

ALL ABOUT THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY!

Currently, humans produce **WAY** too much waste. We make products, consume them and then chuck them away, littering our planet in the process. But what if there was a *different* way to do things?

We all need to buy less stuff and get more use out of stuff we already own!

In the **natural world**, there *isn't* any rubbish or landfill. Energy is provided by the **Sun**, one species' **waste** is another's **food** and when things die, their nutrients return to the soil – in a **circle of life**. Unfortunately, humans do things in a more **linear** way (see below)...

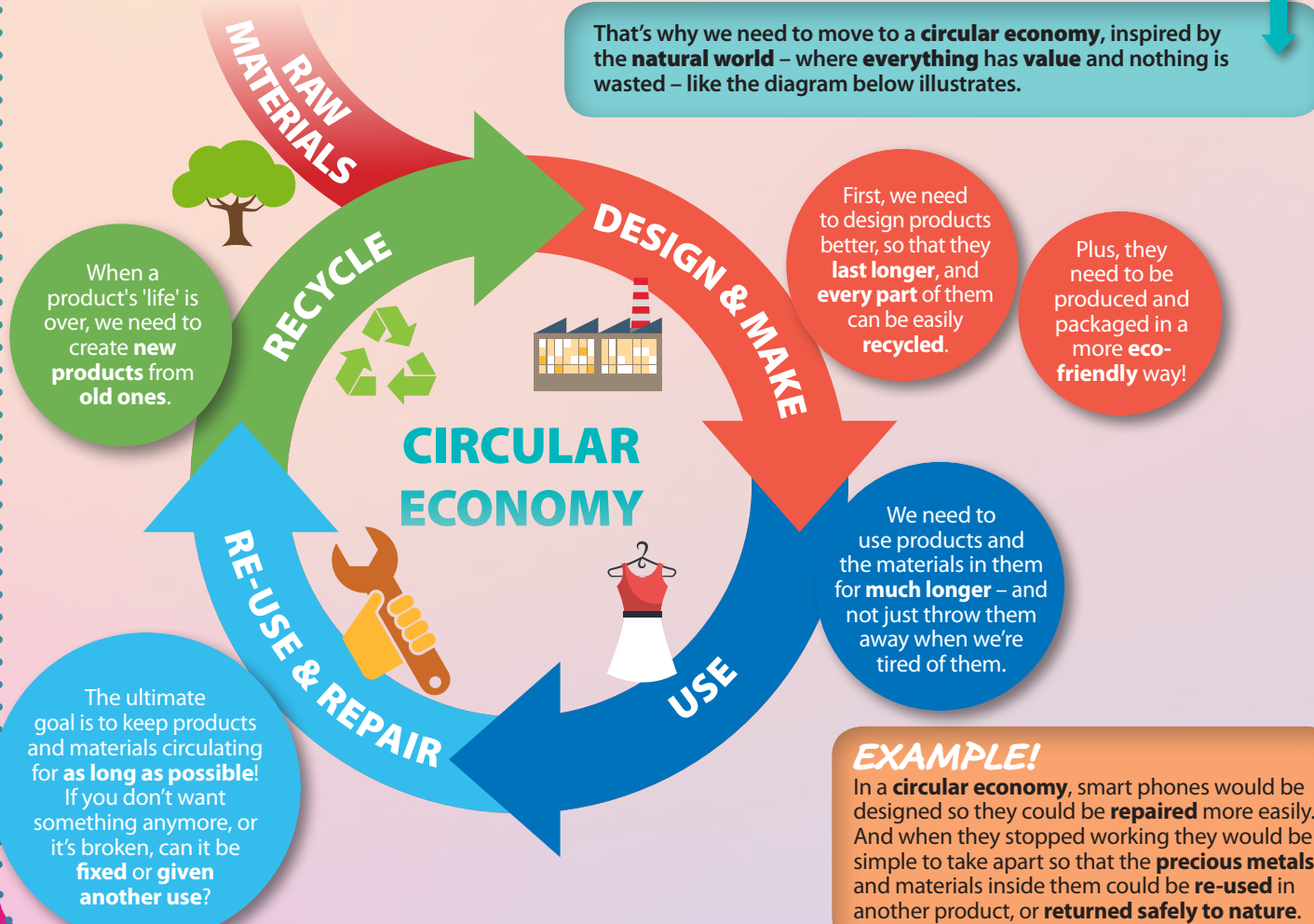
LINEAR ECONOMY



When we want the latest **phone** or **computer**, we tend to **bin the old one**. When our **dishwasher breaks**, we buy a **brand-new one**. But this **wasteful** approach, known as the **linear economy** isn't working! We're running out of **resources** to make new things with, and we're producing too much **toxic waste**.

That's why we need to move to a **circular economy**, inspired by the **natural world** – where **everything** has **value** and nothing is wasted – like the diagram below illustrates.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY



TRUE OR FALSE?

Are these claims about the circular economy real or rubbish? Test your friends and family!

The circular economy is just another name for recycling.

FALSE: It's **much more** than just recycling! It makes sure we use **fewer resources** to make products, and that we use them for as **long as possible**, regenerating them at the end of their life.

Products designed for the circular economy need to be easily dismantled and recycled.

TRUE: We should see old tech as a **valuable resource** of materials!

In a future circular economy we could rent tech instead of owning it.

TRUE: This could be one solution! If we **rented** our washing machines or lighting systems, it would be up to the **maker** to **fix** and **replace parts** so **nothing** would have to be **thrown away**!



If we make less stuff, there will be less work for people.

FALSE: In a circular economy, new jobs could be created in the **recycling** and **remanufacturing** industries!

If there were no humans, then there would be no landfill. Nature is the original circular economy!

TRUE: Humans have invented loads of **brilliant products** – but unfortunately many of them cannot **biodegrade**.



All waste is bad for the environment.

FALSE: Although we should try to reduce our waste, in the **future** rubbish is likely to become one of the **most important** alternative **raw materials**! For example, materials manufacturer **Covestro** is currently researching innovative ways to **repurpose** used **plastics** and **foams**.

The circular economy is really bad for business.

FALSE: Not if **businesses adapt**! For example, they could provide service packages that include **repairs** and **maintenance** for items they make.



Read on for examples of exciting innovations in the circular economy...