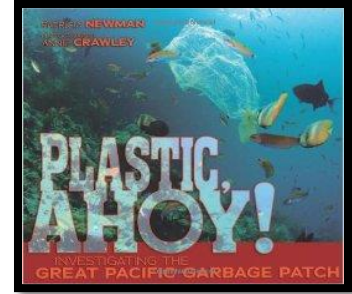


Title: Plastic, Ahoy!
Author: Patricia Newman
Grade Level: 6th Grade



SUMMARY

Plastic, Ahoy! uses vivid photography and real life interviews to explore how plastic is polluting our Earth's oceans. The book follows a team of scientists who set out to research the devastating impact that plastic waste floating in the Pacific Ocean has on animal and plant life. They even study how it is affecting the lives and health of humans back on land! Your family will enjoy reading this book because the amazing photographs almost tell the story themselves. There are also informative diagrams that help explain the scientific processes resulting from the pollution. The book is not long and your child may want to discuss his or her thoughts and feelings about this issue. This book is great for a sixth grader to read aloud with others, and is a great way for you and your child to talk and learn about science in a compelling way that matters.

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT WHILE READING

VOCABULARY

It's important to make sure that your child has an understanding of key words in the book. Talking about words while reading is a great way for your child to learn new words.

In this book, you might talk about these words:

- marine (pg. 4)
- gyre (pg. 12)
- debris (pg. 15)
- barnacles (pg. 15)
- plankton (pg. 17)
- buoys (pg. 18)
- hypostasized (pg. 35)

You might use a question like:

In the book, what does the word debris mean? What do you think debris have to do with the main idea of this book?

KEY IDEAS and THEMES

In addition to words, it's important to talk about key ideas and themes and how they develop over the course of the book. Here are some examples to get you started:

- 1) Ask your child what overall message about human behavior the author is trying to convey. What information do you think she wants her readers to remember from reading this book?
- 2) How does the team of researchers use the scientific method to drive their work? Remember the 7 steps to the scientific method are:
 - a. question
 - b. research
 - c. hypothesize

- d. experiment
- e. collect data
- f. analyze data
- g. draw a conclusion.

List some of the things the three scientists do for each of these steps. (Hint: use the water bottle silhouette on page 8 to get you started.)

- 3) Look at some of the pictures you found most interesting or most disturbing. How does each caption for these pictures help explain it? Why do you think the author and photographer chose to include these pictures? How do they help tell the story?
- 4) Check out the diagrams on pages 22 and 26. What's happening in each diagram? What do they show? Talk about them by using other details from the book.
- 5) What are some of the ways the author suggests we can help keep our oceans clean? Do you notice a difference between these suggestions? According to the author, what are some things the government can do? What are some things businesses can do? What are some things you and your family can do?

EXTRA ACTIVITIES

- 1) Visit a body of water near your home. It can be large like a lake or ocean or small like a pond or creek. Take photographs to document any trash or pollution you find, particularly any plastic debris. Print the photos you take and on the back of each photo label the following information: 1. Where it was taken 2. A description of the trash in the photo 3. Where you think the trash may have come from.
- 2) Are there any local organizations that help with keeping your water system clean? Call them up and ask to have a meeting with them to see what they do. You can tell them you read a book about plastic garbage in the ocean and want to learn more about this topic. Perhaps you can be a part of a waterway clean-up with the organization. You can create flyers and use social media to promote the time, date, and location of the clean-up. Take photos of this fun and helpful event to use for promoting future clean ups!