

***One Plastic Bag:
Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of the Gambia***

by Miranda Paul

Illustrated by Elizabeth Zunon

Isatou is bothered by the increasing presence of plastic bags in her village,
so she comes up with a clever solution to the problem.

Audience:

- K-5

Synopsis:

- Isatou Ceesay observed a growing problem in her community: people were using plastic grocery bags for all sorts of things, but when they were no longer useful the bags were not disposed of properly. In response to this problem, she formulated a possible solution, tested it, and came up with a functional solution. Wonderful story for reinforcing the impact one person can have on the world.

Author Website:

- <http://mirandapaulbooks.blogspot.com/>

Illustrator Website:

- <http://lizzunon.com>

Curricular Connections:

- Earth Day (April)
- Community Service
- Art
- Recycling/Environmental Education/Sustainability
- Biographies
- Writing/Research
- Problem Solving/Design Process/Scientific Method

Lesson Ideas:

- http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/newsforyou/newsforyou086.shtml
Lesson plan for Grades 2 and up that uses a news article reporting on a grocery store chain that banned plastic grocery bags
- <http://www.recommunity.com/education>
Lessons and resources for grades 1-5 about recycling and reducing waste
- <http://www.learningtogive.org/units/environment-sustaining-our-world-3-5/what-about-all-plastic>
Lesson for grades 3-5 introducing students to the Great Pacific Garbage Patch
- Lerner Source Lesson Plan *From Plastic Bag to Jump Rope* (PDF)

- Art Project Ideas:
 - <http://etsylabs.blogspot.se/2007/05/long-overdue-fusing-plastic-bag.html>
fusing bags to create a kind of plastic fabric
 - <http://matsutakeblog.blogspot.com/2011/09/diy-pom-pom-light-made-from-trash.html?q=plastic%20bag>
using plastic bags and domed lids from frozen coffee drinks to make pompom lights
 - <http://www.makeiteasycrafts.com/2013/01/recycled-plastic-bag-braided-bracelet.html>
plastic bag bracelets
 - <http://radmegan.com/2012/03/going-green-with-wrapped-baskets.html>
weave a basket
 - <http://www.myrecycledbags.com/2007/03/24/crocheted-plastic-bag-coasters/>
crochet a coaster
- Earth Day education:
 - <http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/earth-day>
 - <http://www.dltk-kids.com/crafts/earth/about.htm>
 - <http://tinkerlab.com/fifty-earth-day-activities/>
 - <http://www.pbs.org/parents/crafts-for-kids/category/holiday/earth-day/>
- Local Community Service
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmK-xF0NQfQ>
Teach your students to crochet and make a difference in your local community!
- Compare/Contrast (2nd-5th)
Read One Plastic Bag and another from the companion titles listed below. Have the students compare and contrast the environmental impact of the main characters in each story.
- Fact & Opinion/Data Collection (3rd-5th)
 - Read One Plastic Bag and another from the companion titles listed below. Have the students research the women in the stories using online resources or print materials.
 - Form an opinion: which woman has had more of an impact on your world, and why?
 - *Web 2.0 version:* use Google Forms to create a survey to poll students in your class or elsewhere in the school using the opinions generated through this activity. Use Google Sheets to collect the data and create charts to display your findings.
- Point of View (2nd-5th)
 - Read One Plastic Bag and another from the companion titles listed below. Have the students discuss the point of view of each story.
 - Are both stories written from the same point of view? What is the advantage or disadvantage of writing in the first person? What is the advantage or disadvantage of writing in the third person? Does the point of view of the book make a difference in how the author gets the message across?

- **Web 2.0 version:** use Voicethread or Stupeflix to create a short video or slideshow explaining the difference in points of view of the two books.
 - Research Project (3rd-5th)
- Use One Plastic Bag as a jumping off point for environmental research. Use print and online resources to conduct a research project about environmental hazards in your community (school, neighborhood, County, state, etc). When writing the research paper, make sure to include information from the original text to explain why your students were motivated by Ceesay's actions, as well as facts and information from the print and online resources consulted. Make sure to include accurate citations for each resource used. **Web 2.0 version:** post research findings on a blog or wiki; use online media editing sites such as Stupeflix or Voicethread to create a Public Service Announcement using your research.

Common Core Anchor Standards:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R. 5 Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9 Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.6 Use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7 conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject matter under investigation.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.10 Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.5 Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

Suggested Companion Titles

- Bang, Molly. *Nobody Particular: One Woman's Fight to Save the Bays*. NY: Henry Holt & Co, 2001.
- Lawler, Laurie. *Rachel Carson and Her Book That Changed the World*. NY: Holiday House, 2012
- Napoli, Donna Jo. *Mama Miti: Wangari Maathai and the Trees of Kenya*. NY: Paula Wiseman Books, 2010.
- O'Connell, Caitlin and Donna M. Jackson. *The Elephant Scientist*. NY: Houghton Mifflin, 2011.
- Winter, Jeanette. *The Watcher: Jane Goodall's Life With the Chimps*. NY: Schwartz & Wade Books, 2011.