Enduring Principle: The products we buy and consumer show only a fraction of the resources actually used to make and deliver them. In this lesson, the students will see the far-reaching resources used to make simple, everyday products.

Lesson Focus: In this lesson the students will see where products originate from to see the connection between resources and locations.

Big Question: What resources do we used to make….? Does this process cycle? What can you do to help minimize the resources used?

MSLR:

  Implications of Science and Technology: Identify commonly used resources, their sources, and where waste products go.
  Explain practices for conservation in daily life, based on recognition that renewable and non-renewable resources have limits
  Geography: Use a variety of materials and geographic tools to explain how the physical environment supports and constrains human activities.

Objective: In this lesson the students will see the many components that are used in products that we, the consumer, buys. They will also get a sense of the interaction of different location as well as the energy costs associated with each product.

Assessment: The posters will be used to assess how much they understand of the topic as well as a discussion after the presentation.

Method: This will probably be a two-part lesson. In the first half, the students will read one of three short excerpts from the book Stuff, on t-shirts, newspapers, and burgers. Using the information given in the reading, they will piece together the production of their product, incorporating as many details and locations as possible, making a “life cycle” of a product. If they are able to progress this far, they can go on to making a rough draft of a poster to present their product to the rest of the class. In the second lesson, they will finish their poster and present it to the class.

Teacher input: Discuss Stuff, what it is about (an average consumer in Seattle, Washington), what it tries to do.

Guided Practice: As the students read, I will help them to understand some of the specific words associated with each product.

Independent Practice: In the three groups, the students will put together a life cycle of the product, trying to include each component and connector. In addition the students will be asked to list ways that they can reduce the waste associated with each product (listed in the book).
Materials: - Stuff photocopies, (1 copy per group of their topic – perhaps I should let them choose from a few options, though some of them, like the computer which may be of interest, are harder to understand and longer – I’ll bring it to class)
  - Paper (for rough drafts and large paper for final draft)
  - markers, whatever else to make posters (in classroom)

Closure: After the presentations, we will discuss when we start thinking about all that goes into these everyday products, it can be a little overwhelming. The solution is to make good choices, to help reduce, not eliminate their use all together.