

Title: Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out¹

Suggested Time: 4 days at 45 minutes per day

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.7.1, RI.7.2, RL.7.4, RL.7.5, RL.7.10; W.7.1, W.7.4, W.7.9; L.7.1, L.7.2, L.7.5, L.7.6

Teacher Instructions

Preparing for Teaching

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis. Please do **not** read this to the students. This is a description for teachers about the big ideas and key understanding that students should take away **after** completing this task.

Big Ideas and Key Understandings

One seemingly small choice can have many consequences beyond the obvious.

Synopsis

A young girl, Sarah Stout, despite her father's request, chooses not to take out the garbage, and soon realizes that there are serious and far-reaching consequences to her choices.

2. Read the entire selection, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.
3. Re-read the text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Tier II/academic vocabulary.

During Teaching

¹ *This story is a "duplicate." (It is found in other anthologies, as well.) This particular revision was completed by a teacher who uses a different anthology than you, so the page numbers have been removed. This may require you to make some adjustments/add page numbers to some of the questions.*

1. Students read the entire poem aloud with a partner so they can hear the rhyme scheme. Students then create a one-sentence summary of what happens in the poem. Share one-sentence summaries as a class. Explain to students that while this poem seems very simple, there is an underlying message the author is trying to convey to the reader.
2. As students re-read the poem for a second read, have students **mark the text** by highlighting/underlining the examples of sensory details and figurative language, such as exaggeration, alliteration, and rhyme. As a suggestion, students may underline examples of exaggeration, circle alliteration, and box where they notice rhyme.
3. Students, with the teacher, re-read the text. Students will stop periodically to respond and discuss the text-dependent questions.

Text Dependent Questions

Text-dependent Questions	Evidence-based Answers
Read the title. What type of figurative language is being used by the author? Identify three other examples of this figurative language technique within the poem.	Sarah Silvia Cynthia Stout is an example of alliteration. Other examples include: "Prune pits, peach pits..." "Black burned buttered toast"
Who is the intended audience of this poem? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.	The audience of this poem is children. The author states this directly in line 46-47 when he states, "But children, remember Sarah Stout and always take the garbage out." Additionally the use of whimsical and nonsensical language indicates the poem is meant for a younger audience.
Give three examples of exaggeration used by the author that you identified in the second read and explain why the examples are exaggeration.	"It raised the roof, it broke the wall..." "That finally it touched the sky..." "The garbage reached across the state..." Each example shows the ongoing growth of the garbage, starting first within the house, then outside of the house, and then

	crossing state lines. This is exaggeration because none of these things can really happen. Piles of garbage could never have the ability to reach the sky or break down walls.
In the poem, the author uses exaggeration to illustrate the impact of the garbage on the household. Explain the impact of this exaggeration on the poem.	The impact of exaggeration is used to show time, progress of the plot, and humor.
In lines 5-6, how does the complex sentence signal a differing relationship between Sarah and her father?	The first half of the sentence has a subordinate clause starting with the subordinating conjunction though. This transitional word highlights the contrast between Sarah and her father.
There are ellipses strategically placed in the poem. Review each of the ellipses and explain why the author used each in the poem. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.	Answers may vary. The first place where ellipses occur is in the line "Gristly bits of beefy roasts...The garbage rolled on down the hall," which signals a break in the list of garbage and notes the consequence of the large amount of garbage as a whole. The second place it is noted is "It raised the roof, it broke the wall...Greasy napkins, cookie crumbs," brings the reader back to the list of garbage. The third place it is noted, "By then, of course, it was too late...The garbage reached across the state," it is used to show the consequence of so much garbage and ultimately the fate that cannot be related.
Which sensory details in the poem create an unpleasant image for the reader?	Chunks of sour cottage cheese Brown bananas Rotten peas Green bologna Curdled milk, rancid meat
How does the use of sensory details impact the effect of the poem?	The descriptions stimulate the reader's visualization of the garbage in a humorous way.
Based on the lines 42-43, "And there, in the garbage she did hate, Poor Sarah met an awful fate," what conclusions can be drawn about Sarah's fate if she is "in" the garbage?	Answers will vary. Sarah's fate could result in any of the following: becoming a smelling outcast, being buried alive, catching a disease, or even dying.

<p>What is the tone of the poem? Provide examples from the poem that illustrate the tone.</p>	<p>The tone is humorous. Some examples include rubbery, blubbery, gloppy, globs of gluey bubble gum, gooey, and gristly.</p>
<p>How does the author's use of lines versus stanzas contribute to the tone?</p>	<p>The lines create a list which creates the literary device of repetition. Repetition creates a humorous sing song pattern.</p>
<p>A theme is a life lesson, meaning, moral, or message about life or human nature that is communicated by a literary work. Based off Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout's decisions and actions (or lack thereof) determine a theme for this poem. Use lines from the poem to support this theme.</p>	<p>Answers will vary. Sample answer could be "one small decision can have many large consequences" based off lines 5-6 and lines 35-36. "And though her daddy would scream and shout, She simply would not take the garbage out" = small decision/ "And all the neighbors moved away, And none of her friends would come out to play" = large consequences</p>
<p>Review parts of a plot with students (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution). Have them map out the progression of events in the poem by placing them within these different categories.</p>	<p>Exposition: Refusing to take the garbage out Rising Action: Garbage grows out of control Climax: The garbage reached across the state/Cynthia is in the garbage Resolution: Sarah met an awful fate.</p>
<p>The poem has two clear rhyme patterns. What are the two rhyme patterns of the poem?</p>	<p>In lines 1-36, every two lines rhyme (couplets). In lines 39-45, every line rhymes.</p>
<p>What impact does the change in rhyme pattern have on the poem?</p>	<p>The change in rhyme pattern highlights the consequences Sarah faces due to her reluctance to take the garbage out.</p>

