

R-Generation

A guide for primary school teachers

About R-Generation

R-Generation is a flexible, curriculum-linked programme that inspires pupils to think about using our planet’s resources sustainably and become active citizens to make change in their school community.

Participants	Resources
All pupils	Briefing assembly
R-Generation Ambassadors	Work with smaller group (e.g. a class, club or committee) to develop an Action Plan over four short workshops, involving the rest of the school as required
All pupils	Celebration assembly

R-Generation is brought to you by Nestlé Waters, in collaboration with RECOUP, a recycling charity, EVERFI, an education company, and a panel of practising teachers. Nestlé Waters is part of the European Plastics Pact to help make 100% of its packaging recyclable or reusable, and reduce its use of virgin plastics by one third by 2025. We have also committed to reaching net zero by 2050.

About this guide

Although R-Generation puts pupils in charge, you will need at least one adult leader who can champion R-Generation across the school and lead workshop sessions with pupils.

This guide includes all the information that the R-Generation lead will need to run the programme.

Benefits of taking part

- Deeper understanding**
 Even if you’ve already taken steps to reduce your waste and recycle more, R-Generation will help your students to develop their understanding of our use of natural resources, the resulting impacts on the environment and the importance of recycling.
- Curriculum links**
 The programme supports curriculum learning in PSHE, Citizenship and Science.
- Active citizenship**
 The programme also contributes to meeting Ofsted requirements on personal development, preparing learners for life in modern Britain by equipping them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society.

- **Skill development**

R-Generation Ambassadors set and work towards a range of Action Plan goals. This helps them to develop valuable skills including teamwork, organisation, creativity, problem-solving and communication; and personal qualities including resilience, initiative and determination. Pupils will be able to use and analyse a range of survey templates, developing their numeracy and data handling and presentation skills.

- **Reduced waste**

Your school will use fewer materials, find ways to reuse where possible, increase your recycling rate and reduce your waste - which will reduce your school's climate impact and that of students' families.

Consider who needs to be involved

Choosing your R-Generation Ambassadors

R-Generation can involve all pupils in your school, but it works best when led by a smaller group of R-Generation Ambassadors.

The right number will depend on the size of your school, the scope of your Action Plan and the delivery model you prefer. You may choose to work with:

- a single class or a year group
- a new committee, with representatives from each class (10-20 can be a good number - the maximum is limited only by your own ability to manage volunteers).
- an existing School Council, Eco-club or Eco-Schools team
- a rotating team that changes every month - invite volunteers or hold monthly class elections

Tips on starting a new committee

- Define your expectations, the timescale of the programme, and the commitment required
- Outline what Ambassadors will do: attend the four workshops, develop the Action Plan, work in groups to deliver one or more elements, and work as a team to inspire and lead the school
- Explain how to volunteer: this could be via class teachers, a dedicated email address, or a sign-up box, for example
- If you get lots of volunteers, agree how you'll involve everyone.

Involving other pupils

Pupils are the source of ideas for your Action Plan and so the more pupils you can involve, the more ideas you will discover and you will build greater engagement with the Action Plan.

While the R-Generation Ambassadors will take the lead, there are many ways to involve all other pupils.

- The programme can be introduced with a whole-school assembly.
- The class rep delivery model can work especially well in cascading ideas throughout the school and maximising engagement.
- R-Generation Ambassadors can run surveys, seek feedback and provide regular updates via assemblies etc.
- R-Generation Ambassadors can give regular updates via assembly, newsletters, circle or golden time etc.
- There can be a whole-school celebration assembly at the end of the programme.

Involving your SLT

Any activities are more likely to succeed if you can gain the support of your Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Your SLT can champion R-Generation across your school and can help to ensure that pupils' initial ideas and enthusiasm can be sustained until your Action Plan is complete and pupils can see their success.

Work with your SLT to:

- scope out realistic opportunities for your Action Plan
- include R-Generation in your school development plan or eco-schools calendar of activities
- help to involve all staff, including those who may be sceptical or have 'eco fatigue'
- include your office staff, who can look at the impacts of their purchasing decisions on material use, recycling and waste
- include your catering team or contractors, and help to find positive ways to work together within any contractual constraints.

Involving the Governors

You could also invite a governor to be a 'link' to R-Generation. This can help to align your approach with the school's ethos and values or to any non-curriculum elements of a school improvement plan, and help to keep the governing body aware of the school's efforts to reduce waste.

Involving the wider school community

R-Generation works best when as many people as possible are involved. This reinforces that recycling and waste prevention is for everyone, not just a concerned few.

Present R-Generation as a positive opportunity, not a failure to address or resolve. This includes the benefits for pupils listed above, as well as the environmental benefits from a reduction in waste.

- Teaching staff can help to address classroom material use and recycling
- Non-teaching staff:
 - Office staff for purchasing
 - Waste management supervisors can help with bin use in outdoor areas
 - Catering staff can consider packaging use
- Volunteers - any non-teaching classroom helpers can play a role

Remember that your pupils come from diverse homes and so will bring with them a range of attitudes and opportunities. This extends to your community: help pupils to identify ideas that are realistic and which include everyone, including people from different cultural and economic backgrounds.

Think about where and when

Timeframe

The timeframe of the programme can be flexible. You can choose the duration over which to run the programme, such as a half term, a whole term or the whole school year.

Decide on this before your first workshop, and share the timeframe with your R-Generation Ambassadors during the first workshop.

