



WHERE DO APPLES GO?

a story about the nature of materials

Student's Handout



The TerraCycle Curriculum Series was co-created by The Cloud Institute for Sustainability Education and Learner-Centered Initiatives.

A cartoon illustration of a girl with purple hair in pigtails, wearing a purple dress, holding a red apple. She is standing on a green hill under a blue sky with light blue clouds.

THIS APPLE
LOOKS DELICIOUS

Maria likes apples.

A cartoon illustration of the same girl from the first panel, now holding a blue granola bar. She is standing on a green hill under a blue sky with light blue clouds.

YUMMMMMMM...
GRANOLA!

A girl with purple hair in pigtails, wearing a purple dress, stands on a green hill. A speech bubble next to her says "I'M DONE EATING THIS". To her right, an apple core lies on the grass. The background features light blue clouds.

I'M DONE EATING THIS

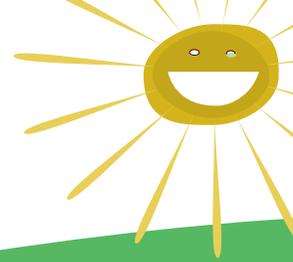
When Maria was finished with her apple, she threw it on the ground.

The same girl in a purple dress stands on a green hill. A speech bubble next to her says "I FINISHED THE GRANOLA BAR.". To her right, a blue wrapper with the word "GRANOLA" on it lies on the grass. The background features light blue clouds.

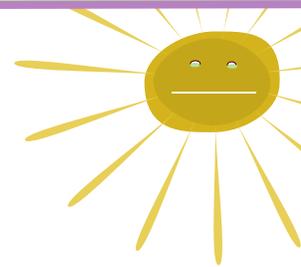
I FINISHED THE GRANOLA BAR.

When she finished eating her granola bar, she threw the wrapper on the ground, too.

ONE MONTH PASSED...



THEN ANOTHER...



AND ANOTHER...



What was happening to the apple? It was disappearing!
But the granola wrapper was still there.



Maria was confused.
She decided to ask her grandmother about this.
Grandmother knew everything!
She would know where the apple was.

"I AM WONDERING WHY YOU THINK IT IS OKAY TO JUST THROW SOMETHING ON THE GROUND WHEN YOU DON'T WANT IT ANYMORE," GRANDMOTHER SCOLDED GENTLY. "YOU KNOW BETTER THAN THAT."

MARIA LOOKED AT THE FLOOR AND SQUIRMED A LITTLE. "I KNOW. I'M SORRY."

"SO... YOU THINK YOUR APPLE HAS DISAPPEARED?" ASKED GRANDMOTHER.

"WELL, JUST WAIT AND WATCH. YOU'LL SEE THAT IT HAS NOT."



