

Plush for the Planet Lesson:

# Plastic Waste



**At least 8 million tons of plastic end up in our oceans every year, and make up 80% of all marine debris from surface waters to deep-sea sediments. Common items include food wrappers, beverage bottles, grocery bags, straws, and take out containers, all made of plastic**

## Environmental Impact:

Many plastic products are single-use items that are designed to be thrown out, like water bottles or take out containers. While it's tough to say exactly how much plastic is in the ocean, scientists think about 8 million metric tons of plastic entered the ocean in 2010. That's the weight of nearly 90 aircraft carriers, and the problem continues to grow.

## What You Can Do:

**Reduce plastic use in your everyday routine.** Can you count them all? Look around you. How many plastic things can you see? Being more aware of how and why you use the plastics that you do is the first step to reducing plastic use. Commit to changing your habits by reducing your use of disposable and single-use plastic items, reusing items and/or recycling them.

**Participate in a clean up.** Volunteer to pick up marine litter in your local community. Find a clean up near you!



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**79% of plastic waste is sent to landfills or the ocean, while only 9% is recycled and 12% gets incinerated.**



**Every minute, one garbage truck of plastic is dumped into our oceans**



**Many fish humans consume, including brown trout, cisco, and perch, have at one time or another, ingested plastic microfibers**