

TEACHERS ACTIVITIES**Theme:**

Just because something is old, doesn't mean it's junk. . .take another look. What one person calls junk, another might call treasure.

Topics For Discussion:

Discuss the attitude of the townspeople toward Mr. Crampton. Why did they feel this way? Ask the students what they would do to change the town's perception of Mr. Crampton if they were in Theodora's place. Include in the discussion how sometimes misunderstandings arise or we may have a negative opinion of someone when in reality we don't know that person very well.



In the program, LeVar says that "one person's trash is another person's treasure." Discuss the meaning of this statement. Ask students if they have ever experienced finding a real treasure (to them) that someone else had discarded.



Theodora made a wonderful discovery (and a new friend!) while she was visiting her Aunt Mazel. Invite students to share stories of special times, adventures, discoveries, or friends that they experienced while visiting relatives.



Ask students if any of them have been to a garage or yard sale, rummage sale, flea market, etc. What takes place at these events? What is a "bargain?"

Curriculum Extension Activities:

Invite students to bring in a book that is an old favorite—one that was perhaps read to them many times when they were younger. Set up a display of these books in the classroom and title it "Old Friends." Provide the opportunity for students to tell why the book is a particular favorite.



Have students make posters about the importance of recycling and post them around the school building. Check with local businesses to see if they would be willing to display the posters as well.

Designate a crate or tub in the classroom as a place where students can place a book that has already been read aloud to the class, but one they would like to hear again. From time to time, revisit one of these books and reminisce about why it is special.



Make videotapes of the students reviewing books, similar to the way it is done on **Reading Rainbow**. Watch the book review segments of several programs. Discuss with students what they notice about how the children on the programs do their reviews (e.g., the reviews are short, they tell a bit about the story, they generally recommend the book in some way, they use expressive voices, etc.). Have students plan and rehearse their book reviews before taping. Share the tape with other classrooms as a means of having the students recommend books to their peers.



Discuss with students some of the things that they or members of their family collect. With parent permission, invite students to bring samples of their collections to school. In the days before they start sharing their collections, brainstorm a list of questions the class can ask the person who has the collection (e.g., "How did you get started on your collection?", "What is the most unique or unusual piece you have?", "How do you display or care for your collection?"). Extend the invitation to family members, school personnel, or friends who have unique collections to come to the classroom with samples as well.



Discuss recycling with students. Brainstorm a list of the types of things their families recycle. Write these items across the top of a chart. Have students write their names under each item they recycle. Use this chart as a graph to discuss which types of items are recycled "more than" or "less than" others. Extend this math talk to include statements of quantity, such as "Seven more families recycle aluminum cans than recycle glass containers."



Invite students to bring in an old, much-loved toy or some photographs showing them when they were younger and display these items in the classroom. Provide time for them to tell about what they brought in. Allow the owners to set the guidelines for handling the items.

Using an assortment of materials (boxes of all sizes and shapes, cardboard rolls, container lids, film canisters, popsicle sticks, cans, paper plates, wood scraps, egg cartons, string, plastic bottles, etc.), have small groups of students “invent” something. They need to name it, tell its purpose, and explain how it works. Encourage them to use their imaginations. (Revisit the segment of the program in which LeVar demonstrates the chain reaction aspect of his invention.)

SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:

RAGSALE

by Artie Ann Bates, illus. by Jeff Chapman-Crane (Houghton Mifflin)

OLD HENRY

by Joan Blos, illus. by Stephen Gammell (Morrow)

JUNK PILE!

by Lady Borton, illus. by Kimberly Bulcken Root (Philomel)

JOSEPHINA, THE GREAT COLLECTOR

by Diana Engel (Morrow)

CROSBY

by Dennis Haseley, illus. by Jonathan Green (Harcourt Brace)

ARTHUR'S HONEY BEAR

by Lillian Hoban (HarperCollins)

THE PUDDLE PAIL

by Elisa Kleven (Dutton)

JET BLACK PICK-UP TRUCK

by Patricia Lakin, illus. by Rosekrans Hoffman (Orchard)

THE OLD RED ROCKING CHAIR

by Phyllis Root, illus. by John Sandford (Little, Brown)

YARD SALE
by James Stevenson (Greenwillow)

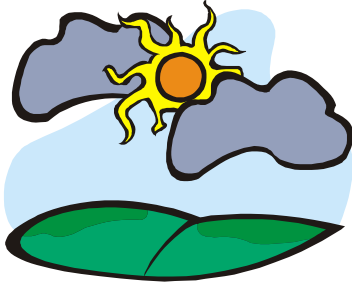
THE PAPER BAG PRINCE
by Colin Thompson (Alfred A. Knopf)

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Gotta Lotta Rot



Key Words: garbage, decomposition

Concept: Organic materials are naturally recycled into soil.

