



The Litter Bug
and
Lisa the Litter Guard



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The Litter Bug *and* **Lisa the Litter Guard**

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It was a beautiful day in the Northern Beaches,
so the Litter Bug decided to head on out the door
to his favourite spot. He set up his comfy chair and
put on his headphones to listen to his favourite song:

*You put the garbage into my heart
You send my soul sky high when the litter starts
Love it down the drain
Cans go bang-bang-bang drives people insane
But if I'm bugging you that's alright
I only litter when I'm outside
Every place that I can reach
My absolute favourite has to be the beach!*

He grabbed a drink and ate his lunch and, being a Litter Bug, couldn't help himself and threw his plastic bottle high into the air. A moment later, he heard a loud "Ouch!"



It was Lisa the Litter Guard coming in his direction! The Litter Bug jumped up and tried to hide, but it was too late.

“Did you throw this?” Lisa said.

“Oh, you know me? Well, you must know that I’m just doing what comes naturally,” said the Litter Bug.

“Well, I’m a Litter Guard, and it’s my job to stop people and bugs like you from messing up our beautiful area,” explained Lisa.

The Litterbug replied, “Don’t worry, most of it just blows into the ocean anyway – out of sight, out of mind.”

“Litter Bug, it isn’t out of sight. It looks terrible, and animals in the ocean think the rubbish is food and eat it and it makes them very sick. The litter can also take a very long time to decompose. How long do you think it would take for that bottle to break down back to nature?” she asked.

The Litter Bug scratched his head and thought very hard. The bottle was thin and clear, and it didn’t weigh very much. Surely it wouldn’t take long to break down?

The Litter Bug replied, “I think, in my expert opinion, that the bottle will break down in ... three weeks.”



Lisa took a big, deep breath and said, “It would take up to 450 years for that bottle to break down.”

“Litter Bug, would you like to see if you can guess how long it takes for these items to decompose? They start from two weeks, right through to one million years. Let’s see how many you can get right.”

***See if you can guess, too.
(See the back of this book
to see if you were right.)***



The Litter Bug tried very hard to work out how long it took for rubbish to decompose, but didn't get many of the answers right, so he got a bit cranky and said, "So what? It's just one plastic bottle. Who cares? It doesn't make that much difference!"

Lisa shook her head. "Oh, Litter Bug, it can make a *huge* difference! Did you know that if everyone contributed just one piece of rubbish..."

The Litter Bug sat on his chair and put his headphones on and tried to ignore Lisa.

"Litter Bug, could you imagine the rubbish we would have if everyone in Australia dropped one piece of rubbish a day! That's a lot of rubbish. That's over 23 million pieces a day!" said Lisa.

Did you know?

Australia is the second highest producer of waste per person in the world, at approximately 650 kilograms per person.

The average Australian family of four people makes enough rubbish in one year to completely fill a three-bedroom house from floor to ceiling!



“Yeah, yeah, yeah... Even if I was slightly concerned, what could just one bug do?” sighed the Litter Bug.

“It’s very easy, you just have to put the right things into the right bin!” Lisa exclaimed.

“Is that all?” said the Litter Bug.

“Yep, sure is. But sometimes it’s hard for some people – and bugs – to get it right. See if you can put the right things into the right bin.”

See if you can get it right.

See the answers at the back of this book.



“Litter Bug, do you know what the worst kind of litter is?” Lisa asked. “It’s a SUP.”

“What’s SUP, Lisa?” the Litter Bug snickered.

“A SUP, Litter Bug, is what we call a **Single-Use Plastic** – like straws and plastic bottles and plastic bags and throw-away cutlery. How many SUPs can you see?”

Did you know?

Over 1 million seabirds are killed by plastic waste each year. Over 100,000 sea mammals and countless fish are killed each year due to pollution.

What's
SUP?



“Well, how come SUPs are so bad, Lisa?” asked the Litter Bug.

“Well, Litter Bug, not only can they make our sea creatures sick, but SUPs also affect our other wildlife like the swamp wallaby and bandicoots. Their environment is also affected!”

“Poor little animals. It’s not their fault we are spoiling their homes. That makes me feel sad, Lisa,” said the Litter Bug.



“Do you know what, Litter Bug? I think it might be time for you to take the Pledge,” said Lisa, as she handed him a pen.

“Just sign here.”

The Litter Bug’s Pledge

I promise

To use the bins

At the beach

Or wherever I might be

I promise

To make more effort

To keep our environment clean

Signed,

Litter Bug

Answers

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Paper towel: 2 weeks

Newspaper: 6 weeks

Cardboard box: 2 months

Apple core: 2 months

Cotton rope: 14 months

Biodegradable cloth nappy: 1 year

Plywood: 1 – 3 years

Wool socks: 1 – 5 years

Painted wood stick: 13 years

Baby’s dummy: 450 years

Sushi fish: 20 – 30 years

Nylon rope: 30 – 40 years

Leather shoe: 50 years

Styrofoam cup: 50 years

Disposable nappy: 450 years

Plastic bottle: 450 years

Aluminium can: 500 years

Fishing line: 600 years

Plastic shopping bag: 20 – 1000 years

Glass bottle: 1 million years

Sandwich: landfill

Straw: landfill

Ice cream cone: landfill

Paper bag with food scraps: landfill

Baby’s dummy: landfill

Takeaway food box: landfill

Chip packet: landfill

Confectionery wrapper: landfill

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Plastic cup: recycle

Plastic bottle: recycle

Can: recycle

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10 SUPS: 3 plastic bottles, lolly stick, straw, sushi fish, 2 coffee cups, plastic bag, and a plastic fork.





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