

Mirna Cruz

3rd Place Winner

Grade: 10

Tennyson High School

What Does Recycling Mean to me?

As I walk past a recycling bin I realize I'm too lazy to go back and throw away my empty soda bottle once I've finished the last drop off. Eventually the bottle ends up under our car in the parking lot, forgotten until the wind picks up speed and the bottle jingles around. PLOP! PLOP! PLOP! I've heard the noise from my bedroom, from classrooms and most commonly as I'm walking on a deserted sidewalk. To me this noise used to mean nothing but one day I came upon a book filled with problems having to do with us not recycling. Maybe it's a sign, since unlike musical notes this noise urges us to pick up its source and not just throw it away, never to be remembered again but to be saved and reused because one never knows if what we have today will be around tomorrow.

Recycling didn't matter to me until I realized every system is made up of hundreds or even thousands of other little parts and sections. For our world to work, we need the little and the big and recycling plays a very big role in this. We might not be around by the time our resources run out but what about our children, and their children? Shouldn't they be able to enjoy toilet paper and plastic bottles as well? I think to me this is one of the main things that makes me pick up a piece of paper and toss it in a recycling bin. When I get older and have family of my own I'd like to think the world they live in is safe and sound. The world will always have its share of violence but what's a world without trees? To me nothing. For our air to stay clean and our energy to last hundreds of lifetimes we all have to join as one for the sake of one another.

Did you know water is a factor of recycling? I sure didn't know this because I would think that what does water have to do with recycling? Water never goes anywhere but it takes a lot of energy to keep it running. For instance when I go to brush my teeth at night I leave the faucet turned off but before I was completely opposite. I would just watch the water run as if I'd win a prize for staring

longer. This may sound off but I was a little kid and didn't learn otherwise until I got yelled at for wasting water. I would rather waste all that energy on something valuable like heating my house during winter. Even though bad habits are heard to break would much rather save energy and paper now than have none whatsoever in the future.

Recycling to me isn't much of a hassle to me because out of an ordinary piece of paper I make a basketball and shoot away. If we could all just realize the world doesn't belong to us and we have to keep it in good shape then many of our resources like energy, water, wood, plastic, steel and glass would always be around. "Our world" isn't just something to say its something to do. To be able to call this world ours we have to care for it and genuinely want to improve it. Without this how can we expect future residents to have practical lives? At the end of the day just a little help from each person will change things for the best. Recycling isn't pretending to care and picking up one piece of paper a year. To me recycling is caring and knowing why one cares. I care because I want to have a hopeful future not just for myself but for everyone the future welcomes as well.