

# Introduction to Repair - Purpose and Context

In this activity, you will: **explore how repair serves as a meaningful environmental solution by reflecting on your own experiences with broken items and then examining the diverse people and roles that power the broader repair movement.**

*Here, we'll share some background information that will introduce this concept to your students.*

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This lesson introduces repair as a powerful environmental solution that supports both people and the planet. Many products today (especially those made from plastic) are designed to break quickly, encouraging a disposable culture while repair skills, shops, and knowledge sharing have faded from daily life. Bringing repair into schools helps reverse these trends by reconnecting students to how things work, building confidence, and highlighting that “broken” doesn’t always equate to “throw it away”.

Repair honors the resources behind every object, extends product lifespans, and cultivates a mindset of care over disposal. It gives students hands-on ways to engage with sustainability, think critically about consumption and waste, and practice environmental stewardship.

As we confront an unsustainable take-make-waste system, repair becomes essential. It reduces the need for new production, cuts emissions, limits landfill waste, and supports a shift toward a circular economy. Movements like Repair Cafés, Fixit Clinics, and Right-to-Repair legislation show this shift is already happening. By teaching repair, we prepare the next generation to participate in this transformation.

In this activity, students reflect on their personal experiences with a broken item in their past and their potential attempt to repair it. The second part of the lesson then deepens their understanding by connecting different actors in the repair economy to the unique benefits they bring to the larger movement.



# INTRODUCTION TO REPAIR:

JOURNAL, PAIR, SHARE



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you remember a time when something you loved broke?**

Draw a quick sketch of it.

*\*Try to include the part that broke or made it stop working if you know!*

**What was the item?**

**Where did the item come from?**

**Why was it meaningful to you?**

**How did it break? How did you feel when it broke?**

**How does learning to fix things change the way you think about buying things in the future?**

# INTRODUCTION TO REPAIR:

## BUILD THE REPAIR ECOSYSTEM



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Match each stakeholder to the specific way they help strengthen the repair ecosystem by drawing a line between the two columns. As you make these connections, you'll begin to see how different people, roles, and skillsets come together to create a more accessible, collaborative, and resilient repair system.

### STAKEHOLDERS

### STRENGTHS

1. Companies
  2. Waste Management Facilities  
(Recycling Centers and Landfills)
  3. Schools/Teachers
  4. Government and Policy Makers
  5. Nonprofits
  6. Free Local Repair Cafes  
and Fixit Clinics
  7. Tinkerers (aka Volunteer  
Repairers)
  8. Product Designers
  9. Consumers (us!)
- a. Voluntarily provide repair guides  
and replacement parts for their  
products they sell
  - b. Design products that are easy to  
take apart, fix, and keep using longer
  - c. Host repair workshops, offer repair-  
related courses to students, or support  
clubs
  - d. Create free or low-cost places or  
events where people can learn repairs  
and get help
  - e. Learn basic repair skills and how to  
use common tools
  - f. Pass laws that require companies to  
provide parts, tools, and manuals for  
repairs
  - g. Share hands-on skills and keep  
repair knowledge alive
  - h. Rescue or divert repairable items  
before they get recycled or thrown in a  
landfill
  - i. Host community repair events like  
Repair Cafes or Fixit Clinics