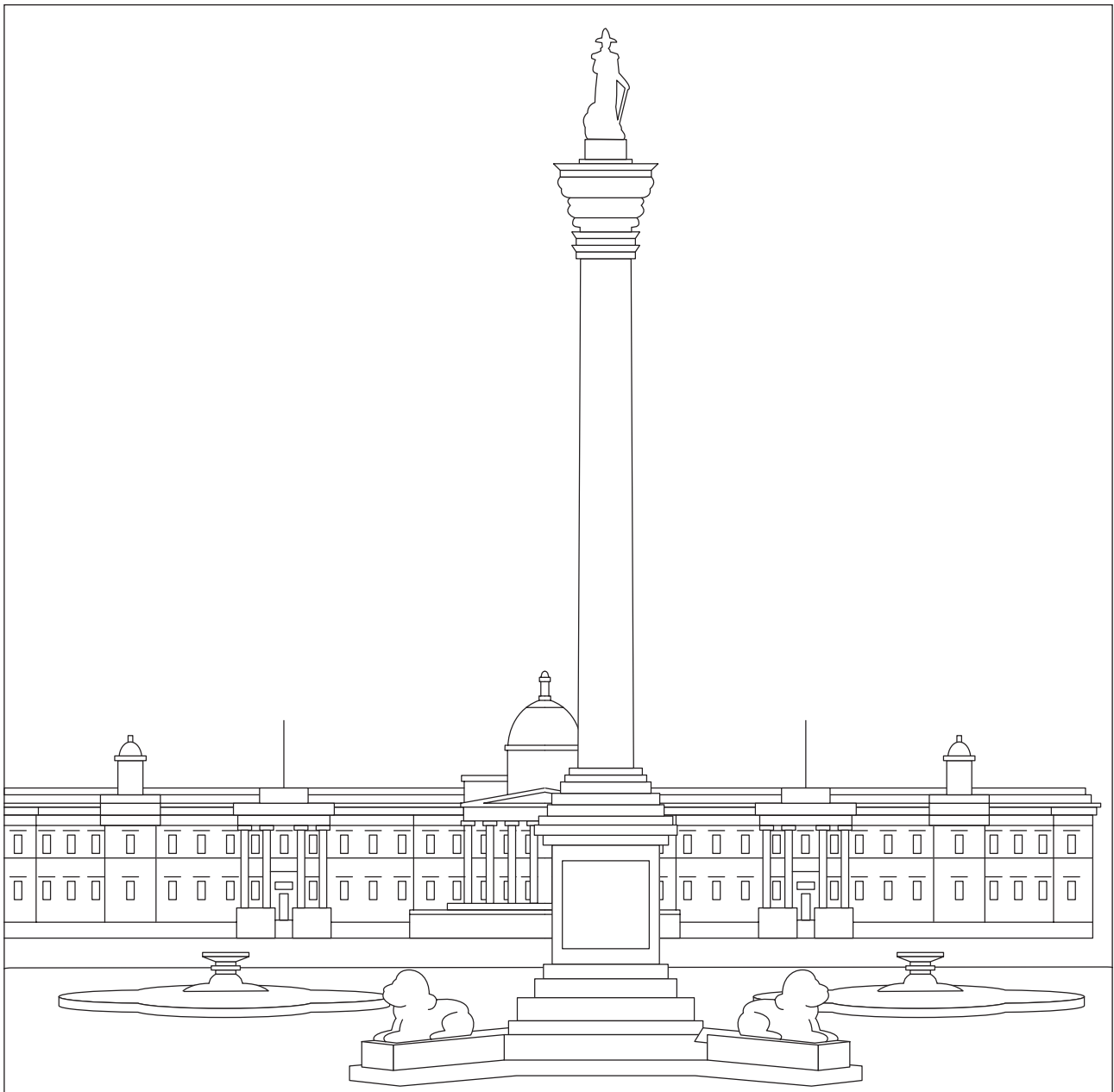


The waste we create: How much?

Every day we throw away enough rubbish to fill Trafalgar Square in London to the height of Nelson's Column.

The diagram below shows Trafalgar Square. Draw in rubbish until it is filled to the height of Nelson's Column.



Answers

This depends on the drawing skills of the students.

Notes

The purpose of this activity is to take a very familiar and large open space and then show the magnitude of our rubbish problem (but note this does not include commercial rubbish).

From this, students can understand a number of things:

- They can get a sense of the magnitude of the problem on a meaningful scale.
- They can focus on the whole business of rubbish and how to cart it away.
- They can imagine the amount of landfill that needs to be found in order to get rid of it.

It is important to note that the volume of rubbish depends on how much it has been compressed, so the idea of filling Trafalgar Square is only intended to give an idea of the scale of the problem. But students can immediately understand the sense in compressing rubbish before it is transported – and so they can see the purpose of the squashing ram in the back of dustcarts (link to technology) and they could see the sense in trying to reuse some of it.

This activity sets the scene for more detailed consideration in subsequent worksheets.