Trash Talkin' Activity – Let's Talk Trash Worksheet

I. Prediction

I predict that our class generated _____ of trash this week. I think _____% of it will be reusable, _____% of it will be recyclable, and _____% of it will be non-recyclable.

Prediction:

Item	MASS OF TRASH			
	Re-usable	**Recyclable**	**Non-recyclable**	**Total**
Food				
Paper				
Plastic				
Metal				
Glass				
Misc.				
Total				

II. Analysis

How much total garbage did your class create this week? _____

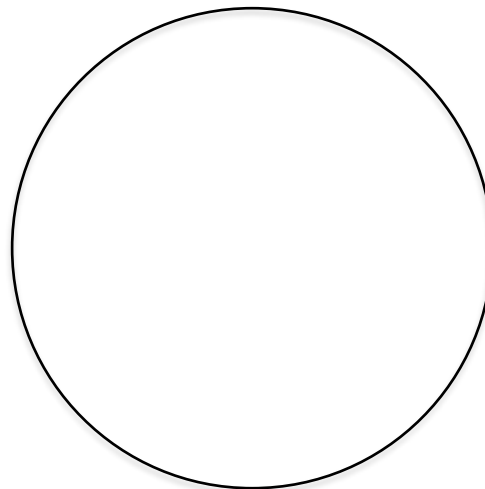Calculate the percents in each category and record them in the table below.

Example

Your class produced 19 pounds of trash this week. Of this, 2.5 pounds was re-usable paper.

$2.5 \div 19 \times 100 = 13.2\%$ of the trash was re-usable paper.

Item	PERCENT OF TOTAL MASS			
	Re-usable	**Recyclable**	**Non-recyclable**	**Total**
Food				
Paper				
Plastic				
Metal				
Glass				
Misc.				
Total				**100%**

Create a pie chart of these results.

III. Discussion Questions

1. Which of the categories has the most re-usable items (by mass)? _____

   Why do you think this is? _____

   _____

   _____

2. Which of the categories has the most recyclable items (by mass)? _____

   Why do you think this is? _____

   _____

   _____

3. Which of the categories has the most non-recyclable items (by mass)? _____

   Why do you think this is? _____

   _____

   _____

4. Was your prediction for the total amount of trash close to correct? _____

   Are you surprised by how much trash your class generated? Explain why or why not.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. How many classes of students are there in your school? _____

   How much trash do the classrooms in your school generate every week? _____
   (Assume all the classes generate about as much trash as yours does and show your work
   below.)

IV. Conclusion

Make some suggestions for that you think happens to the waste from your school each week. (Do not forget that in addition to the classroom waste, there is waste from the school office, the restrooms, the lunch room, special activity rooms, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

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_____

_____

_____

Based on the results from this investigation, suggest some ways that your classroom can reduce its solid waste. How might an engineer work to reduce solid waste?

_____

_____

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