

Activity 3: Garbage Patch and ocean currents

time: 30-40 minutes

Goal: students will understand that oceanic currents are primarily wind driven, and the Coriolis effect forces the net water transport 90 degrees to the right (clockwise) of the wind in the Northern Hemisphere. Students will learn that the Pacific Garbage Patch is roughly in the center of the North Pacific Gyre where currents are weak and convergent.

Preparation: Students will only need the Activity_3_worksheet. They should have a basic understanding of what the Pacific Garbage Patch is and its location (Lesson 3). An Earth Science textbook may be helpful.