

Resource: 8. A Turtle's Life

Appendix: 8.8 - Questions for the Preparatory Circle Time

After viewing the three suggested videos, discuss the issues faced by turtles, opening up in detail about Marine Litter. The following sequence of questioning is suggested. Modify according to age and ability.

1. What **dangers** do turtles face from the instant the hatchlings reach the sea?
Eaten by predators, hit by boats, caught as by-catch, mistakenly caught by fishing hooks, entangled in fishing nets and ropes, eating plastic bags and other litter.
2. In the case of one of these dangers, **all of us** contribute to it. Which one?
We all continuously produce waste. Just **half a gram of plastic waste can kill a baby turtle**.
3. Can you mention some **items** that we use which end up as litter in the sea?
Plastic bags, bottles, straws, balloons, bottle caps, glass bottles, metal cans, ropes, etc.
4. Do these waste items take the same time to break down?
No. Different materials have **different life spans** and their life span varies on the conditions it encounters where it happens to occur, such as temperature, wind and wave action. Show estimated lifespan chart provided in the background information (Source: [Marlisco](#)).
5. How big is the marine litter issue? Do we find a small or large amount of waste in our seas? Let students guess then specify.
It is a serious issue. There are **five large garbage patches** in our oceans, known to be the size of a continent if put together.
6. What material is most marine litter made of? Let students try to guess.
 - Plastic: **60 – 80 % of the marine litter in European seas is made up of plastic**.
 - **Marine wildlife often ends up stranded** because of ingested plastic (Optional: show presentation "Choice of News – Waste Matters & Actions").
7. Which are the top 10 waste items in European seas? Let students try to guess, then show the related infograph as in background information (Source: <https://safety4sea.com/top-10-garbage-items-collected-from-beach-clean-ups-worldwide/>).

8. How can we prevent this waste from reaching the oceans? Probable answers (emphasize last two points involving **waste reduction**):
- Do not litter.
 - Safely pick up litter and take part in clean-ups.
 - Dispose of litter in bins.
 - Separate waste and dispose accordingly to send for recycling.
 - **Avoid use single-use items** (e.g: metal cutlery, glass cups and plates, metal straws, ice-cream in cone, release pigeons instead of balloons etc.).
 - **Avoid buying items with unnecessary packaging** especially plastic (e.g: toothpaste tablets instead of toothpaste tubes, soap bars & shampoos instead of liquid soaps, popcorn in one wrapper instead of microwave popcorn, pasta in cardboard packets instead of plastic or cardboard with plastic windows, buying nuts in own containers etc.).
9. Does plastic waste disappear into harmless invisible pieces?
No. It breaks down into smaller pieces. When the pieces are **5mm or smaller they are called micro-plastics**. These can end up in food like fish.
10. How small can they become?
Plastic keeps breaking up into smaller and smaller pieces until eventually it becomes microscopic/invisible to the naked eye. These can end up in food like shellfish.
11. Is it enough for Mediterranean countries to clean the Mediterranean sea?
No, because litter is known to **travel long distances** across the oceans depending on ocean currents.