



## Tour Theme: Sustainable Practices (grades 3 to 5)

### Pre-Activity #2 Cracking the Code



#### Materials:

A variety of plastic containers

#### Overview:

Discuss that plastics are forever. They do not decompose in our environment. Instead, they gather on the land and water, trapping animals in plastic nets and shopping bags. Find ways to reduce plastics in your classroom and at home.

#### Instructions:

- Many plastics are made with chemicals that are not good for you. You must look for the clues on the containers to find out what type of plastic it is, if it can be re-cycled, and most importantly, whether it includes chemicals that may harm you or the environment.
- Turn the container upside down and look for the number in the recycling arrows.
- Have students sort the good and the bad plastics.
- You could divide into groups and have a competition.
- The numbers 1, 2, 4, and 5 are safe, while 3 and 6 you would want to avoid, and 7 is questionable.



#### With the Number 1 (water bottle)

Safe

Avoid using single-use bottles

Recyclable



**With the Number 2 (milk bottle)**

Safe  
Recyclable



**With the Number 3 (vinyl lunch bag)**

Harmful chemicals  
Avoid  
Not recyclable



**With the Number 4 (food wrap)**

Safe  
Recyclable



**With the number 5 (food storage container)**

Safe  
Recyclable



**With the number 6 (plastic bowl)**

Harmful chemicals  
Avoid  
Recyclable



**With the number 7 (reusable water bottle)**

Harmful chemicals  
Questionable  
Not recyclable