

Reading Comprehension: The Recycling Challenge - Answer Key

5th Grade - passage comprehension, main idea, and inference | 20 minutes

Read the passage:

Mr. Diaz's fifth-grade class noticed that the school trash cans overflowed every day. Most of what filled them was paper and plastic bottles - things that could be recycled. The class decided to act. First, they counted the bottles thrown away in a single week: 412. Then they placed blue recycling bins in every classroom and made posters showing what belonged in each bin. At first, some students still tossed bottles in the trash out of habit, so the class added a short 'Recycling Reminder' to the morning announcements. By the end of the month, the recycling bins were full and the trash cans were only half full. The principal was so impressed that she ordered bins for the entire school. The students had learned that a small group, with a clear plan, could change a big habit.

Read the passage. Then answer each question in a complete sentence, using evidence from the text.

1. What problem did the class notice?

Answer: The trash cans overflowed daily, mostly with paper and plastic that could be recycled.

2. How many bottles were thrown away in one week?

Answer: 412 bottles.

3. What two things did the class do first to fix the problem?

Answer: They placed blue recycling bins in every classroom and made posters.

4. Why did the class add a morning 'Recycling Reminder'?

Answer: Because some students still tossed bottles in the trash out of habit.

5. What is the main idea of the passage?

Answer: A small group of students with a clear plan changed a schoolwide habit and reduced waste. (Sample answer.)

Challenge

6. Why do you think the principal ordered bins for the whole school? Use the text.

Answer: Because the class's plan clearly worked - the recycling bins filled up and the trash was cut in half.