The Recycling Fashion Show

Activity Credit
This activity was submitted by member affiliate Keep Mesquite Beautiful

Objectives
To challenge the way people think about trash and to engage the public in creative uses of waste

Method
This program was designed to challenge the public to think about trash in different ways. It is open to participants age kindergarten through college and beyond. The show brings costumes made from trash and recyclable material to a runway show held at a town center, preferably a mall. The 2014 theme, "The Great Big Spooky-Wooky Recycled Costume Contest," challenged people to pre-plan for their Halloween costumes while preserving the environment. Contestants make a costume from mostly recycled or recyclable materials, and model it in a runway style fashion show. Winners in each age category received a $50 prize; a Best of Show prize for $100 is given to the highest overall score. This year, for the first time ever, groups are invited to participate in the show. A business or civic group may enter a costume that advertises the business's recycling or environmental efforts.

Grade Level: K-12, additionally adults and business groups
Focus Areas: recycling & waste reduction
Duration: planning begins two months in advance
Group Size: any
Setting: town center, preferably a mall
Conceptual Framework Topic Reference: challenges the public's thinking on trash and recycling
Vocabulary: reuse, recycle, upcycle
Appendices: EPA tips to consumer reduction of trash: http://www.epa.gov/waste/wycd/funfacts/index.htm

Vocabulary
reuse: to use again, after processing
recycle: to process something so it can be used for another cycle or product
upcycle: to process (used goods or waste material) so as to produce something that is often better than the original
Vocabulary definitions retrieved from: vocabulary.com and dictionary.com (2014)

Materials
Both common and unusual items that are discarded for trash such as vinyl billboards, old electronics, trash bags, aluminum cans, dry cleaning bags, cardboard, landscape netting, etc.

Procedure
1. Identify the rules for entry and develop a rules form
2. Build an example dress and get a model to wear it
3. Coordinate the location, sound system, emcee, judges and stage program
4. Appoint student leaders to work alongside adults in planning and preparation
5. Publicize, publicize, publicize
6. Provide clear instructions for volunteers: where to go and what to do; where to be at what time and what to bring
7. Inform entrants about where to go when and what they will do
8. On the day of the event, decorate stage, coordinate models, emcee, judges, and volunteers
9. Execute the event
10. Thank everyone for a great show

Timeline & Publicity
Pre-Event Planning begins approximately 2 months prior to the show. For the 2014 publicity, a model dress was built from items such as a discarded Southwest Airlines billboard vinyl donated by a local radio station and used for the base of the dress, a local electronics recycling company donated electronics that were cut up to build trim on the dress, additionally trash bags, aluminum cans, dry cleaning bags, cardboard and landscape netting were also used to build the dress. The end result was modeled by a high school intern and professional photographs were taken at a local store to use for publicity. The poster, which is the main advertisement for the program, is placed in all public schools. Approximately 300 posters were distributed to businesses and the local radio advertised the event. Social media including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram brings entries from students.

Budget
This event costs approximately $800 to run each year; the bulk of that cost is in prizes given to participants. KMB budget attempts to absorb that cost each year; however, some years the event gets a public sponsor.

Volunteers & Participants
The local mall is a major supporter, providing a kiosk for advertising, the location for the event, and runway setup/support. The total number of volunteers needed for the show is approximately fifteen. A volunteer is present during the show to estimate numbers of spectators. In addition, Fashion Show attendees are offered the opportunity to purchase a rain barrel or compost bin, or to donate to Keep Mesquite Beautiful. Additionally, partnerships with local businesses help to provide prizes.

Location & Results
The Recycling Fashion Show is held in a mall. In past years the event was held at a local high school and the numbers of attendees was limited to participants and their families. By bringing the event to the mall two years ago, out each and participation was increased substantially. For many people the Recycling Fashion Show is a way for the public to learn about other Keep Mesquite Beautiful projects and programs. Because the nature of the event is fun for both children and adults, it is a great way to teach the importance of litter prevention and recycling. The creativity of our participants results in an effective way to share what they learn about fashion, costuming, recycling and litter prevention, while bringing the spotlight onto their efforts.

Extensions & Variations
Interchange the theme of a fashion show with a design challenge. The Design Challenge could be implemented using “trash-innovated” products, sculptures, or other artistic productions where participants innovate new products and inventions through upcycling trash.
Educational Links


TEKS Correlation

112.14. Science, Grade 3 (1B) Make informed choices in the use and conservation of natural resources by recycling or reusing materials such as paper, plastic, and aluminum cans

112.15. Science, Grade 4 (1) Scientific investigation and reasoning. The student conducts classroom and outdoor investigations, following home and school safety procedures and environmentally appropriate and ethical practices. The student is expected to:
   (B) make informed choices in the use and conservation of natural resources and reusing and recycling of materials such as paper, aluminum, glass, cans, and plastic.

112.16. Science, Grade 5, (9) Organisms and environments. The student knows that there are relationships, systems, and cycles within environments. The student is expected to:
   (C) predict the effects of changes in ecosystems caused by living organisms, including humans

112.37. Environmental Systems, High School (5) Science concepts. The student knows the interrelationships among the resources within the local environmental system. The student is expected to:
   (C) document the use and conservation of both renewable and non-renewable resources as they pertain to sustainability;
   (F) evaluate the impact of waste management methods such as reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting on resource availability.