“Would you like Paper or Plastic?”

“No thanks, I’ve brought my own.”

In this lesson, students will set criteria they would use to judge the costs and benefits of plastic or paper shopping bag options. Then they will conduct research to gather facts, and display findings so that a comparison of options can be assessed.

Students will:

* Discuss criteria by which one could judge the benefits or costs of different bag options.
* Discuss a ranking of importance of these criteria.
* Conduct research to gather information about the energy and environmental impacts of plastic and paper single use bags.
* Display the findings so that the options can be compared.
* Make recommendations based upon evidence.

Materials: Devices for accessing Internet websites, or handouts with information to compare.

Goal: Students will create a table or chart to display relevant facts about plastic and paper shopping bags in units that are comparable and in a format that conveys the information to the reader.

Resources: There are many sites on the Web that have information. What would you use as your search criteria / question?

One that has a comparison: Australian Bureau of Statistics. Year Book Australia, 2004, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/1301.0Feature%20Article212004>

Prompt: What do you think is a better environmental option, paper or plastic grocery bags?

What criteria do you think we should use to make this assessment?

How would you rank the importance of the different criteria you have listed?

Task: Research to gather facts and data about paper and plastic grocery bags based upon the criteria we have talked about in class. Organize your information, pairing facts and data that are comparable. Convert units where necessary for clear comparison.

What is your recommendation for grocery transport? Display your findings in a poster display so that an interested person could read and come to a decision for themselves based upon your data.