasey@littletongov.org to coordinate pick-up or drop-off of the banners.
6. All banners must be returned to the museum no later than **April 15, 2022**. *Please note how many weeks of collection are represented when you submit artwork to the museum.*
7. The museum will display the final community art project at a public event on June 22, where each quilt module will be pinned to the ground with landscaping staples, creating one large quilt. Participating individuals will be invited to come and celebrate the reveal of the project at the event.

Extension Activities (optional):

- ⇒ Have your class calculate the area covered by the plastic they produced in a week. Multiply that out for a month or a year and see how many football fields your class's trash would cover. At that rate, calculate how much time it would take for your class to cover the entire United States in a layer of plastic.
- ⇒ 40% of the plastic manufactured every year goes to making single-use plastic. Have your class list all the single-use plastic they can think of and then sort it into categories: "Single-Use Plastic we can't live without" and "Single-use plastic we can choose to avoid." Brainstorm alternatives to those single-use plastics we can avoid.
- ⇒ Bags and packaging aren't the only items that are made of plastic. Take your class on a plastic safari. Challenge your students to identify as much plastic as they can in the classroom and in their homes. Then lead them in a discussion asking what the benefits and drawbacks are of those varied uses of plastic.

For questions, please contact Moira Casey at mcasey@littletongov.org or 303.795.3953.

Cut and return this section with your submission on or before April 15, 2022:

Group Name (e.g. Ms. Kerfuffle's 5th grade class, Girl/Boy Scout Troop 456, etc.):

How many weeks of plastic collection are represented here?

How many individuals worked on the project?

Do you have any feedback for the artist and the museum regarding this project? For example, what was hard, what didn't work, or what people really enjoyed? Your thoughts will help inform future iterations of this community project.