

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

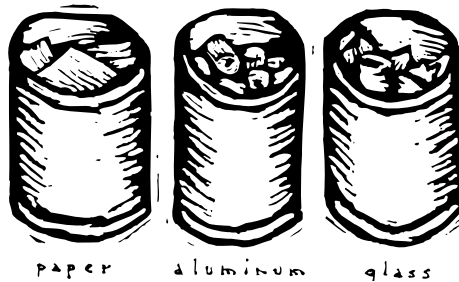
# Recycling by the Numbers

In “So Long to Sorting” (p. 10) you read about a new type of curbside recycling program that allows residents to dispose of all their recyclable materials in one large bin. Every year, the Environmental Protection Agency produces a report about how much *municipal solid waste* (trash) is generated and recycled in the United States. Complete the chart and answer the questions below in complete sentences to find out more about the materials in your garbage can and recycling bins.

## Generation and Recovery of Municipal Solid Waste in 2007 by Type of Material (in millions of tons)

Material	Weight Generated	Weight Recycled	Weight Recycled as a Percent of Weight Generated (Weight Recycled x 100/Weight Generated)
Paper & Paperboard	83.0	45.2	54.5 percent
Glass	13.6	3.2	
Steel	15.6	5.3	
Aluminum	3.6	0.7	
Plastic	30.7	2.1	

SOURCE: Municipal Solid Waste Generation, Recycling and Disposal in the United States: Facts and Figures for 2007, EPA



### Graph it

Create a double bar graph that compares the weight of each material generated with the weight of each material that is recycled. Don't forget to give your graph a descriptive title and label both the x and y axes. You will also need to design a key to show which bars show "Weight Generated" and which bars show "Weight Recycled."

### Analyze it

1. Which material is recycled the most, as a percentage of the weight generated? Which is recycled the least?
2. What reasons can you think of to explain why some materials are recycled at a higher percent?
3. What do you think happens to the materials that are not recycled?
4. In some states, such as California, consumers pay a deposit on recyclable beverage containers. How do you think this affects the percent of the containers that get recycled?