

## Talking Trash: The Life of Garbage

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### **Purpose of Book-talk**

Intended to be both humorous and informative, this book talk will introduce children to the wonderful world of trash. Fiction books will be used to entertain and get readers interested in the topic, and non-fiction books will be used to inform readers with their more serious approach. An important diversion is taken to discuss recycling.

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### **Audience and Location**

This book talk will be done in a public library, and is aimed toward children in preschool through second grade. Though this talk is aimed at children, parents will be encouraged to attend with children who are not yet wholly independent readers. The talk includes both books that can be used by parents reading to their child as well as books for beginning and independent readers.

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### **Organizational Pattern**

The first books presented will be humorous stories about trash and what happens when it leaves (or does not leave!) the home. These books will be used to get children interested and excited about a topic as gross as garbage. From there we will explore the trash collection process through a series of entertaining stories about the equipment and personnel who are involved in garbage removal. Once informed of the problem through entertainment, readers will be shown non-fiction works that further discuss what happens to trash and the recycling process.

The following books will be used for this book talk:

Bourgeois, Paulette (2004) "Garbage Collectors" Tonawanda, NY: Kids Can Press.

McMullan, Kate (2002) "I Stink!" New York: Joanne Cotler Books.

Maass, Robert (2000) "Garbage" New York: Henry Holt.

Sensel, Joni (2000) "The Garbage Monster" Enumclaw, WA: Dream Factory Books.

Showers, Paul; illustrated by Randy Chewning (1994) "Where Does the Garbage Go?" Revised Edition. New York: Harper Collins Publisher.

Testa, Fulvio (2001) "Too Much Garbage" New York: North-South Books.

Zimmerman, Andrea Griffing (1999) "Trashy Town" New York: Harper Collins  
Publisher.

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## Script for Book-talk

### Introduction

Hello everybody! My name is Corrine and today we're going to talk about something really gross – garbage. Do you know where garbage comes from? (wait for responses) That's good! It can come from leftover food, things that have been used and empty containers. You know what I always wondered? What happens to all that trash? The books we're going to talk about today are going to answer that question for us, and hopefully make you more aware of what you're throwing into the garbage can. But first, we have to get that rotten trash out of the house! Sometimes moms, dads, and older brothers and sisters are the ones who take out the trash, but it's possible that some of you are already taking out the trash yourselves.

### Transition

How many of you are already taking out the garbage? (wait for children to raise hands) It's definitely a smelly chore! I know there are times when I don't even want to

touch the garbage, but I'd like to tell you about Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout, a little girl who put off taking out the garbage until it was a little too late... (read "Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout" by Shel Silverstein)

#### Transition

Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout isn't the only child who didn't want to take out the garbage. (hold up "The Garbage Monster") In this story, Jo didn't take out the trash, so it took her out! (read pages 7 through 11). I don't want to spoil the ending for you, but Jo came out far better than Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout, and now as soon as it is time to take out the trash, Jo takes out the trash! I'll also let you in on a little secret; this book has a hidden message in it. So if you want to know the hidden message, you'll have to read the whole thing.

#### Transition

Do any of you know what happens to garbage after it out of the house? (ask those who answered yes to tell us what happens.) It can be different depending on where you live, but at my house some people wearing orange vests like this one (put on orange vest) come by in a big dumpster truck like this (hold up toy dumpster truck) and they pick up our garbage bags and throw them in the back of the truck.

If you've never seen the garbage truck go by, it might be that it comes while you are still asleep. "I Stink!" (hold up book) is the story of the garbage truck that comes in

the middle of the night to eat your trash. This garbage truck is hungry, and one of his favorite things to eat is Alphabet Soup. Let's check out his recipe for Alphabet Soup... (read the recipe from the book) How many of you would want a bowl of his alphabet soup? Neither would I! Without the garbage truck coming by to eat our trash, it would just be lying around in a big heap.

#### Transition

But the garbage truck can't do all that work by itself. The people who drive the truck play an important part in gathering up the garbage. In "Trashy Town" we are told the story of Mr. Gilly, the man responsible for cleaning up all the garbage in Trashy Town. (read pages 3 through 6).

#### Transition

Mr. Gilly is probably awfully dirty at the end of the day. Do you think cleaning up all that garbage is a smelly job? In this story (hold up "Garbage Collectors") Sam and Mabel are the garbage collectors, and the children in the story went ahead and asked whether or not he thought the job was stinky. Let's see what Sam had to say about that: (read pages 7 through 11, ending after "... 500 houses today")Five hundred houses! That's an awful lot of houses to visit in one day! It's a good thing garbage collectors come by to take our garbage away.

## Transition

Unfortunately, not all the garbage is taken away by the garbage collectors. For the garbage collectors to take the trash, it first has to make it to the garbage cans and dumpsters. Sometimes people are lazy and throw their garbage out the car window or on the ground instead of a garbage can. In "Too Much Garbage" (hold up book) Tony and Bill are doing the right thing by taking their trash bags to the curb, but not everyone has been as good as Tony and Bill. People have been tossing garbage all around, and everywhere they look they see garbage. (read pages 12 through 19) It seems that Bill and Tony have found their way to the dump! Imagine all that garbage!

## Transition

Did you know that not all of the garbage goes to the dump? Can you think of any other places that garbage might go? (wait for responses) So far we've talked about what happens when you take the trash out (and what happens when you don't!), and we know that the garbage collectors come around with the dumpster truck and pick up the trash, but we've not really talked about where the truck takes all that trash. This book (hold up "Where Does the Garbage Go?") answer our question "Where Does the Garbage Go?" One place is indeed the dump, but much more trash gets buried at landfills or burned up in incinerators. But we're running out of room for landfills, and incinerators can put bad things into the air. The problem is that we are creating too much trash. Does anyone know how we can send less trash to the

landfills and incinerators? (wait for responses) One way is through recycling. Do any of you know what recycling means? (wait for responses) Instead of throwing some things away, they can be broken apart and made into something new – that's recycling. Does anyone here already recycle? Let's look at how some things are recycled and made into new things: (read pages 24 through 27, being sure to talk the children through the illustrations).

### Transition

I want to show you one more book today. All the books that we've looked at have given you a pretty good idea of what a landfill looks like, but they've all just been drawings. I want to show you what it really looks like (open "Garbage" to page 7). In this book, there are photographs that show you what happens to all the garbage. When you get a chance to look up close, you can see some items that people use every day; tires, coca-cola cans, and water bottles. Sadly, these items could have been recycled into new things if only someone had not thrown them away. There are a lot more pictures in this book, and it does a great job explaining what happens at the landfill, as well as incinerators.

### Conclusion

Recycling is one way to reduce the amount of garbage going to landfills, but there are other ways to do this as well. One way is to find a new use for old items. For example,

I made this bird feeder out of an old milk jug (hold up craft). This way, I can feed the birds and not have to worry about my trash going to a landfill. Your mom and dad could help you make your own bird feeder, and I'll give you directions to take home. I want to thank you for coming by today. I hope that you had fun learning all about garbage. I have these and a few other books with me. If you'd like to finish reading some of the stories, you're welcome to take them home with you. I can also help you find more books about garbage and recycling if you would like. Again, thank you for coming, and I hope that you all start recycling really soon!