

Odd one out?



What do they all have in common?



WALT: Plastic – helpful
or unhelpful?

Think, Pair, Share

- Where do you find plastic? What do we use it for? How would life be without it?

1. WHY DO WE USE SO MUCH PLASTIC?



Plastic is all around us from the moment we are born



Photo: Dmitriy



Photo: L Graci

Bakelite was an early plastic used to make items such as telephones



Plastic is a brilliantly useful material - strong, light, easily moulded and cheap to make



In developed countries about a third of plastic is used in packaging



Every minute around a million plastic bottles are made in the world



Since the 1950s, 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic has been made - that's more than 1 billion fully grown African elephants!



Plastic thrown in the bin will end up in landfill



Up to 12 million tonnes of plastic enters our oceans every year - that's a rubbish truck every minute



Plastic that is dropped can be carried by wind and rain into rivers that then flow into the sea



Products containing plastic such as ear buds and face wipes are flushed down the loo and end up in the sea



Plastic fibres in clothing such as fleece are washed out in the washing machine, carried into the sewerage system and onto the sea



Photo: Mark Hillary



2. THE PROBLEMS WITH PLASTICS



Plastic does not rot away so all the plastic ever made is still in existence on our planet's surface



When exposed to sunlight over long periods plastic can break into smaller pieces - but they never fully disappear



Plastic is much more difficult to recycle than materials like glass, aluminium or paper



But plastic can be down-cycled
It's broken down into flakes before being
melted and moulded into a new shape



Plastic drink bottles can be made into other items such as fleece jackets and plastic chairs



Plastic is used to make many single use items

Ear buds



Photo: Marco Verch

Cutlery

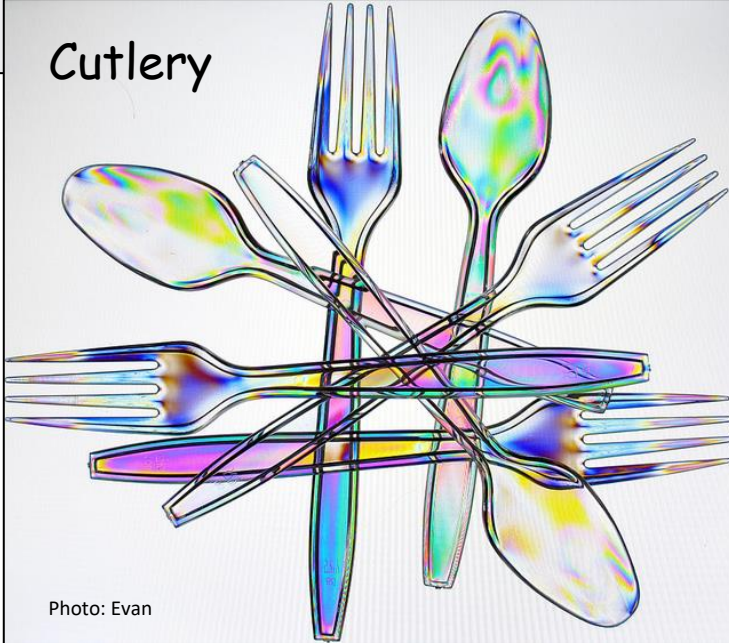


Photo: Evan



Straws

Photo: Horia Varlan

Over 8 million tonnes of plastic are deposited in the world's oceans every year



Plastic often washes up on beaches like this one in Mumbai, India



By 2050 it is thought the plastic floating in our oceans will weigh more than the fish



Up to 1,900 microfibres can be released from a single garment when it's washed - these can become lodged in the intestines of fish



