Trash Talkin’ Activity –
Let’s Talk Trash Worksheet

I. Prediction
I predict that our class generated ___________________________ of trash this week.
I think _______% of it will be reusable, _______% of it will be recyclable, and
________% of it will be non-recyclable.

Prediction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Re-usable</th>
<th>Recyclable</th>
<th>Non-recyclable</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Environment: Lesson 4, Trash Talkin’ Activity – Let’s Talk Trash Worksheet
II. Analysis

How much total garbage did your class create this week? __________

Calculate the percents in each category and record them in the table below.

*Example*

Your class produced 19 pounds of trash this week. Of this, 2.5 pounds was re-useable paper.

\[
2.5 \div 19 \times 100 = 13.2\% \text{ of the trash was re-useable paper.}
\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>PERCENT OF TOTAL MASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Re-usable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Metal</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Create a pie chart of these results.
III. Discussion Questions

1. Which of the categories has the most re-useable items (by mass)?  _____________________
   Why do you think this is?  _____________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________

2. Which of the categories has the most recyclable items (by mass)?  _____________________
   Why do you think this is?  _____________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________

3. Which of the categories has the most non-recyclable items (by mass)?  __________________
   Why do you think this is?  _____________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________

4. Was your prediction for the total amount of trash close to correct?  _____________________
   Are you surprised by how much trash your class generated? Explain why or why not.
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________

5. How many classes of students are there in your school?  ______________________________
   How much trash do the classrooms in your school generate every week? ______________
   (Assume all the classes generate about as much trash as yours does and show your work
   below.)
IV. Conclusion

Make some suggestions for what you think happens to the waste from your school each week. (Do not forget that in addition to the classroom waste, there is waste in the school office, the restrooms, the lunch room, special activity rooms, etc.)

______________________________________________________________________________
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Based on the results of this investigation, suggest some ways that your classroom can reduce its solid waste. How might an engineer work to reduce solid waste?

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