

**Chapter Five,
Lesson One:**

**Paying the
True Price
for Beverages**

**Concepts and Skills
Addressed:**

Self expression
Problem solving



Materials Needed:

Liquid containers from home - glass, plastic, metal, paper

Materials Supplied:

Discussion Questions

Students will explore the differences between various types of containers. They will see how size affects the cost of products we buy.

A. Procedure:

1. Ask the students to bring in liquid containers from home. You will want to bring some examples yourself to be sure there are many different kinds, including both returnable and nonreturnable glass bottles, a plastic milk bottle, a paper milk carton, a plastic beverage bottle and an aluminum can. (You will need some examples of 16 oz. containers; the exercises are based on size.)
2. Read the message from MOBIUS to the students.
3. Begin the discussion questions by calling on students to identify each different type of container; then go on to the next question.



A Word to Teachers:

Be sure to caution students about the type of containers to bring in. Suggest beverage containers and/or those that held food products. Be certain that the students understand they should not bring in containers that held household cleaners, oil and so on.

Lessons in this chapter are based on prices at the time of this writing. As recycling evolves as a mainstream activity, particularly for plastic, these figures may change.

A Word to Students from MOBIUS:

MOBIUS says: It seems simple. We buy beverages in a plastic or nonreturnable bottle and, when we're done with it, we put it in the garbage can, and then it's hauled away. But what we're really throwing away is money. Did I say money? How can that be? You will find out after answering and discussing the questions in this set of lessons.

B. Discussion Questions

What materials are the containers made of?

Glass, plastic, aluminum, paper.

What would be the best thing to do with them once the beverage is gone?

Recycle. Reuse.

Is this the right answer for each container?

No. Returnable bottles are reused by bringing them back to the store. Nonreturnable bottles and aluminum cans are recyclable. They can be taken to a recycling center where they are separated and sold to companies that use the material. Plastic bottles are recyclable, but as of this writing, collection programs for them are only available in certain areas. Yours may be one of these lucky communities.

What happens to the container when we're done with it?

Your community pays someone or some company to take the trash away to a landfill or recycling center. Your parents pay taxes or fees to have discarded containers hauled away, whether as trash or as recyclables. The money paid increases when we don't recycle, because landfills fill up faster and expensive new ones have to be built. We may also pay for the cost of developing new ways of disposing of trash, like incineration.

Who pays for garbage collection and disposal? Why?

Cities and individuals pay for garbage collection and disposal. Trash removal is a service we pay for. It is similar to paying for police protection or for someone to paint our house or to baby-sit. Traditionally, it has been a relatively inexpensive service for the convenience it gives us. However, costs are now beginning to rise as landfills reach their limits and new landfills must be built that meet environmental requirements.