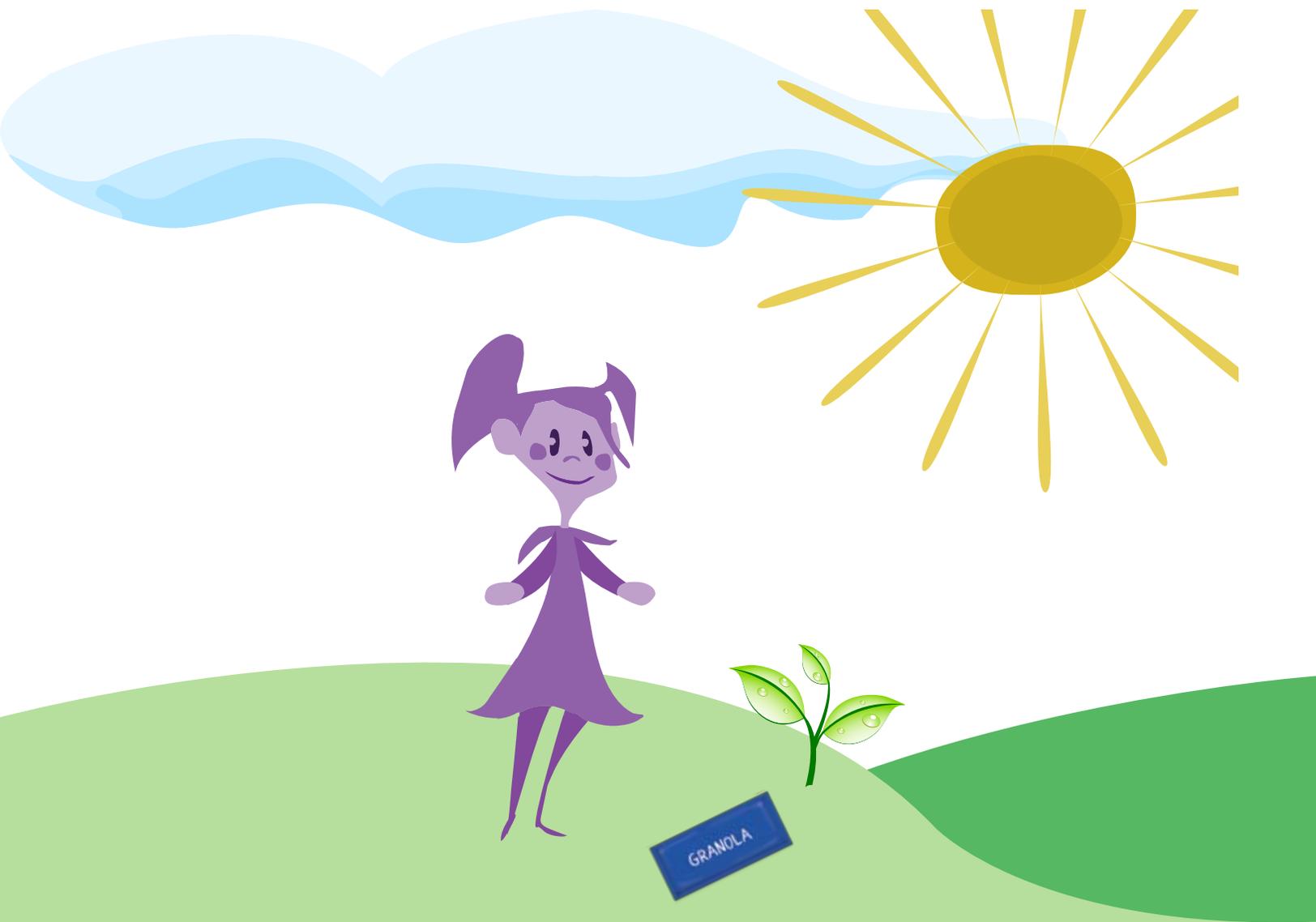
"YOUR APPLE WAS MADE BY NATURE. WHEN YOU THREW YOUR APPLE ON THE GROUND, YOU THOUGHT SOMEONE WOULD TAKE CARE OF IT FOR YOU."

"MAYBE...BUT I DON'T REALLY THINK I WAS THINKING ABOUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN AT ALL," MARIA SAID SERIOUSLY.

