Activity 1—Trash Can Be Art

1. One excellent way to take care of the earth is to recycle. We can use recycled products for all sorts of uses. Have a class about the different ways people can recycle goods.

2. Explain that the everyday items that one might throw away can also be recycled by using trash as your art materials. For example, white paper could be crumpled up to make clouds, or images from old magazines could be cut out to make a collage. In fact, there are several professional artists who exclusively use trash as their medium when creating art.

3. Ask students to collect old materials from home: paper, magazines, candy wrappers, and other items.

4. Once you have enough materials, ask the students to look through the books in the exhibitions and have them choose an illustrated page that they will try to recreate with their recycled materials. For example, I really like the pictures in Our Water: Myths and Legends for Children. My favorite illustration in that book is on page 21. For my recreation of this beautiful image, I used tin foil for the water, cut up small pieces of colorful magazines to make the wall, and old yarn for the woman's hair.

5. Have students present their works of art to the class. Make sure they discuss the various materials that they used, and that they explain what the image means to them.