Photo: Carl

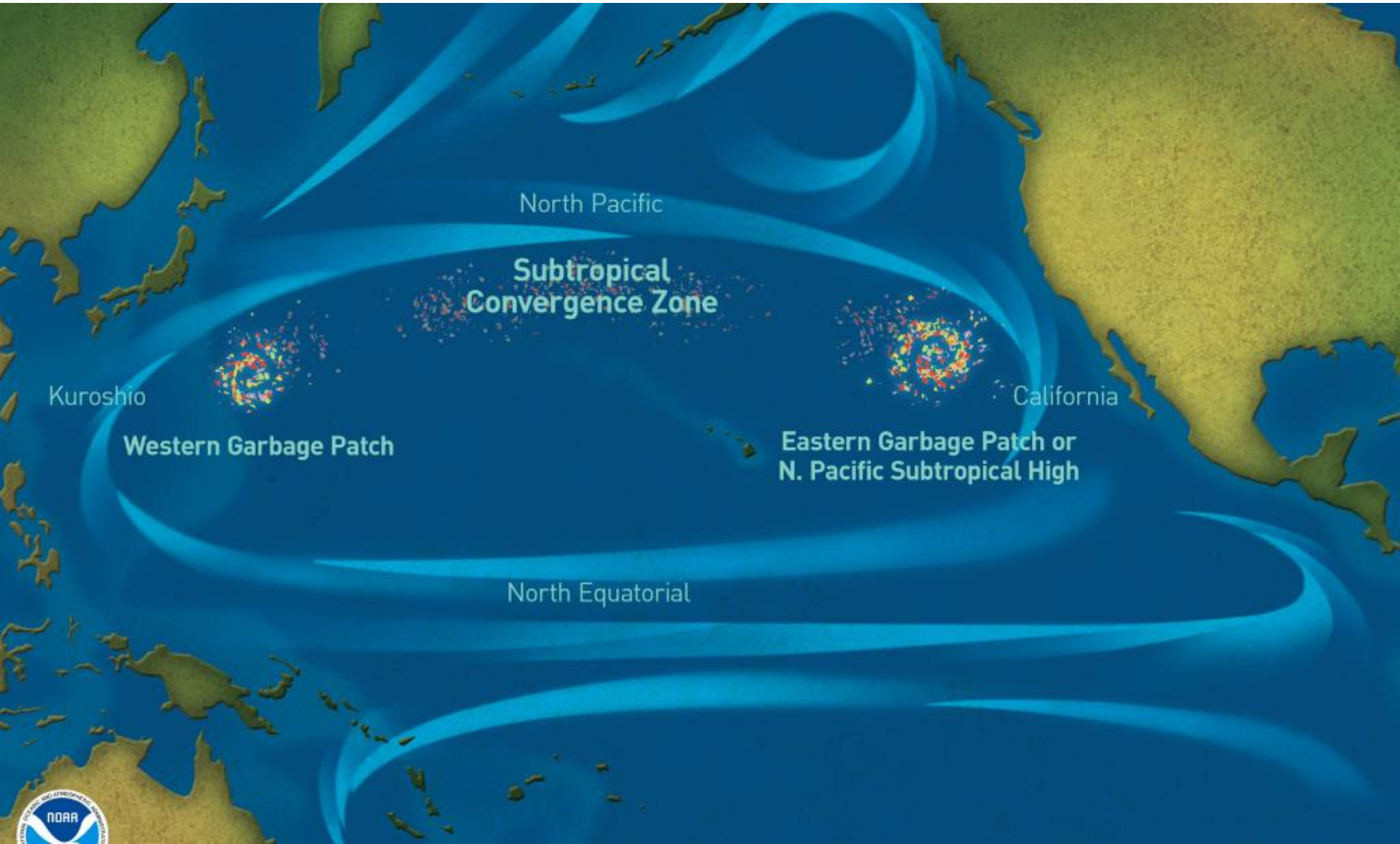
In the UK microscopic plastic fibres were found in 72% of tap water samples



A study found that 90% of the world's most popular bottled water brands contained tiny pieces of plastic



The Pacific Garbage Patches are masses of floating plastic waste



Pacific garbage patch - it covers an approximate surface area of 1.6 million square kilometers – an area twice the **size** of Texas and three times the **size** of France!



Plastic debris floating in the sea can kill animals



Around 100,000 marine mammals and turtles and 1 million seabirds are killed by marine plastic pollution every year



Young albatrosses are fed plastic waste by their parents which can kill them



Fish eat fragments of plastic
which we in turn may be eating



Opinion corner

- Consider this statement and decide whether you Strongly Agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly Disagree

Plastic is bad for the environment and should not be used

Think of reasons for your opinion and be prepared to share and discuss them

WALT: Plastic Pollution

Task: to consider what is helpful / unhelpful about using plastic

- Split your page and put the subheadings helpful and unhelpful. List reasons below each

Using Plastic

Helpful

Unhelpful



Homework

Use the table on the WWF sheet to help you collect data on how much single-use plastic you use in your house.

MY PLASTIC DIARY

Your name



Over the next week, keep a 'plastic diary', recording how much single-use plastic you use.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Add up your totals here
Plastic bags								
Plastic bottles								
Plastic drinking straws								
Plastic food wrappers and packets								
Yoghurt pots and other food containers								

What other plastic items have you used this week?

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