

Teacher Answer Sheet

1. About 3.5 pounds (1.6 kilograms).

2. **34.2% of our garbage is paper.** Yard waste (leaves, grass clippings) makes up 20%; food waste, 8.5%; glass, 7.1%; metal, 8.4%; plastic, 9.1%; the remaining 12.7% is a combination of other materials like textiles, rubber, wood and rubble.

3. Short answer.

4. **True.** Many states now have recycling laws. These laws provide a framework for state wide recycling efforts and, in some cases, force local governments and citizens to participate in collection efforts.

5. Short answer.

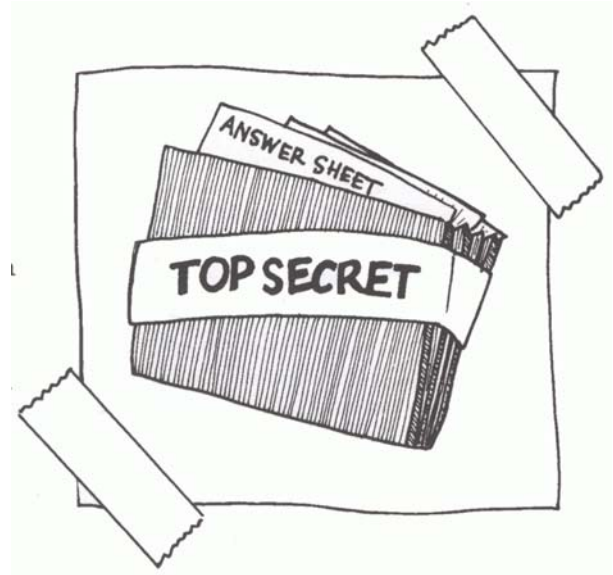
6. **34.8 billion cans are thrown away, rather than recycled, each year in the United States.**

7. Short answer.

8. Short answer.

9. **32% by weight and 30% by volume is packaging.** This means a large percentage of our purchases is packaging that in most cases is disposed of immediately.

10. **True.** An example of recycling is turning newspaper into cardboard boxes. Recycled glass bottles and jars are melted down to make brand new bottles and jars. Recycling is different from reusing.



11. **True.** To reuse means to use something again for the same or a different purpose in the item's original form. For example, cleaning and refilling bottles to be returned to the store and sold again and again; or using the back of a printed piece of paper for notes or to find the answer to math problems.

12. Short answer.

13. **73% of our garbage is buried in landfills;** 14% is burned in incinerators to produce energy; and 13% is recycled.

14. **False.** Open dumps contain waste that is allowed to remain exposed to the atmosphere over long periods of time. Open dumps have been phased out in the United States. Sanitary landfills are different. They contain a specially designed liner that protects the environment by keeping the waste sealed within the ground. Heavy machinery covers the waste daily with six inches of soil. Today there are thousands of sanitary landfills in the United States that can accept household trash. However, developing new landfills is difficult because land that is suitable is hard to find near cities and towns, where a majority of our waste is created. More and more waste is being generated, but fewer and fewer places are being found to put it all.

15. **True.** The liners used in sanitary landfills protect groundwater by preventing leachate (see glossary) from seeping into the water supply.

16. **True.** Incinerators reduce waste volumes by converting waste into heat energy and a small amount of ash. Also known as resource recovery, or waste-to-energy, incineration could become a reliable source of electrical energy in the future.

17. Short answer.

18. Short answer.

19. Short answer.

20. Short answer.