Activity: Upcycled T-Shirt Tote Bag

Category: Arts & Crafts

Suggested Grade Level: Grades 7-12

Description: Upcycle an outgrown or unloved t-shirt into a tote bag without any sewing!

Supplies:
- Knit t-shirt
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Pencil or chalk

Instructions:
1. Lay the t-shirt on a flat surface and smooth out any wrinkles with your hands.
2. Cut off the sleeves just inside the sleeve seams.
3. Using your ruler, measure 3 inches from the sleeve seam at the shoulder, across the shoulder seam towards the neckline, and mark with your pencil/chalk.
4. Repeat on the other shoulder of the shirt.
5. Cut a U shape starting at the mark on one shoulder and meeting the mark on the other shoulder. The bottom of the “U” should be about the same depth as where the underarm was cut off for the sleeve.
6. Keeping the front and back of the shirt lined up at the bottom, cut off the bottom hem.
7. Using the ruler, cut 1” wide strips along the bottom of the shirt about 2” tall. Be sure to cut the front and back at the same time, so your ties will be even.
8. Cut the side seams up 2” to make the first and last ties on each side.
9. Flip your t-shirt inside out, so the knotted fringe will be on the inside. If you want your knotted fringe on the outside of the bag, cut it 4-5” and leave the shirt right side out when you tie your fringe.

10. Tie a piece of fringe from the front and back together all along the bottom edge.
11. Once all the fringe pieces are tied, you’ll notice small holes in between the knots. If you want to be sure nothing falls out of your bag through these holes, do a second set of knots using one strip from the knots on each side of the hole. Keep doing this until all the strips have been tied twice.
12. Turn your bag right side out, and you’re finished! Take your bag to the beach, the farmer’s market, or on your next sleepover!

**Takeaways:** Repurposing clothing that’s no longer used, is a great way to keep it out of our landfills and make something useful for free.