



## One Man's Trash is Another Man's Treasure: Creating Something New

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Science  
Grades K-2



### Introduction

Large items are often built from smaller items that were disassembled from something else. In this lesson, students will learn about the famous artist Simon Rodia, who constructed the Watts Towers. They will use a makerspace or a collection of recyclables to create their own new object.

### Learning Objectives

[2-PS1-3](#). Make observations to construct an evidence-based account of how an object made of a small set of pieces can be disassembled and made into a new object.

### Materials Needed

- *The Wonderful Towers of Watts* by Patricia Zelter
- Makerspace materials or recyclables (including tape and glue)

### Procedure

1. Tell students that many things we use are made out of objects that were previously used for something else and then disassembled and made into new. Examples of these objects could be soap, roads, tennis balls, playground equipment, or kitty litter. Tell students that there was once a famous artist who built something called the “Watts Towers.” These towers were made out of things other people had thrown away, such as broken bottles, tiles, or glass. Today they are going to listen to a book read aloud to them about Simon Rodia, and then create their own object out of things that have been “thrown away.”
2. Read aloud the book, *The Wonderful Towers of Watts*. Tell students that as you are reading, they should be thinking about things they could create from the recyclable materials in the classroom (have the makerspace objects in eyesight of the class to help them begin brainstorming).
3. After reading, have students turn to a neighbor and reflect on the towers that were created out of trash. Have students talk with their partner about the ideas they have for their project.
4. Send students to their desks. Tell students that they will be given time to build something out of the given materials. The object they build can have a use (such as a bowl for a dog to eat out of or a silverware for camping) or be something that would be displayed in a house (such as a picture frame or vase). After creating their object, they will need to write a 3-5 sentence summary about what their object is, why they created it, and what function or use it has.

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## Evaluation

### Checklist:

- Did the students build an object out of recyclable materials?
- Did the students write a summary of their creation that included the following:
  - What the object is
  - Why they created it
  - What function/use it has
- Did the student use correct capitalization and punctuation in their summary?
- Did the student stay on task throughout the course of the lesson?