Leader note:
The recycled paper activity goes with the Akua Lezli Story that can be found on page 40 if the girl’s, It’s Your Planet - Love It! Get Moving! Journey book.

Recycled Paper

Background Information:
Recycling is the process of using old products to create new ones. This process helps prevent the waste of useful materials, reduces the consumption of fresh raw materials, reduces energy usage, reduces air pollution and water pollution and helps lower greenhouse gas emissions.

Materials provided in Program Kit:
- 2 pieces of window screens cut the same size (6 inches x 8 inches) per girl
- Rectangular cake pans
- Metal fork (or blender)
- Sponges

Materials you will need to provide:
- Toilet paper, tissue paper) or newspaper shredded into small pieces
- Gallon sized Zip locks (1 per girl)
- Large paper or plastic plates (to place the wet pulpy window screen) (1 per girl)

Did you know?
- It takes glass bottles and jars 1,000,000 years to decompose.
- It takes aluminum cans 80 – 100 years to decompose.
- It takes plastic bags 10 – 20 years to decompose.
- It takes disposable diapers 10 – 20 years to decompose.
- It takes newspaper 2-4 weeks to decompose.
- Glass never wears out -- it can be recycled forever.

Good things to Recycle:
- Unbroken glass containers
- Clean dry newspapers
- Grocery bags (# 2 or #4)
- Mixed paper (junk mail, magazines, cereal boxes)
- Empty metal or soda cans

Bad things to recycle:
- Light bulbs, mirrors, broken glass
- Rubber bands,
- Spray cans, paint cans
- Plastics stamped # 3, 5, 6, 7
- Stickers, napkins, wax paper
- Recycling one glass bottle saves enough electricity to light a 100-watt bulb for four hours.
- Americans throw away enough steel every year to build all the new cars made in America.
- Seventy-five percent of a tree harvested for paper does not wind up as paper product.
- Americans use 4 million plastic bottles every hour! – Yet only 1 bottle out of 4 is recycled.
- Every year we dispose of 24 million tons of leaves and grass clippings, which could be composted to conserve landfill space.

For this activity the girls will take old, used paper and newspaper and create new paper. By recycling the old paper you are not only saving trees from being cut down, but recycling also helps decrease the amount of trash that goes into a landfill.

In a recycling plant, the old paper is put through a process of removing the ink and is then placed into a large blender with water and beaten until the paper is broken down into small fibers. The fibers are then pressed into screens to remove all the water, flattened, and dried. The dried fibers left over, is new paper.

After completing this activity the girl will have learned;
- How paper is made.
- How new paper can be made from old paper.
- The importance of recycling.

**Tips for Leaders:**
You can either use a blender to break the paper down into small fibers or the girls can put water and toilet paper and small shreds of newspaper into a bowl and whisk it until it becomes a pulp. This activity can be messy. Cover the work areas with a plastic tarp of tablecloth or make sure you do it on a surface that can be cleaned easily.

After the activity is completed ask the girls the following questions:
- How is paper made?
- What is paper made of?
- Why is it good to recycle paper?
- What happened to the pieces of paper when you added water? When you mixed it?
- What does the paper look like when it begins to dry?
- What other materials can be used to make paper?
- How could you make colored paper?
- What would you do to make your paper better?
- How can you use the paper you made?
- Why would you want to make new paper from used paper?

**Procedure:** (follow steps 2-11 for each girl that wants to make paper)
1. Have each girl or group of girls fill a cake pan ¾ full with warm water.
2. Have the girls take turns tearing the toilet paper and newspaper into small pieces and placing them in the water.
3. Have the girls beat the mixture with a metal fork until the mixture is broken down into small fibers and is a pulpy consistency.
   (If you are going to use a blender combine the water and paper into the blender and mix until the paper is a pulp. Pour the pulp mixture into the cake pan then.)
4. Have each girl take one of her window screens and place it into the cake pan. Make sure that the pulp and water completely covers the window screen.
5. Have the girls lift their window screen straight up and let a majority of the water drip off the window screen and back into the cake pan. The window screen should be completely covered in fibers.

6. After the window screen has stopped dripping, have each girl place her window screen on her plate and place the other window screen on top of it and press down gently. They should notice water leak out of their paper.

7. Using the sponges, have each girl use the sponge and press down gently on top of the window screen and fibers. The sponge should begin to soak up the excess water left in the fibers. Squeeze the sponge out into the cake pan.

8. Have the girls continue to press down lightly in their window screens until they have soaked up the remaining water from the fibers.

9. Once the girls believe that they have soaked up the remaining water have them lift the top window screen off of their paper and place their paper plate on top of the paper.

10. After the girls have placed their plate on top of the paper have them grab the edges of their plate and bottom window screen and flip it over so that the paper is resting on the plate and the second window screen is not on top.

11. Have the girls gently remove the top window screen by gently pulling it back until it is completely off. Have them be super careful so that the paper on their plate does not break.

12. If you have time the girls can leave their window screens out to dry completely otherwise have each girl place her paper plate with the paper on it into their gallon sized Zip lock bag to dry completely at home.

13. Once the paper is dried completely, have the girls slowly remove the paper from their paper plate.

Before returning the Program Kit:

- Wash the window screens off so that the majority of the paper is rinsed off.
- Rinse out the blender if you used the blender.
- Let the sponges dry out completely before placing them back in the kit.
- Return all supplies to the Program Kit.