

Upcycle and Uplift

If you throw a plastic bottle in the trash today, it will sit in a landfill and take over 450 years to decompose. Americans use 2,500,000 plastic bottles every hour. If you **reduce** your use of plastic bottles and make sure to **recycle** the bottles instead of throwing them in the trash, you can be a good steward our planet.

The third "R" in the 3 R's of the environment is for reuse. You can reuse plastic bottles through a process called upcycling which means converting discarded materials and turning them into something useful or beautiful. Two-liter soda or seltzer bottles can be turned into a planter and given to a senior center or nursing home as a gift sure to brighten up the day of residents.

Contact a local nursing home or senior assisted-living complex and ask if they would like to have the planters donated for their residents and arrange a time to deliver the planters.



What You Need

Terrarium:

- Empty 2-liter plastic bottles
- Acrylic paint
- Paint markers
- Utility knife or scissors
- Plants
- Additional potting soil (optional)



How You Do It

All Purpose Cleaner

- 1 With a parent to help, start by cutting an empty bottle in half, or about 1/3 of the way from the bottom.
- 2 Paint the outside and bottom of the bottle. Make sure to paint a couple layers so it is fully covered.
- 3 Let the paint dry.
- 4 Using paint markers, decorate the outside of the bottle with colorful things such as flowers, the sun and butterflies.
- 5 Place your plant with soil carefully into the bottle and fill with more soil if necessary.
- 6 Deliver your planters.



Before the
project

READ ONE OF THESE BOOKS.

"I Want to Go Green! But What Does That Mean?" by Jill Dunn

This is a fun, rhyming story that introduces elementary-aged children to a green lifestyle. The main character takes readers on a silly yet educational adventure as he discovers simple ways to conserve resources and keep our Earth clean.

"Heroes of the Environment: True Stories of People Who Are Helping to Protect Our Planet" by Harriet Rohmer

This inspiring book presents the true stories of 12 people from across North America who have done great things for the environment. Heroes include a teenage girl who figured out how to remove an industrial pollutant from the Ohio River, a Mexican superstar wrestler who works to protect turtles and whales, and a teenage boy from Rhode Island who helped his community and his state develop effective e-waste recycling programs.