



Academic Activity Chapter 12

Plastics

One of the most versatile materials we have today is plastic. Over the last 200 years chemists, inventors, and chemical engineers have taken the natural product of some plants and created a whole class of materials we call plastics.

Go online to research plastics and answer the following in complete sentences.

- 1.** How many kinds of plastic are there? What are the names of the different types of plastic?

- 2.** The words *poly*, *vinyl*, and *ethylene* are in the names on many plastics. What does each word mean?

- 3.** Create a timeline of developments in plastics. Include at least 10 developments. For each development answer the following questions:

- What is the date of the development?
- Who developed it?
- What was/is the primary use?



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4. In your opinion, why are plastics so widely used today?

5. The recycling process involves breaking products down to base elements for reuse in new products. From a chemical engineer’s standpoint, are plastics a good candidate for recycling? Use the properties of plastics to justify why or why not.
