

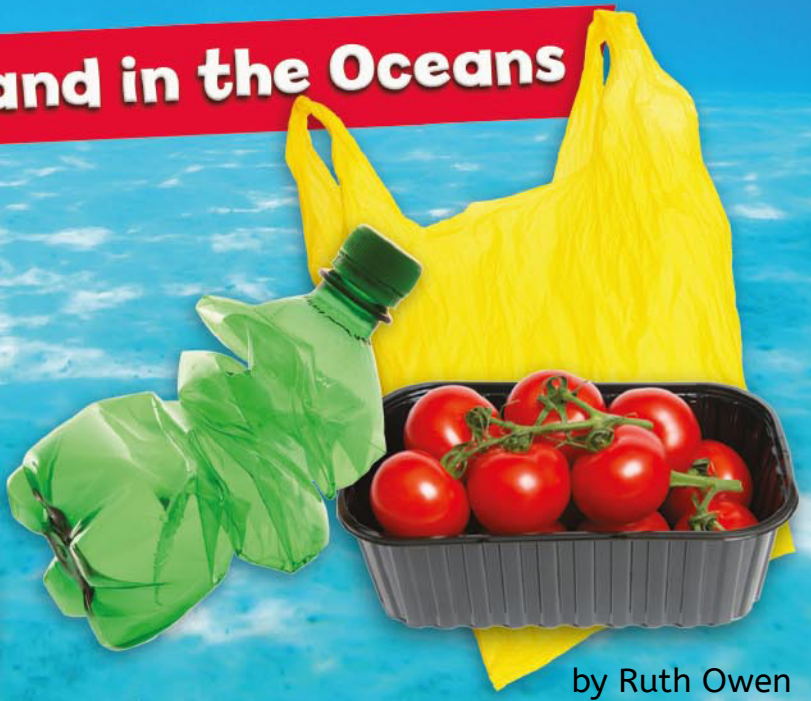
Get Started With  
**STEM**



# Let's Investigate Plastic Pollution



On Land and in the Oceans



by Ruth Owen

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Get Started With

STEM



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**On Land and in the Oceans**

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**With thanks to  
Dr. Laura Foster  
Head of Clean Seas  
Marine Conservation Society**

**RUBY TUESDAY BOOKS**

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# Contents

A Plastic Problem .....	4
What Is Plastic?.....	6
Single-Use Plastic.....	8
Why Is Plastic a Problem? .....	10
Plastics in Landfills.....	12
Plastic in the Ocean.....	14
On the Move!.....	16
Microplastics .....	18
Animals in Danger .....	20
Let's Recycle It.....	22
Plastic Free .....	24
Clean Up the Ocean .....	26
Plastic-Free Packaging .....	28
Be a Plastic-Free Champion .....	30
Glossary, Index.....	32



Words shown in **bold** in the text are explained in the glossary.

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# A Plastic Problem

We all use plastic every day. Some plastic objects make our lives safer or more fun.



Plastic helmet



Plastic soccer ball

But sometimes plastic is used to make things we don't actually need.



Plastic net

The BIG problem with plastic is that when people throw it away, it doesn't disappear.

In fact, almost every piece of plastic that's ever been made is still on Earth somewhere.



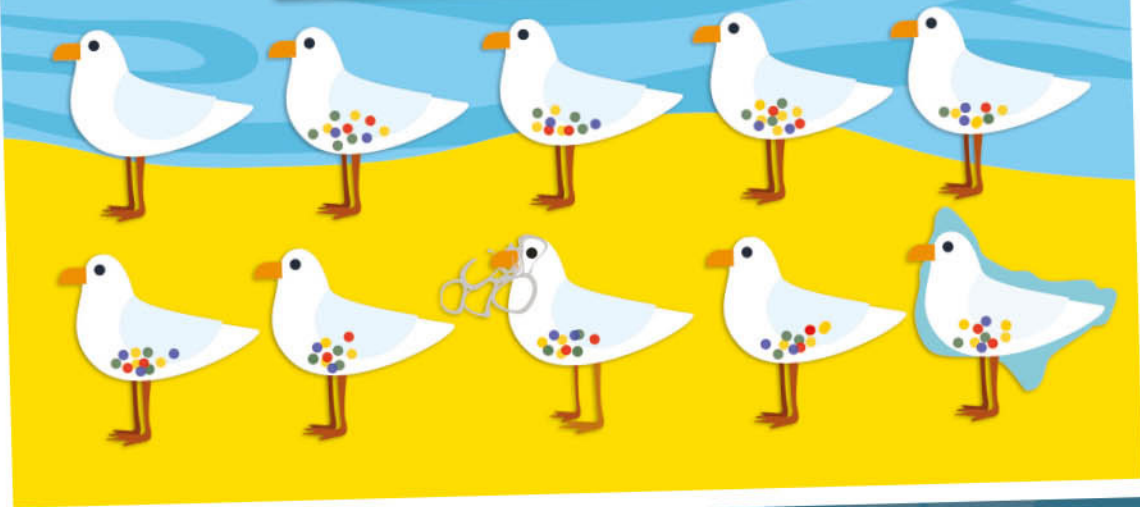
When plastic is thrown away, it often ends up in the ocean.

Seal pups playing with plastic

Up to 14.5 million tons (13 million tonnes) of plastic enters the world's oceans each year. That's the same as a dump truck of garbage every minute of every day!



Scientists estimate that 9 out of 10 seabirds have plastic in their stomachs.



It's time to solve the problem of plastic **pollution**, and everyone can help!

# What Is Plastic?

Plastic is a material that's produced in factories. It is made from oil, coal, gas, **chemicals**, and other materials.

Plastic objects can be made in any shape or color.



Some fabrics, such as polyester, are made from plastics.

Nurdles



These tiny beads are pellets of plastic, known as **nurdles**. In factories, the pellets are heated and melted. Then the melted plastic can be shaped into different objects.





Plastic can be used to make long-lasting parts for computers, cars, and planes.



Car seats and seatbelts contain plastic.

It can even be used to make plastic bones for people who have been badly injured.



However, not all plastic objects are made to be used again and again.



What kinds of plastic objects do you think might only be used for a short time?