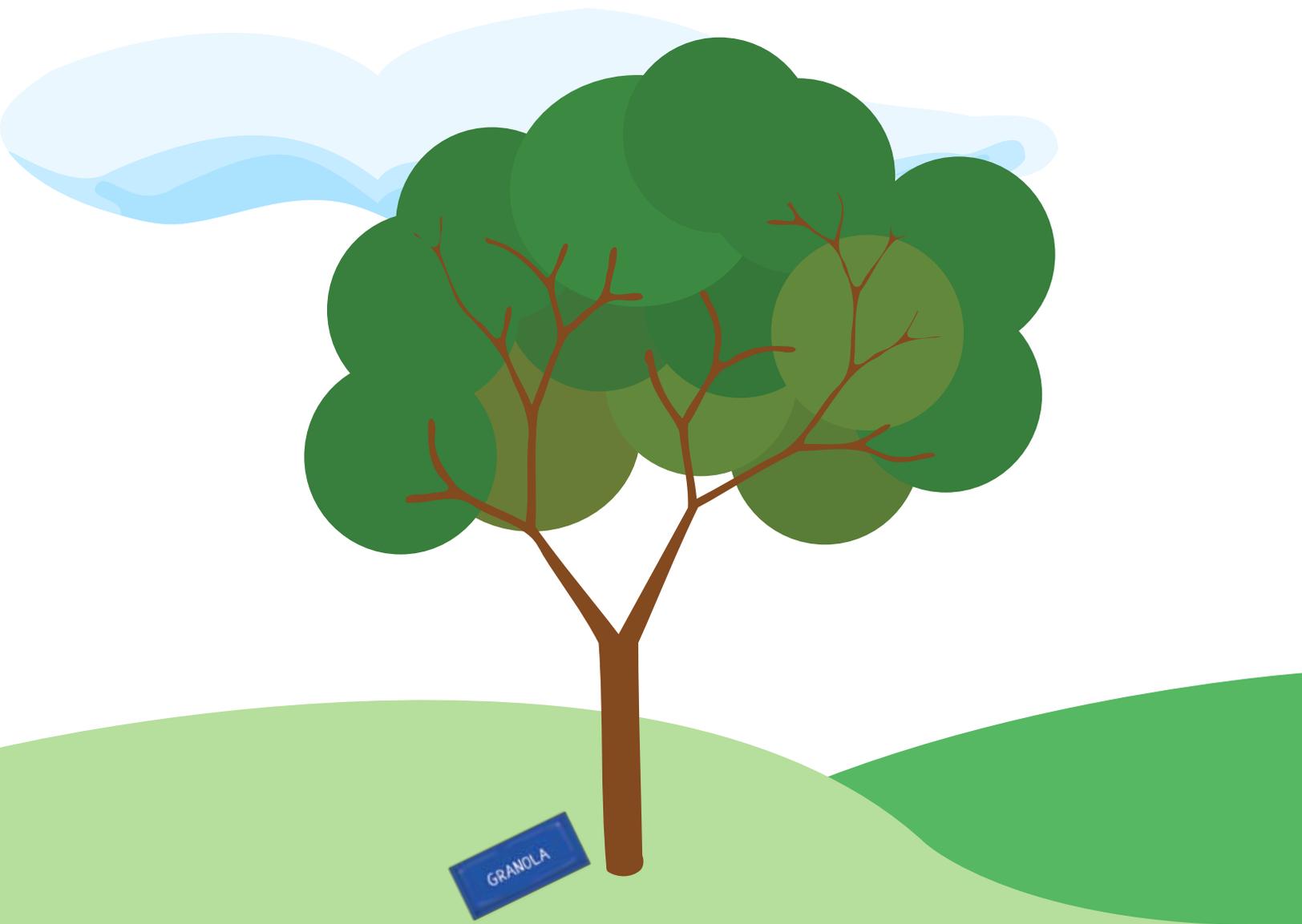
"WELL," GRANDMOTHER CONTINUED, "NATURE DOESN'T LET ANYTHING IT MAKES GO TO WASTE. NATURE HAS USED YOUR OLD APPLE TO MAKE SOMETHING NEW. WATCH CAREFULLY AND YOU WILL SEE SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL COME FROM WHAT YOU THOUGHT HAD NO MORE USE."

"YOUR GRANOLA WRAPPER IS VERY DIFFERENT, THOUGH. WATCH. YOU WILL SEE."



