



# Inspector Blue Mystery

The Case of Converting Contamination Culprits

**Background story for teachers/group leaders**

Inspector Blue is new to (your town/village). The Inspector's mission is to uncover contamination culprits that are ruining your recycling collections. Last year in Fenland, our communities lost £70,000 due to people not recycling correctly, and a further £80,000 of good recycling was just thrown in the waste bin and not recycled at all! All that money could have gone towards helping public services in your area, like building play parks and keeping the streets clean and safe.

Inspector Blue is passionate about recycling, helping old things to become new things and helping to save the planet. The Inspector also knows that recycling can reduce carbon emissions and help wildlife and the environment. Did you know that in the UK over 3 million small mammals die because of litter thrown on the floor!? They get trapped in it or hurt by it. Most of that litter could have been recycled in your blue bins!

Inspector Blue is also aware that recycling can be confusing, and people can make mistakes without realising how bad the consequences can be, for them, and the environment. In Cambridgeshire one of the most common mistakes is people not emptying or rinsing their recycling! Plastic tubs full of left over food or full bottles of drinks or sauces find their way into the recycling and ruin all the clean dry recycling that others have put in! You can't recycle paper or card with food on it, and it's a messy, smelly job to sort out for the people who hand sort your recycling. Ewwwww, it is too awful for the Inspector to think about.

Some people think they are recycling right so never check they are actually doing it right. Different countries recycle differently and technologies change - what couldn't be recycled years ago, now can. People get used to the idea once they learn something that it cannot change. 150 years ago, people used to bury their rubbish in the garden. Now we know that can be dangerous, and we soon run out of room! In time people have learnt to use recyclable materials when creating things and ways to recycle items has improved over time too. Years ago you couldn't recycle plastic bottle lids or even the bottle! Now you can.

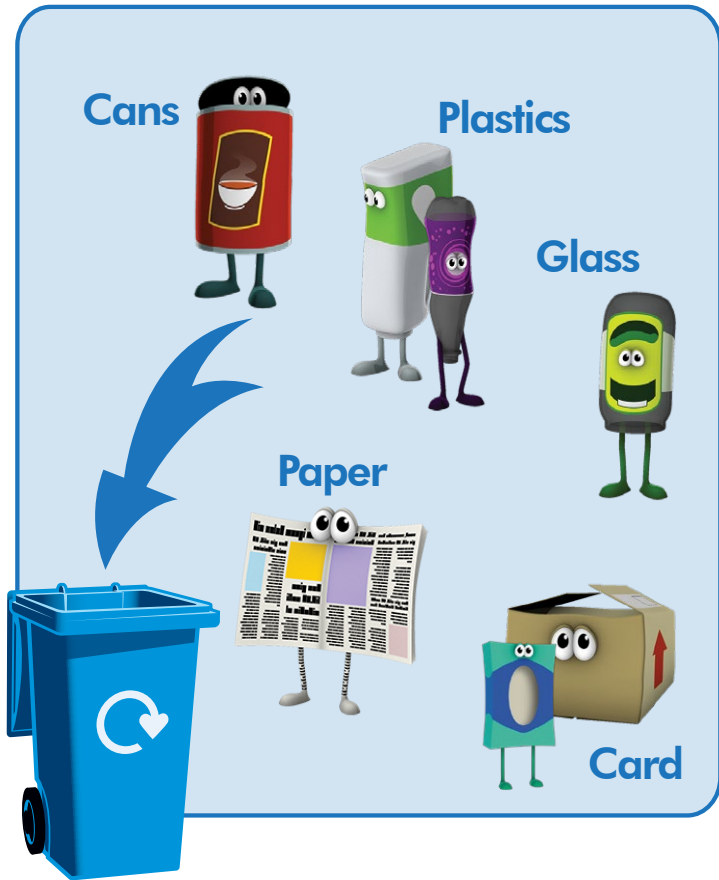
During the Inspector's first week, he had to investigate a fire! Iva Forgottocheck had put batteries in the bins and caused the bin to catch fire. Iva thought it would be OK as they wouldn't work in the remote control anymore, how bad could it be really? Iva Forgottocheck didn't understand the harm a small battery could do in the recycling bin until it caused a fire. Luckily no-one was hurt but Iva Forgottocheck was so upset. Inspector Blue felt he had learnt his lesson! But warned Iva not to forget to check where rubbish should go!

