

# Family Day Discussion Guides

## “Michael Recycle”

by Ellie Bethel  
Juvenile Easy Bethel



**As you read these books with your child, use the following questions to stir their curiosity and get them involved with the story. All of the books in this guide are available at the San Antonio Public Library. Check them out!**

### Before the Reading

This book is all about recycling and how it can change a whole town!

Q. Does your family recycle? Where and how?

Q. What kinds of things do you recycle?

Q. Why is recycling good? Why is it better than throwing things away in the trash?

### During the Reading

Page 2 – Did people in the town not recycle because they were lazy? Do you ever feel too lazy to do things? Do you think laziness is a good excuse to not recycle?

Page 10 – Do the people of the town sound excited to start recycling? I bet they are tired of their town being so ugly and smelly.

Page 12 – So the town did other things besides just recycling their paper and cans. What other things did they do? (They saved rain water and grew their own food, etc.)

Page 16 – So now the town doesn't litter? What does it mean to litter?

### After the Reading

Q. How did the town change after the people started recycling?

Example Answers: The sky turned more blue, the grass more green, the people were happier, and everything was cleaner.

Q. Which version of the town would you rather live in?

Q. Do you think San Antonio could ever get as ugly and smelly as their town did? Why or why not?

Q. What types of things did the people from the town do that you could do in your community?

Example Answers: Recycle cans, paper products, bottles, etc. There are recycling bins at all homes, most apartments, and many schools/parks. How easy do you think it would be to start using these bins?

Q. How did Michael Recycle inspire the town to recycle?

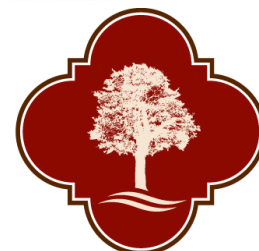
Example Answer: He educated them!

Q. Do you think you could be like Michael Recycle and encourage your family, school, or neighborhood to start recycling?

Example Answers: Recycling is all about reusing the materials and things we already have so we can save precious resources by needing to make less new materials.

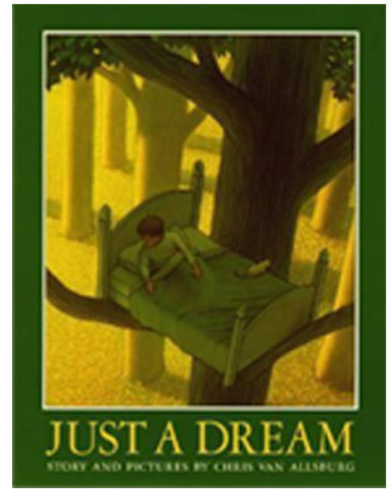
Q. What other ways of saving resources?

Example Answers: Save materials – reuse plastic bags (or use reusable bags), wrap presents with old newspaper, make art out of things you would usually throw away.



# “Just a Dream”

by Chris Van Allsburg  
Juvenile Easy Van Allsburg



## Before the Reading

This book is about a boy named Walter who travels to the future in his dream and sees what our environment might look like.

- Q. What do you think Earth will look like in the future? Do you think our sky will look the same? Our streets? Parks?
- Q. How do our decisions in the present affect the future?

## During the Reading

Occasionally stop throughout the reading to reiterate what is happening in the picture. Summarize an important idea that may have been overlooked and ask questions to encourage critical thinking:

Page 1 – When Walter threw his wrapper on the ground, what is that called? (Litter) What should he have done instead?

Page 3 – So Walter was too rushed to separate recycleable goods from the garbage. Don't you think that he could have spared a couple minutes to recycle? Do you recycle?

Page 7 & 8 – What do these mountains look like they are made of? Did you ever think there could be so much trash?

Page 13 – Do you think that cutting down a big, tall tree just for little, tiny tooth picks seem wasteful?

Page 25 – Did you know that fishing ships today catch thousands of fish a week? Why do you think fishermen in the future can only catch 1 or 2 fish?

Page 33 – Smog is caused by pollution from cars and factories. That's a lot of pollution to cause enough smog to cover the entire Grand Canyon!

## After the Reading

Q. Which of Walter's trips in the future stood out to you?

Example Answers: The streets of the town filled with trash? The layers of highways overflowing with cars? The ducks that couldn't find any pond to land in?

Q. Do you see any connections between the different things Walter saw?

Example Answers: It seems like all of them had to do with people's actions like littering, cutting down trees, creating pollution, and taking too many fish out of the ocean. People's actions now affect the future of our Earth, do you agree?

Q. How do you feel about the future that Walter saw? Would you like our Earth to look like that? Why not?

Q. After Walter saw the future in his dream, what did he do when he woke up?

Q. How did his actions change the future? What can you remember from the second time he traveled to the future in his dream? Would you rather live in the first or second "future" that Walter saw? Why?

Q. Do you think you can do some of the things that Walter did to make the Earth a better place in the future like pick up trash, recycle, and plant trees?

Q. What else do you think you can do to help the environment now?

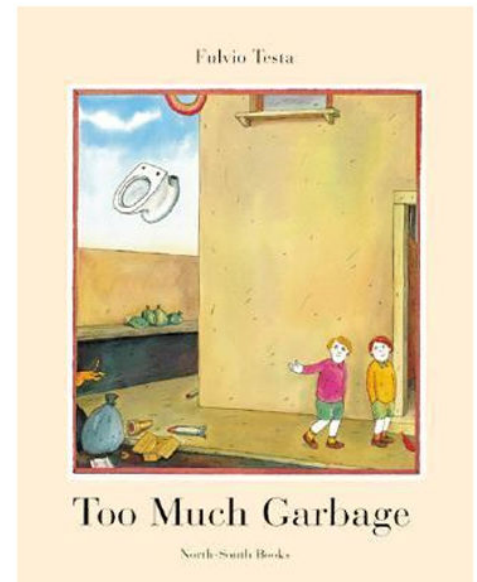
# “Too Much Garbage”

by Fluvio Testa

Juvenile Easy Testa

## While Reading

- Q. Can you describe the places that Tony and Bill saw garbage in their community?
- Q. Why was the garbage there? Where does garbage belong?
- Q. Do you see garbage like that in San Antonio? In your neighborhood, school, and parks?
- Q. What did the two friends see at the end of the story in the middle of all the garbage?
- Q. What do you think they are going to do with the flower? And after? Maybe plant a garden or a tree?
- Q. Did you know what you can easily plant a garden in your backyard and grow tasty things like sugar peas and spices, or you can plant a tree and grow apples and oranges?
- Q. Maybe they are going to spread the word about what the flower they found and they're plan to have more flowers and less garbage?
- Q. What can you do to help the garbage and litter problem in our community?



PARKS & RECREATION  
SAN ANTONIO

Check out lots of fun volunteer opportunities on our website:  
<http://www.sanantonio.gov/parksandrec/volunteer.aspx>

## It's Your Park: Pitch In!

City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department  
Volunteer Services Program