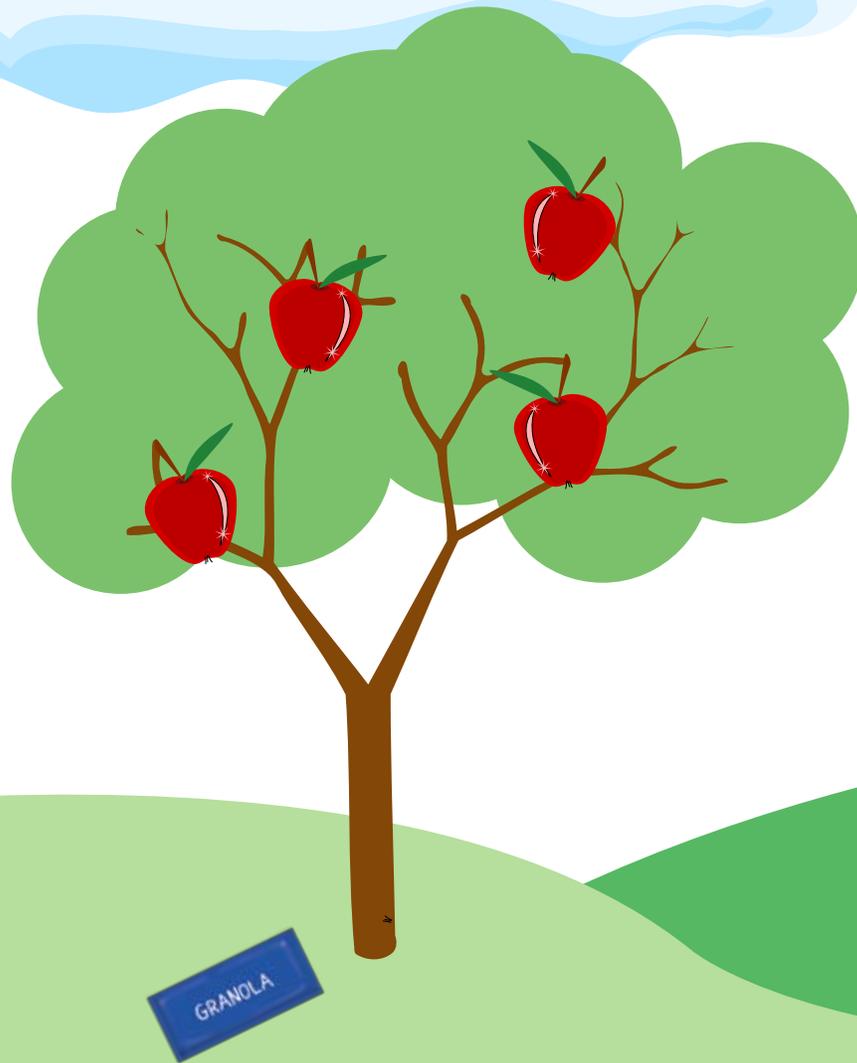


Soon after her talk with grandmother, Maria saw a little, green plant push up out of the ground where she had tossed her apple - and right next to the granola wrapper that was still there.



The tiny plant grew into a beautiful tree - right next to the granola wrapper that was **STILL** there.

One day, when Maria looked outside, she saw that the tree was full of lots of tiny...APPLES! So that was what Grandmother had meant about Nature using her old apple. Nature had used it to make new apples!



But her granola wrapper was still there, right where she dropped it. Why hadn't Nature made something out of that?

"GRANDMOTHER WHY DID NATURE MAKE SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL OUT OF THE APPLE, BUT NOT OUT OF MY GRANOLA WRAPPER?"

"WELL, LET'S THINK ABOUT IT. WHO MADE THE APPLE?" GRANDMOTHER ASKED.

"NATURE," REPLIED MARIA.

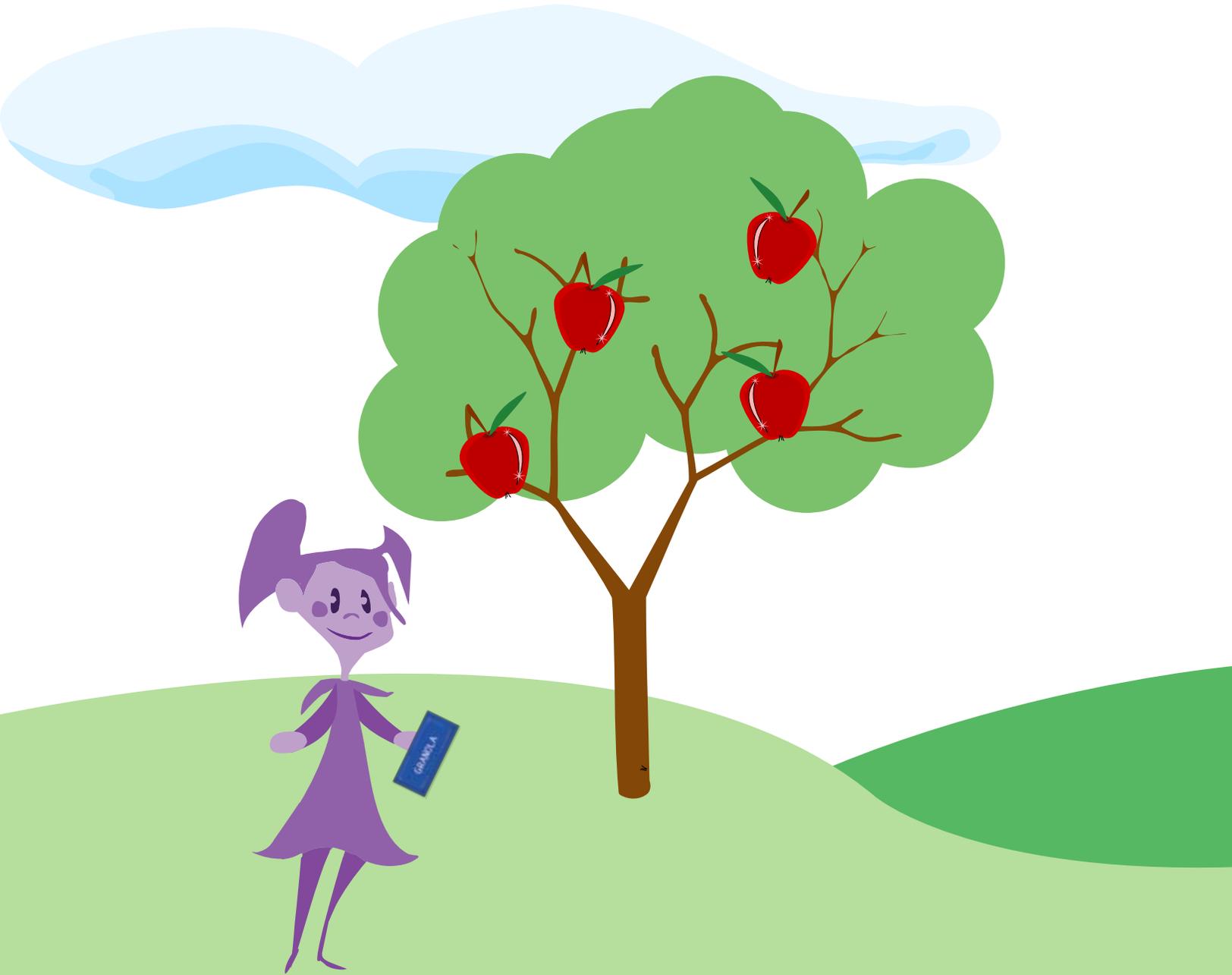
"AND WHO MADE THE GRANOLA WRAPPER?" ASKED GRANDMOTHER.