Many items in a junkyard can be recycled. They can be changed into works of art, new products, or just repaired and used again. The natural environment is the ultimate recycling center. Water, air, soil, plants and animals are all naturally recycled.

Unfortunately, this natural system doesn't work with many materials made by people. Items like plastic milk cartons and styrofoam cups can take hundreds or even thousands of years to biodegrade in a landfill. Even natural items like orange peels take a lot longer to rot than we think. Experiment to see which items of garbage decay fairly quickly and which do not.

Materials: Several 2-liter soda bottles that have been cleaned and the labels removed, large spoons, soil, water, newspapers, writing paper, pencils, small samples of garbage to be decomposed including paper, plastic, cardboard, styrofoam, and food scraps (not dairy or meat).

1. Using a pair of large scissors, cut the top portion off the soda bottles. Remove and discard the lids.
2. Have small groups of students each fill the bottom portion of a soda bottle with about 2" of soil. Next have them place a layer of 6 or 7 small (about an inch or two in diameter) samples of lunch leftovers (no meat or dairy, it is too smelly) or other small items of garbage in the bottle. Have them place as many of the items as they can against the sides of the bottle so they can be seen as they rot. Then have them make a list of the samples and draw a diagram showing where they placed each. Have students cover the samples with another layer of soil and then dampen the soil by sprinkling water in the bottle.
3. Refit the top portion of the bottle to the bottom portion and tape the two together. Set the bottles in a cool, dark location. Ask students to predict which of the samples will be completely decomposed in four weeks and have them mark their predictions on their list.
4. Once or twice a week for the next four weeks, have students check their bottles. Ask them to describe the appearance of the contents of the bottle. How can they tell if any of the samples are rotting? Have students record their observations in a log. Remind them to dampen the soil if it appears dry.
5. After four weeks, have students dump the contents of their bottle out onto newspaper. Have them use a spoon to examine the samples and record the condition of each sample in their logs.

6. Discuss the findings and rank the samples from those that showed the greatest signs of decay down to the samples that showed the least. Ask students to identify characteristics of those that decayed quickly and those that did not.

Stay Away From The Trash Can

Key Words: garbage reduction, recycling, reuse, measurement, weight

Concept: The amount of garbage thrown away each day can be reduced.

Learn about trash by taking a closer look at the classroom trash can.

Materials: Large trash bags, plastic gloves, bathroom scale, trash can, chart paper, markers.

1. At the end of the school day have students collect the trash from their classroom in a large plastic trash bag(s).
2. Have students weigh the trash using a bathroom scale. One way to do this is to have a student stand on the scale holding the bag of trash, then have the same student stand on the scale without the bag. Subtract the difference between the two weights and record the weight of the bag on a chart.
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 each day for a week. Then have students add up the total weight of their classroom trash for the entire week.
4. Discuss the three R's of waste reduction (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle), then have students brainstorm a list of ways that they can decrease the weight of their classroom trash. Encourage them to make suggestions that they can do themselves and are workable over a long period of time (e.g. using both sides of a sheet of paper, using only single paper towels, collecting small scraps of paper for art projects). Decide on a garbage reduction plan by choosing the brainstorming ideas they can start doing right away. Make a separate list of ideas that will take some additional planning or preparation to begin but are worth pursuing (e.g. taking paper to a recycling center). Help them set a reasonable goal for the amount of trash they think they can decrease the next week.



5. During the next week, have students implement their garbage reduction plan. At the end of each day have students collect and weigh the classroom garbage. At the end of the week, add up the total amount and compare it to the amount for the past week. If students met their goal, help them plan a trashless celebration. If not, help them review what might have happened and assist them in revising their plan. Then try it again.

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