

Investigating the maths inside:

Cleaner coasts

Activity 1

A rubbish audit



Where does the rubbish collect in your school yard?

What would happen if the rubbish was never cleaned up?

# Introduction

Every day we produce mountains of rubbish from our normal daily activities. Some rubbish is biodegradable and some can be recycled but the rest ends up in rubbish dumps or the environment.

What would happen to the rubbish that accumulates around the school if it was never cleaned up?

# Where is the rubbish? How much is there?

## Planning

Make a preliminary survey of the places in the school where that rubbish accumulates. Consider sports fields, fence lines and garden areas as well as the outside of buildings.

Using a printed school map, or a Google map of the school, divide the yard into survey regions. Allocate a group of students to each region.

You will need to decide how to categorise the **amount** of rubbish rather than trying to measure it (for example, “lots, “some”, “small amount”, “none”).

## The audit

After lunch, conduct an audit of the rubbish that gathers around the school. Work in groups in your allocated region.

* Where does the rubbish gather?
* How much rubbish is in each section of a region?

## Representing your information

What is the best way(s) to represent this information? Compare your group’s representation with that of others. Which representation was most effective?

# What next?

Discuss the information you have found. Are there any particularly bad areas for rubbish? Are there areas that are very clean? What factors might be contributing?

What can be done?

Develop a school action plan to keep the yard clean.