"UMMMM...PEOPLE?" ANSWERED MARIA.



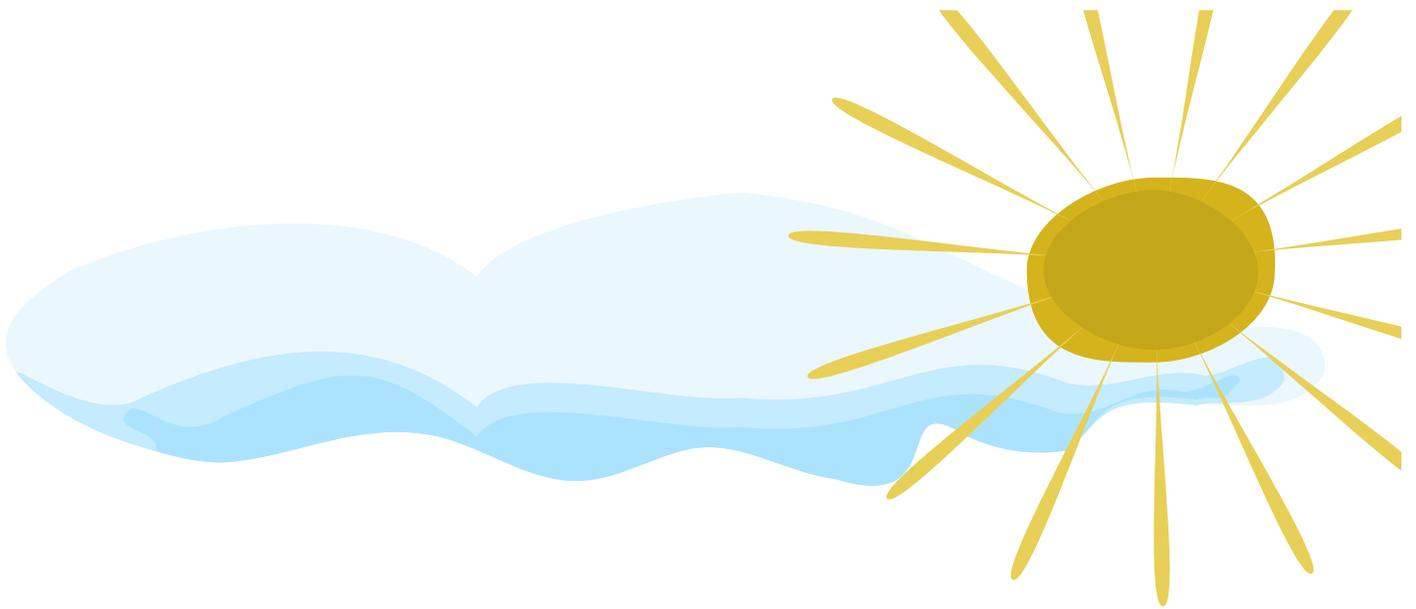
"SO, IF NATURE TAKES CARE OF WHAT NATURE MAKES, WHO SHOULD TAKE CARE OF WHAT PEOPLE MAKE?" GRANDMOTHER SAID SOFTLY.

"PEOPLE!" MARIA GASPED AND RAN OUT OF THE ROOM INTO THE BACKYARD.



