

## LifeSmarts U Environment Lesson Cold Water Clean

### Lesson Description

Switching the washing machine temperature to cold yields benefits for the consumer and the environment. While many consumers think that warm water temperatures result in cleaner clothes, laundry science has developed detergents that are effective with cold water, shorter cycles, and less water.

Making cold water wash your default will save you money on energy costs. You are also benefiting the environment. Cold water wash reduces carbon emissions and the number of microplastics released into waterways.

### Lesson Objectives

Explain the advantages to consumers and the environment when clothes are washed in cold water. Critique current laundry habits and consider implementing Cold Water Clean.

### Materials

- Student Worksheet: [Content Vocabulary: Cold Water Clean](#)
- Student Handout: [Content Vocabulary: Cold Water Clean - Key](#)
- PowerPoint Presentation: [Cold Water Clean](#)
- PowerPoint Presentation: [Tell Me the Question: Cold Water Clean](#)
- PowerPoint Presentation: [Tell Me the Question: Cold Water Clean Key](#)
- Student Worksheet: [Discussion Questions: Cold Water Clean - Talk About It](#)
- Student Worksheet: [LifeSmarts Rapid Research](#)

### Steps

#### Day One

1. Distribute the Student Handout: [Content Vocabulary: Cold Water Clean – Key](#). As a group review and discuss terms that are unfamiliar.
2. OR distribute blank Student Worksheet: [Content Vocabulary: Cold Water Clean](#) and ask students to define the terms.
3. View the PowerPoint Presentation: [Cold Water Clean](#)

Optional: Duplicate and distribute the Student Worksheet: [Discussion Questions: Cold Water Clean – Talk About It](#) and ask students to complete the discussion in small groups and share their ideas with the large group.

## Day Two

1. Review the Content Vocabulary.
2. Use the PowerPoint to play *Tell Me the Question: Cold Water Clean*
3. Assign individuals or small groups to write a persuasive, one minute "Elevator Speech" convincing someone to use cold water as the default cycle on their washing machine. Include the benefits to the environment and the consumer. Share your speeches.
  - **Hot to Cold Elevator Speech**
    - Research shows that adults base their preferred laundry water temperature on perception, not science.
  - Give your speech to a family member. Discuss the experience with your class.

## Extensions

**PLAY** Use the Kahoot! platform to play Go Cold. <https://kahoot.it/challenge/08114963>

**READ** and discuss the National Resources Defense Council's paper *What is Greenwashing?*  
<https://www.nrdc.org/stories/what-greenwashing>

**LISTEN** Malcolm Gladwell's Revisionist History Podcast *Laundry Done Right* (Season 6 Episode 6)  
<https://www.pushkin.fm/podcasts/revisionist-history/laundry-done-right#play>

**WATCH** 4 minute News story: *Microplastics: Where Do They Come From, And How Big Is The Problem?*  
TODAY <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQK3rFaLo-c>

**RESEARCH** Assign Rapid Research Cold Wash