

America Recycles Day Art Challenge: 2026

Description and Purpose:

The America Recycles Day Art Challenge is designed to serve as a hands-on way for Dutchess County students to engage with recyclable materials in a creative and innovative manner. Any K-12 student in the County can participate, whether they are homeschooled, public, or privately educated. The goal is to educate young people on recycling practices in the County while influencing them to reimagine materials they would otherwise throw away. Materials for each project will be collected by the participant, bringing attention to how much waste accumulates daily and how much can be recycled or reused.

For the challenge, students are asked to create artwork made with recyclable materials such as paper, cardboard, aluminum, glass, and certain plastics. The piece can be 2D or 3D and students will be permitted to use non-recyclable materials such as glue and tape as needed for construction.

One first-place and one second-place winner from grade level groups (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12) will be selected. Winners will have the opportunity to showcase their work at the Henry A. Wallace Visitor's Center on the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site grounds. They will also be recognized publicly during a small reception, thanking them for their participation and efforts.

Qualifications:

- Created completely out of recyclable materials, no pre-made items like toys are permitted.
 - Examples include paper, cardboard, aluminum, glass, and certain plastics.
 - Plastics not permitted include those used to make toys, such as dolls, figurines, cars, miniatures, Legos, phone cases, etc.
- 2D must not exceed a 24 x 30 in. frame and 3D must not exceed 3 x 3 ft. base and 3 ft. high.
- Must provide a short description of the piece (1-3 sentences), including items that were used, what the piece is of or represents, and title.
 - Guiding questions for the description can be "What led you to your idea?" "Did this give you a new perspective on recycling?" "Is there anything you find special or creative about your use of materials?"
- Must provide a photo of the piece and include dimensions in email submission. It's encouraged to send progress photos! 😊
- If submitting as a group, the group must not exceed 4 students.
 - No entire class submissions are permitted.
- You can use glue, tape, paint, crayons, etc. to decorate or construct.
- Must be submitted no later than **November 5th** for review.

Grading Criteria:

- *Clarity*: What is represented or shown? Is it visually translated well, even if it's abstract?
- *Description*: How does the text reflect what is seen?
- *Creativity*: Did you use the materials in a unique way?

*****Grading will be adjusted to fairly assess different abilities, grade level, and age*****

Timeline:

Submission Deadline	November 5th
<i>Winners Announced</i>	November 6 th
<i>Projects Collected and Displayed</i>	November 9 th
<i>Display Period</i>	November 9 th to November 17 th
<i>Reception</i>	<i>Information to follow</i>

Information for Students:

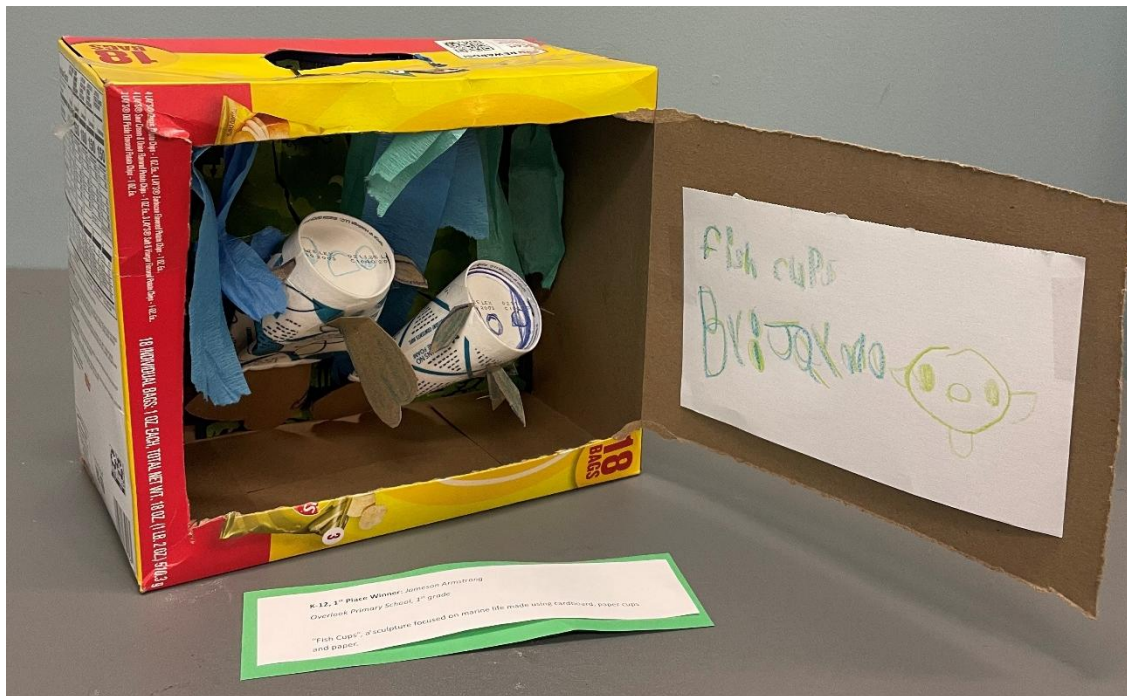
Recycling is the process of taking used materials, such as certain plastics, aluminum, paper, cardboard, or glass, and converting it into a new product. Recycling can help reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills, incinerators, and natural resources – like waterways and soil. Recycling also conserves natural resources used to create brand new products because instead of taking raw materials from the environment, manufacturers can reuse them. It protects humans and ecosystems, saves energy, reduces overall waste, and can create new job opportunities in the environmental field.

