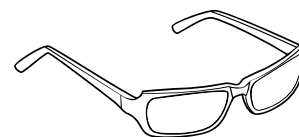


Puzzling over plastics

Name: _____

Date: _____

Plastics are used to make things such as bank notes, milk containers, toys and clothing.



Where do plastics come from?

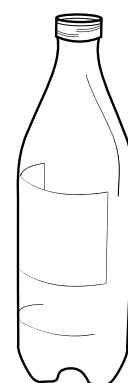
Most plastics today are manufactured from oil which is a valuable, limited resource. Some plastics can be recycled.

Properties and uses of plastic

All plastics are easy to shape. Objects made from plastics are generally lighter than similar objects made of other materials.

Some plastics do not let electricity or heat pass through them, and can be used to keep us safe. Unlike glass, most plastics do not shatter when dropped and so will not break or cut people.

Plastics are waterproof. They will not rot like wood or rust like steel. This means that objects made from plastic last for a long time.



The future

Scientists are researching ways to develop biodegradable plastics that are made from renewable resources such as plants. For example, one Australian company has invented a new type of plastic made from corn starch.