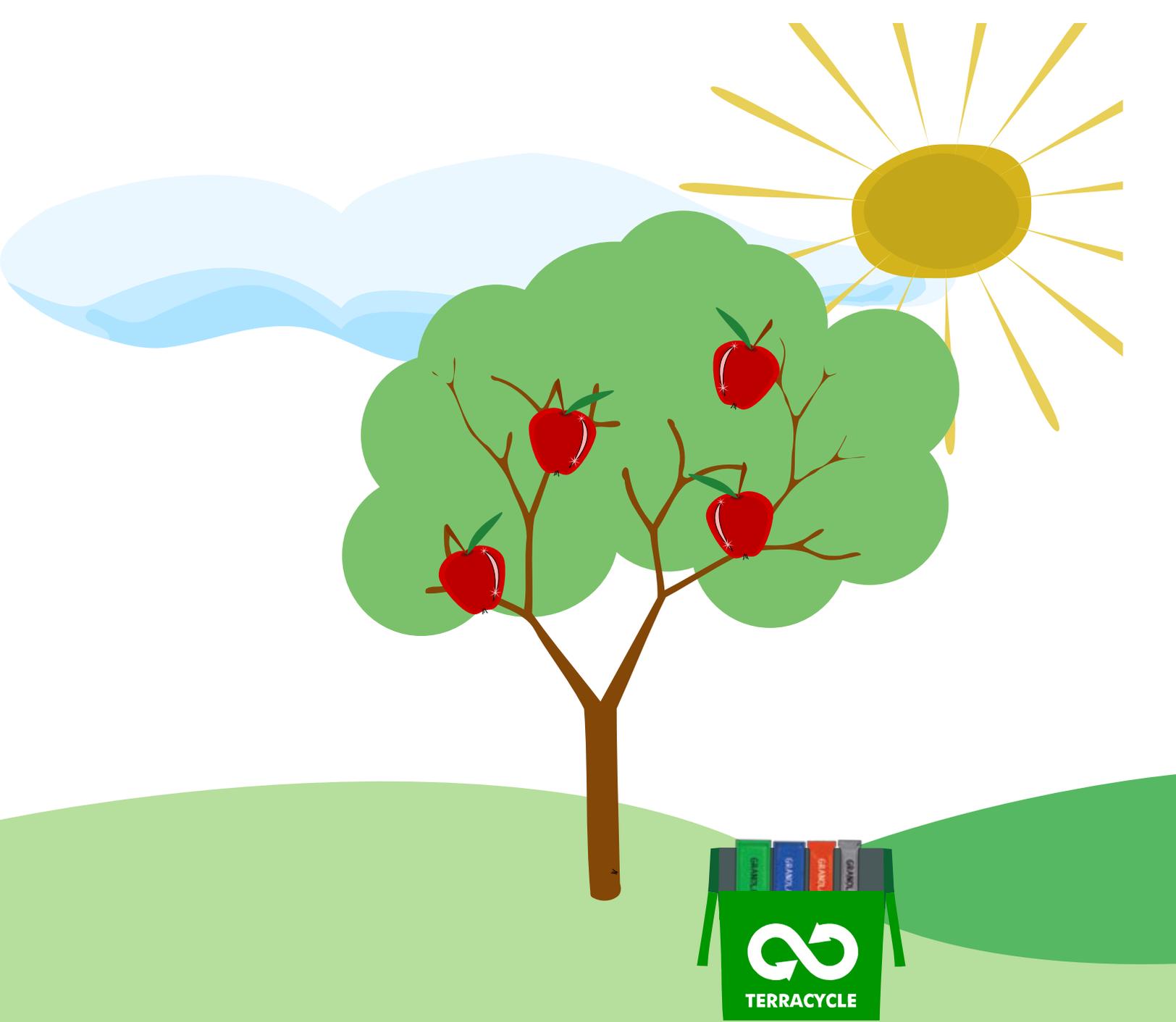
She quickly picked up the granola wrapper, but then stopped. Now what? Nature had made a tree from her old apple. What could she do with a granola wrapper?

Maria thought long and hard. Then she remembered something that made her smile. She knew what to do!



Maria called her friends and told them about her apple and the tree and how Nature couldn't take care of her granola wrapper. She told them about something her teacher had said about a company that takes things like granola wrappers and uses them to make beautiful things that kids can use, almost just like Nature does.

They decided to save all of their granola wrappers and send them to this company.



And they put the first collection bin...

...right next to the apple tree!