By creating an art piece using recycled material you have collected, you can contribute positively to environmental causes! This challenge is designed to equip students with information about recycling so they can pay attention to their own waste generation and reimagine items they would normally throw away.

*****Examples are provided on the next two pages****

Examples from 2025:

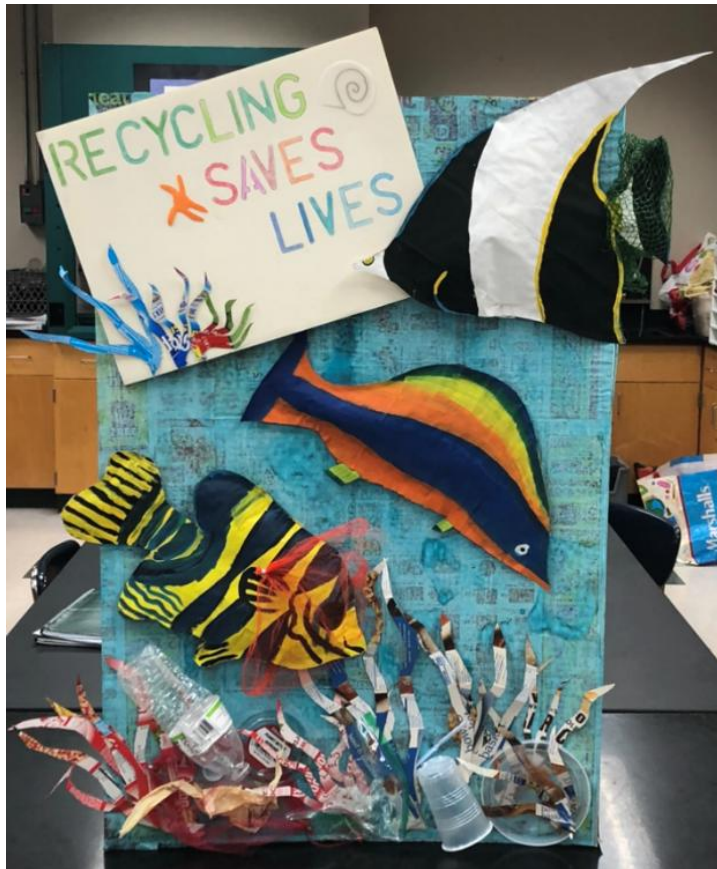
K-2 age group –



3-5 age group –



6-8 age group –



A red electric guitar with a body made of old banknotes, standing next to a black and white amplifier with a 'Fender' logo. The guitar has a black neck with white frets and a light-colored headstock. The amplifier is black with a white grille and a 'Fender' logo on the left side.

