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— R K JAIN —

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ICSE GEOGRAPHY

Class 10

Chapter 24: Need and Methods for Reducing, Reusing and Recycling Waste

The Reducing, Reusing and Recycling of waste have together become an important component of the waste management programme. The main objective of waste management should be to reduce the amount of waste from various sources, which is disposed off in the landfills.

The 3R concept, that is reducing, reusing and recycling of waste, should foster cooperation among waste generators, waste collectors and waste processors. This hierarchy is a nationally and internationally accepted guide for waste management practices for saving our life and our environment.

REDUCING WASTE

The first step in the programme of waste management is to reduce the amount of waste we produce. The term waste reduction can be interchanged with waste minimisation or waste prevention. The practice of consuming less, so that our needs are met without much waste generation, is called the source reduction of waste. Reducing the amount of waste generation is an environment friendly practice, which actually starts at the household level. This practice can go a long way in reducing the stress of waste management. If we can reduce the amount of waste generated, then we will have lesser amount for reuse, recycle or dispose.

Some tips for waste reduction are as follows:

- ❖ We should buy only those products that need less resources in their production.
- ❖ We should buy only long lasting consumer goods. This will help in reducing the amount of waste.
- ❖ We should buy only those products that have less packaging.
- ❖ We should try to buy in bulk to reduce the amount of packaging.
- ❖ We should buy only the right quantity of what we really need. This can reduce waste generation.
- ❖ We must avoid, as far as possible, the regular use of disposable plates, cups, glasses, cutlery, etc.
- ❖ We should avoid the purchase and use of unnecessarily packaged food items.
- ❖ We should carry, as far as possible, our own reusable shopping bag.
- ❖ We should try to reduce the use of those articles that are not packed in recyclable material.
- ❖ We must avoid the use of those articles, that have CFC or non-biodegradable substance.

REUSING WASTE

The practice of using materials and goods again and again after necessary repair and maintenance, is called reusing. If someone gives an article (which is of no use to him/her) to others, who could use it, then it is an example of reuse. This practice can help in reducing the amount of waste disposed off in the landfills.

Some tips for reuse of goods and materials are as follows:

- ❖ Use the materials and goods as many times before rejection. If you do not want to use it again, then find some person who can use it.
- ❖ Do not throw away old clothes, utensils, furniture, newspapers, books, magazines, toys, etc. Many charitable institutions would like to take such articles for giving them to needy people.
- ❖ Every household buys eatables packed in plastic or glass containers. After using the contents, we should reuse these plastic or glass containers for storing other things.
- ❖ The cold drink bottles made of glass can be returned to the shopkeepers or bottling company for reuse.
- ❖ Do not throw away the plastic bags as garbage. The old plastic bags can be washed and dried for reuse.
- ❖ Small children studying in nursery schools use old articles such as egg trays, jam jars, cereal boxes, wooden spoons, etc. in making craft projects.
- ❖ Most of the offices in our country generate waste papers which have only one side written on them. These papers can be easily used for rough work.
- ❖ Car or truck tyres are expensive articles. Do not throw away the old tyres as waste. These can be easily retreaded for reuse.
- ❖ The old furniture in our homes and offices can be repaired and modified for reuse, rather than purchasing new furniture.

RECYCLING THE WASTE

Recycling is the process of breaking down of solid waste into its component materials and using those materials to remake the same article or some new article. Most of the non-biodegradable solid wastes such as glass, metals, paper and plastic items can be recycled. Almost half of the contents of our dustbins can be easily recycled.

Recycling has the following advantages:

- ❖ Making articles from recycled materials needs less energy than using new materials.
- ❖ Recycling can reduce the demand for raw materials. Thus, it can reduce the mining waste.
- ❖ Making articles from recycled materials helps in conserving natural resources.
- ❖ Recycling helps in reducing air, water and soil pollution, because lesser amount of waste has to be managed and disposed off.
- ❖ Recycling of plastic helps reduces emission of toxic gases.



Lots of household materials can be recycled

GOVERNMENT, SOCIAL AND INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES

The reduce, reuse and recycle activities are understood and patronised by most of the people in India, as these comprise an effective waste management programme for a healthy environment. Thus, it is necessary that the government, the community and each individual cooperate with each other to save the environment.

The government is encouraging the industries to follow the concept of “**zero waste**”, which stands for meaningful reduction of waste at the source by the producers of goods.

- ❖ The acquisition of recycled products and services is called “Green Procurement”. These products and services conserve energy and resources, generate less waste and are less toxic.
- ❖ The role of social groups and community has been fully defined and elaborated in Agenda 21 of the Earth Summit 1992 in Brazil.
- ❖ The social group will work together to create awareness and educate people about the importance of bringing about sustainable development in the country.



Use eco-friendly products

The individual is also a part of government and community and should always follow the golden rule, “**Think globally and act locally**”.

The concept of reduce, reuse and recycle is not enough. There are many other R's apart from this 3R's mantra.

Some of them are:

1. Reconsider the need for wasteful living lifestyle.
2. Regulate and restrict the use of resources with prescribed norms and rules.
3. Renounce the use of those goods which can generate harmful and toxic waste.
4. Resolve to change your lifestyle so as to consume less resources.

THANK YOU