So Inspector Blue made a website for people to see what rubbish should go where. It is in all of the common languages in the area and you can visit anytime at: [www.gettingitsorted.org](http://www.gettingitsorted.org). It is pictorial so if people cannot read very well they can still select an item and it will show what colour bin to put their rubbish in or if they cannot put it in a bin, where they need to take it.

Inspector Blue delivers recycling leaflets to all homes in your area, and he even comes and looks at the recycling bins to see if people are taking notice and thanks those that recycle well! But still mistakes are happening and the recycling is being ruined. The Inspector must find these contamination culprits. Here is a leaflet for each of you to take away and use at home.

Well after a lot of investigations, Inspector Blue has uncovered 3 contamination culprits near our school!

In your groups plan a way to help each of the contamination culprits to stop ruining the recycling! All culprits are unaware they have done anything wrong and the Inspector believes helping this time would be the best option. What could Inspector Blue do to help? Can you help?



**DO!**

**1 DO!**

Rinse cans,  
jars & bottles



**2 DO!**

Empty bottles  
of liquids



**3 DO!**

Wash food  
off tubs, trays  
& containers



**Fenland District Council**

## Need a bin day reminder?

Search for Fenland Bins

Available on the App Store  GET IT ON Google Play 

Check your bin days on the move and get reminders sent to your smart phone

**Shoes & Clothes**



## Entry form:



**Culprit 1.** Ima Careless thinks that others should pick up her litter. Ima Careless thinks they are too important to recycle and do their part to help the environment or community. Ima Careless doesn't recycle a thing and pollutes the environment, throwing litter out of windows, leaving it on park benches, and even throwing litter into the rivers and ditches that flow out to sea!

**What's the Solution?** (draw your solution here):

Explain here why you think this might work:

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**Culprit 2.** Flo Rinsesnaffing thinks washing dirty recycling is a pointless waste of time and a waste of water! Flo often throws tubs and bottles in the recycling that are still full of food! This food waste then gets on the rest of the recycling in the bin and ruins other people's recycling when the recycling bin is loaded onto the refuse truck!

**What's the Solution?** (draw your solution here):

Explain here why you think this might work:

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**Culprit 3.** Max Recyclesalot puts everything in the recycle bin - bags of nappies, food, dog poo, clothes, full jars of pasta sauce! Max believes that everything should be recycled so puts everything in the recycling bin and is contaminating the recycling! Now none of it can be recycled!  
**What's the Solution?** (draw your solution here):

Explain here why you think this might work:

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Please share the ideas with us and post to:  
Getting It Sorted , Fenland District Council, Fenland Hall, County Road, March, PE15 8NQ  
or email: [gettingitsorted@fenland.gov.uk](mailto:gettingitsorted@fenland.gov.uk)

# Teacher/group leader NOTE:

There are no right or wrong answers. Judging of the competition will be based on creativity, practicality (something FDC or the school could do) and positivity of the solution.

Entries may include but not restricted too; make posters, design social media posts, videos, art projects to raise awareness, poems, cartoons, create a new process, write a press release - whatever they think would help solve these very real issues. Inspector Blue may even use them in Fenland to help these contamination culprits! If Inspector Blue thinks the idea is good enough to try, the Inspector will use it! And your school will win a free recycling service for the year, worth up to £660. The children with the best ideas will also win a prize to further their creative thinking. All age groups may enter. You can give a problem to a year group or all problems to each class/pupil.

The winning group/individual will also receive an age appropriate prize too!

**Email, or post entries to enter by the 31st March 2023.**

## Terms & Conditions

Please visit [www.fenland.gov.uk/recyclingcompetition](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/recyclingcompetition)

## To Enter

Please tell us your name(s), your age, which school you are from and your teacher/parent consent.

Email entries to: [gettingitsorted@fenland.gov.uk](mailto:gettingitsorted@fenland.gov.uk)

Post to:

Getting it Sorted Volunteers  
Fenland District Council  
Fenland Hall  
County Road  
March  
PE15 8NQ



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