Here is an example timeframe:

Week 1	Launch assembly
Week 2	Committee applications
Week 3	Workshop 1
Weeks 4-5	Survey, interviews, analysis
Week 6	Break
Week 7	Workshop 2
Week 8	Workshop 3
Week 9	Workshop 4
Week 10	Celebration

Regular meetings might take place:

- once a week/fortnight
- at breaktime or after school.

Pupils may meet between meetings to work on Action Plan items informally.

You may provide drop-in opportunities for help, (e.g. to deliver Action Plan activities).

Running R-Generation step by step

1. R-Generation launch

Participants:	All pupils
Resources:	Briefing presentation
Lead adult preparation:	Familiarise yourself with the presentation. Identify links to your existing school practice or to existing examples of active citizenship that you can share. Consider inviting R-Generation Ambassadors to help present.

The Briefing presentation covers where materials come from and why we need to use them responsibly.

It showcases some inspiring young people who are already using their initiative and leading by example, and invites pupils to do the same through the R-Generation programme.

Establish your aims

A successful programme starts 'where you are' with a clear understanding of current practices, successes, barriers and opportunities. It has a clear vision of success against which you can measure progress and final outcomes.

- Start by working out what you hope to achieve
- Start where you are and use the survey ideas to gain an accurate picture
- What will success look like for you? Workshop 1 helps to visualise what pupils want to achieve.
- Agree a timescale, for example, a half or whole term
- Be realistic! It's important that pupils see some early-wins. You can build on their initial success over time
- Aim to create sustainable change, not a big impact that quickly fades

2. Workshop 1 - Introduction and survey planning

Participants:	R-Generation Ambassadors
Resources:	Workshop 1 presentation Survey template
Lead adult preparation:	Familiarise yourself with the resources.

Workshop 1 welcomes the R-Generation Ambassadors and recaps what it means to be active citizens.

It guides them through planning and running a survey and/or interviews with decision-makers in your school community.

Link to your values and ethos

Help pupils to see that taking action on waste is consistent with your wider expectations for behaviour. Work with pupils to develop ways to make recycling a socially desirable activity - part of a positive and caring school culture.

- See how the '3Rs' of reduce, reuse and recycle, and the ideas of taking responsibility, using initiative and leading by example, can link to your existing values and ethos statement
- Position these as normal and expected of everyone - not just something that a core group of 'environmentalists' should worry about.

Tips

- It's up to you how many elements of the survey templates you include.
- Plan how the survey and any interviews will be run, and make sure everyone is clear on their roles, the steps involved and the timeframes.
- Also think about survey analysis: you might involve everyone, or invite some of the more mathematically-minded Ambassadors to take the lead.

3. Workshop 2 - Reduce

Participants:	R-Generation Ambassadors
Resources:	Workshop 2 presentation Survey and interview findings Action Plan template
Lead adult preparation:	Familiarise yourself with the resources.

Workshop 2 helps pupils to review their survey and/or interview findings and explores needs vs. wants, the materials used in school and how they might reduce their use.

It guides them through beginning an Action Plan, which they will build on in the next sessions.

Tips

- Use photos to help pupils to imagine different areas of your school or rooms at home, e.g. using an internet image search.
- You may wish to invite non-teaching staff who play a role in your school's materials use, such as caterers and office staff, who can help to develop pupils' ideas about needs vs. wants in each room.

4. Workshop 3 - Reuse and Recycle

Participants:	R-Generation Ambassadors
Resources:	Workshop 3 presentation Action Plan from last meeting Internet access to explore local recycling opportunities using the Recycling Locator website
Lead adult preparation:	Familiarise yourself with the resources. If possible, gather clean, safe examples of the different materials for pupils to examine and sort (with labels, so pupils can find the recycling information).

Workshop 3 explores opportunities to reuse and recycle, including how to interpret recycling information and follow local instructions for recycling.

Pupils check progress against their Action Plan, and add some new actions to complete before the final workshop.

Tips

- You may wish to break out into separate 'reuse' workshops around specific materials/items, and then reconvene to share ideas.

5. Workshop 4 - Active citizens

Participants:	R-Generation Ambassadors
Resources:	Workshop 4 presentation Survey and interview findings Action Plan template
Lead adult preparation:	Familiarise yourself with the resources.

In Workshop 4, pupils check their progress against their Action Plan. They reflect on their successes as active citizens and to be inspired to extend the reach of their campaign using simple ways to encourage positive behaviour change to include your wider school community.

Pupils consider what existing links to build on to extend the reach of your R-Generation Action Plan. These might include links via governors/trustees or local businesses.

Tips

- The presentation uses the simple COM-B model of behaviour. You can find out more about COM-B at: https://social-change.co.uk/files/02.09.19_COM-B_and_changing_behaviour_.pdf
- You could invite councillors to talk with pupils about their successes, this can be via video or in person.

6. Celebrate your successes

Consider how you can best celebrate your successes, both for your Ambassadors and as a whole school:

- Create displays that show your progress.
- Invite R-Generation Ambassadors to plan and present an assembly.
- Send a press release to your local media.
- Share through your newsletters, website and social media presence.
- Invite parents and community members to a presentation.
- Interview pupils to see what they think and feel.

Don't wait until the end of the programme - share your successes as soon as you identify them as this will inspire everyone to continue to recycle more.

7. Sustain your success

It's important that our recycling behaviours become normal habits so we can all help to reduce waste and the environmental and climate issues it can cause.

Build R-Generation and recycling into the regular work of your school council, governance, etc.

Build on the foundation of your initial success. Set new goals and consider making an R-Generation Action Plan a yearly part of your school's activity programme.

Use your Action Plan and what you learn to make school events more sustainable, e.g. Christmas, Fairs, Sports Days.