

CIRCULAR ECONOMY



LO	2
LEARNING OUTCOME	LO3 Students can take into account the principles of life cycle thinking and circular economy in relation to new and existing business.
SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOME	STUDENTS CAN IDENTIFY THE DIFFERENT PHASES IN THE LIFE CYCLE OF A PRODUCT.
KEYWORDS	Life cycle product, circular economy, linear economy, the 3R's (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle).
INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This activity helps you to know the principles of life cycle thinking, its different phases and what the circular economy is instead of linear economy.
HOW TO WORK WITH THIS MATERIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch two videos of less than 5 minutes each. The first video will explain the “life cycle” of a product, and the second video the “circular economy” principles. Afterwards, you will be encouraged to do a presentation of a real company that uses some of these “R’s”. A computer will be required. Students can be grouped in teams of 4-5 students.
TIMING	Approx. 2-2.5 hours.

Introduction

Do you know the principles of life cycle thinking? Can you identify the different phases in the life of a product? Have you ever heard about circular economy instead of linear economy? In this activity, you will learn from some companies who have already worked on circular economy practices.

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1. Life cycle and circular economy concept and phases

Do you know the principles of life cycle thinking? Can you identify the different phases in the life of a product? The video below will help you from **“Produce, Use and Throw away”** to shift to **“Reduce, Reuse and Recycle”**. You will learn key ideas such as “minimising waste”, “shifting the focus to resources used”, identifying and closing loops, interconnecting processes, long-lasting culture...



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7b9R82vrA40> (4,60 min, english)



And what about circular economy? Probably you have already heard about it, but this activity will help you to better understand the differences between linear economy vs. circular economy. In other words, from **“Take, Make and Dispose”** vs. **“Make, Use and Return”**, service providers vs. sellers of products...



Honestly, nowadays as a society we have a huge challenge: on the one hand to encourage our current companies to move from a current linear economy to some kind of a more sustainable economy, and on the other hand taking part in transforming consumers' mindset.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_0Spwj8DkM (4') (3.42 min, english)

2. Exercises

Step 1. Watch the videos above and get inspiration from sustainable businesses.

After watching the two videos above, you have probably already thought about some companies in your town, city or region that use some of those “Rs” (Recycling, Reuse and Refurbishing) doing business.

Make a presentation of this business case. What is the company about? What kind of product do they produce? How do they implement the use of one or more than one “R” in their product life?

RECYCLING



REUSE



REFURBISHING



Ensure your presentation considers the following topics:

- Which “R” is being used and why?



- What is the origin? Is this product or service highly demanded by its consumers or is it a business initiative?
- Impact on final product prices, if it applies.
- Analyse packaging or service details, product advertising or its communication campaigns.
- Think of the future. How could the business continue innovating to diversify their product, to elongate the product life in the market...etc?

Step 2. Show your presentation in class in front of your classmates and ensure you also think about the future of the business.

How could the business continue innovating to diversify their product, to elongate the life of the product in the market?

