



Core units: Exemplars – Year 9
Illustration 4: E-Waste

E-waste Guiyu: An Internet trail

The Chinese city of Guiyu has linked its entire future to the disposal of e-waste. It imports waste products from around the world and then recycles them. While this sounds like an admirable goal, the reality is that the city is woefully unable to cope with the volume of e-waste it receives and has too few safe methods of working. The sheer amount of e-waste pouring in from countries pleased to be rid of it is overwhelming. This concentration of e-waste has produced local environmental problems in Guiyu.

A big question for the rest of the world is whether Guiyu should be allowed to process e-waste, or whether this should really be the responsibility of those who bought the electronic devices.

The activities below will help you reflect on and understand more about e-waste in Guiyu.

1. Reviewing information about Guiyu

Three sources are provided below that will give you information about Guiyu's e-waste business. They are a photographic essay, a film clip and a short news article. These sources all look at the situation in Guiyu and the environmental consequences of consumption decisions taken by people around the world.

Review the resources, and make brief notes on each one under the headings:

- The size and nature of the problem in Guiyu.
- The specific hazards that take place in Guiyu.
- What needs to be done to fix Guiyu.

Source 1: A Time Magazine photographic essay, **China's electronic waste village** <http://www.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,1870162_1822148,00.html>.

Source 2: A Chinese television news report (in English) on CNC World, **Guiyu: E-wasteland of the world** <http://www.cncworld.tv/news/v_show/25325_Guiyu:_E-wasteland_of_the_world.shtml>.

Source 3: A news article from the British Broadcasting Corporation, **Unused e-waste discarded in China raises questions** <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-17782718>>.

You should now have a good idea of the situation in Guiyu.

2. Writing an article

Read the Wikipedia entry on **Guiyu** <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guiyu_%28town%29>.

Then, using the information obtained from Sources 1–3 (above), write an article or statement entitled 'Eye witness accounts of Guiyu'.

Make it look like a genuine, edited Wikipedia article. Remember to use footnotes and indicate your sources.