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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2020 Volume IV: Solving Environmental Problems through Engineering

A Plastic Struggle for Mother Earth

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Plastics are a huge part of daily life. Many of the products we use daily are made out of or contain plastic. So what happens to the plastic product when we are done with it? When we think about this question, we have to consider the convenience of using plastic in our daily living. The convenience of bottled water packaged in lightweight plastic, which can be easily carried and thrown away as soon as the water is consumed. Is convenience worth it, knowing that more than one-third of all plastic disposable packaging like bottles and bags end up littering the environment? This is a concern for many environmentalist because plastic has become one of the major substances to have a negative impact on our earth's environment. This curriculum unit brings awareness of this environmental issue. It is my intention to inspire students to become actively involved in learning about their surrounding environment and to engage in solving real world issues through environmental engineering. Navajo cultural teachings is part of the unit for students to grasp a deeper understanding of continuing our ancestral ways of keeping harmony with Mother Earth (*Nahasdzáán*).

(Developed for Science, grade 8; recommended for Science, grades 5-8)

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