

Reducing – Packaging 2



Plenary

- ◆ The groups swap their designs and evaluate one another's. They could write a brief evaluation under the following headings:
 - Does the packaging meet the need of the product?
(preservation and protection)
 - Is it an appropriate use of resources?
(reduction, reusable, refillable, recyclable)
 - Is the product likely to be attractive to consumers?
(presentation and practicality)
-

Speakers

You could invite a representative from a local retailer to judge the packaging designs. See Speakers /Visits listed at the end of the lesson plan entitled, 'What Businesses are Doing to Minimise Waste' (4.2).

Reducing – Packaging 2



Learning Objective: to design alternative packaging for goods

National Curriculum subject

Design and Technology

Resources

- ◆ Sheets of paper and coloured pens or pencils
- ◆ examples of food/drink packaging

Approximate length of session

1 - 1½ hours

Introduction

Show the pupils examples of food and drink packaging, preferably examples of those that you are going to ask them to redesign.

Pupil Activity

- ◆ The pupils work in small groups to design the packaging for an item of food or drink. Either give the whole class the same item of food/drink or give each group a different item. Examples of food and drink to package are: fizzy pop, a pizza, an Easter Egg, some chocolates, breakfast cereals, tea-bags and biscuits.
- ◆ They should consider the following points:
 - ◇ What materials will be used?
 - ◇ Is the packaging as minimal as possible.
 - ◇ Can the packaging be reused, refilled or recycled?
 - ◇ Will the packaging preserve the product and protect it from damage?
 - ◇ Is there room to include the necessary information about the product?
 - ◇ Is the packaging attractive enough to persuade people to buy the product?
 - ◇ Is the cost of the packaging going to excessively increase costs for the manufacturer and the consumer?
 - ◇ What will you call your product?
- ◆ The pupils should draw and colour their designs and include labels and any notes.

Continued overleaf

Reducing – Packaging 1



Learning Objective: to consider ways of reducing packaging

National Curriculum subject
Design and Technology

Resources

- ◆ Copies of Information Sheet 3.3a – ‘Packaging’
- ◆ Some examples of items that have been excessively packaged, e.g. Easter Eggs, boxes of chocolates

Approximate length of session

Pupil Activity 1 – half an hour

Pupil Activity 2 – 1 hour

Introduction

As a stimulus, show the pupils the examples of excessive packaging. Can they think of any other items that come in excessive packaging? Ask them why it is important for goods to be packaged. Read the Information Sheet.

Pupil Activity 1

- ◆ In small groups the pupils should come up with some ways of reducing the amount of packaging we use. They should try to come up with strategies that can be adopted by the Government, the manufacturers and the consumers. The ideas can range from new laws, such as the German law mentioned on the Information Sheet, to goods being sold in refill packs, to individuals choosing those items that have not been over-packaged.
- ◆ The groups should feedback their ideas to the rest of the class.

Pupil Activity 2

- ◆ One of the most important things to consider is how to change the shopping habits of the customers. In their groups the pupils should plan an advertising campaign aimed at persuading the shopper to purchase items with reduced packaging. The advertising campaign could be in the form of a poster, or a radio or television advert.

Plenary

- ◆ Pupils perform or present their campaigns to the rest of the class.

Additional resource

‘Waste Minimisation and Recovery’ – Eco-Schools

Website

Industry for Packaging and the Environment: www.incpen.org

INFORMATION SHEET – Packaging

More and more of the goods we buy are covered in packaging – boxes, bags, packets, trays, jars, tubes and tins.

Packaging is costly for the manufacturer and the shopper – about 10% of the average food bill pays for the packaging, not the food. It greatly adds to the amount of waste we produce – about a third of the rubbish we throw away each week is packaging. So why do we use it?

▶ **Packaging Preserves**

Packaging ensures that foods retain their nutritional value so that they last longer and are sold in good condition. Packaging can prevent things like light, air and bacteria from coming into contact with the food.

▶ **Packaging Protects**

Packaging protects the contents from damage so that they do not get broken and spoiled. Packaging also prevents children opening harmful products such as bleach, poisons and medicines.

▶ **Packaging Describes and Identifies**

Nowadays, our shopping is almost entirely self-service so it is important for the customer to be given the relevant information about the product that they are buying. The packaging gives information such as: how to prepare, cook or use the product, who made it, how much there is, the sell-by date. Sometimes the packaging tells you that it is recyclable.

▶ **Packaging Presents the Product**

Clever designs make products easy to use, e.g. roll-on deodorants, loo cleaners and squeeze ketchup bottles. Manufacturers aim to display their goods as attractively as possible, helping to build an image for the product and giving people choice.

Packaging is important for the above reasons, but some of it is excessive and could be reduced. The Dutch have redesigned their glass milk bottles so that they use 35% less glass. Sainsbury's has come up with changes to its own-brand products such as removing unnecessary plastic trays from pizza packs. It estimates that this change alone will save 100 tonnes of plastic per year and reduce costs by £150,000! In Germany, a new law means that shoppers can leave behind excess wrapping at the supermarket and the packaging industry has to clear it up! The companies therefore have an incentive to reduce the amount of packaging they use.