Tier II/Academic Vocabulary

	These words require less time to learn (They are concrete or describe an object/event/ process/characteristic that is familiar to students)	These words require more time to learn (They are abstract, have multiple meanings, are a part of a word family, or are likely to appear again in future texts)
Meaning can be learned from context	Line 3 - scour Line 17 - withered Line 18 - soggy Line 24 - globs Line 25 - cellophane Line 26 - blubbery Line 27 - caked	Line 4 - candy Line 43- fate
Meaning needs to be provided	Line 20 - gristly Line 28 - curdled Line 31 - rancid	Line 44-relate

Culminating Writing Task

- Prompt

Shel Silverstein embeds a message within this simple, funny poem. Identify the author’s message and use evidence from the poem that supports your analysis. Explain how the author uses literary devices (exaggeration, alliteration, sensory details) to convey humor in his message to the audience.

- Teacher Instructions

1. Students identify their writing task from the prompt provided.
2. Students complete an evidence chart as a pre-writing activity. Teachers should guide students in gathering and using any relevant notes they compiled while reading and answering the text-dependent questions earlier. Some students will need a good deal of help gathering this evidence, especially when this process is new and/or the text is challenging!

<i>Evidence Quote or paraphrase</i>	<i>Page number</i>	<i>Elaboration / explanation of how this evidence supports ideas or argument</i>
“But children, remember Sarah Stout and always take the garbage out.”	Line 46-47	The poem explicitly states the intended audience is children. Additionally the use of whimsical and nonsensical language indicates the poem is meant for a younger audience.
Chunks of sour cottage cheese Brown bananas Rotten peas Green bologna Curdled milk Rancid meat	Line 10 Line 9 Line 9 Line 25 Line 28 Line 31	The descriptions stimulate the reader’s visualization of the garbage in a humorous way.
“And so it piled up to the ceilings.” “It raised the roof, it broke the wall.”	Line 7 Line 22	The exaggeration technique in the poem shows stages of increased magnification of the events

“At last the garbage reached so high That finally it touched the sky.”	Line 33	through the rising action.
“And though her daddy would scream and shout, she simply would not take the garbage out.” “And there, in the garbage she did hate, Poor Sarah met an awful fate,”	Lines 5-6 Lines 42-43	The quotes show her small choice and how it is leading to bigger consequences. This is the end result of her actions. Though the reader is not sure what her fate is, it is inferred that it is not good.
“And all the neighbors moved away, And none of her friends would come out to play” = large consequences	Line 35-36	Again, this illustrates larger consequences for Sarah

- Once students have completed the evidence chart, they should look back at the writing prompt in order to remind themselves what kind of response they are writing (i.e. expository, analytical, argumentative). Students should then review the evidence on their chart to be sure it relates to the prompt. (Depending on the grade level, teachers may want to review students’ evidence charts in some way to ensure accuracy.) From here, students should develop a specific thesis statement. This could be done independently, with a partner, small group, or the entire class. Consider directing students to the following sites to learn more about thesis statements:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/01/> OR http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/thesis_statement.shtml.

- Students compose a rough draft. With regard to grade level and student ability, teachers should decide how much scaffolding they will provide during this process (i.e. modeling, showing example pieces, sharing work as students go).
- Students complete final draft.

- Sample Answer

The message that Shel Silverstein is portraying through this simple, funny poem is that one small decision can have large consequences. Evidence from the poem that supports this message can first be found in lines 5-6 when it states, “And though her daddy would scream and shout, She simply would not take the garbage out.” These lines show that Sarah is making a conscious choice not to take the garbage out by disobeying her father. One would not think that this small choice made by Sarah would have huge consequences, but as seen in lines 35-36 and lines 42-43, this was not the case. “And all the neighbors moved away, And none of her friends would come out to play,” shows Sarah being isolated due to her poor decision. “And there, in the garbage she did hate, Poor Sarah met an awful fate,” shows the final outcome/consequence of Sarah’s decision, which can be inferred as quite tragic. The message that the author seems to be conveying through Sarah Stout to younger readers is that if you don’t obey your parents, the consequences can be very dangerous.

To convey this message in a humorous tone, Silverstein uses a variety of literary devices. To begin, Silverstein uses exaggeration to show how the consequences of Sarah’s decision continued to escalate. “The garbage rolled on down the hall, it raised the roof, it broke the wall...” and “At last the garbage reached so high, That it finally touched the sky.” The alliteration of “moldy melons,” “brown bananas,” and “gloppy glumps” provides humor in the build-up of the disgusting garbage that will ultimately lead to Sarah’s “awful fate”. Finally, sensory details such as “soggy beans, green baloney,” and “curdled milk” create humor while forming a repulsive image in the reader’s mind of the consequences of Sarah’s one small choice.

Additional Tasks

- *Because of the focus on making appropriate choices and the consequences of those choices, students research a personal choice to identify global consequences. (i.e. drinking soda rather than water and its consequences.)*
 - Answer: Students begin brainstorming by creating a bulls-eye and adding a choice they made in the center and the impact of that choice on the people around them like Sarah did in the text. Once the choice and the impact of that choice

on others is identified, students then research to create a cause/effect essay that identifies the “ripples” that affect others based on their choices. After the topic has been researched and explored, students return to bulls eye to add details gleaned from their research and writing.

- *Discuss composting with students and being responsible with our environment. An alternate Big Idea can be “Everyone is responsible for protecting the environment.” Have students read the poem again and consider Sarah Stout as a collective “we.” While reading, have students underline items that are simply garbage and circle items for the compost pile. In addition, have students research ways to lower their carbon footprints and write an argumentative essay on the importance of protecting the environment.*
 - Answer: Answers will vary. Students should consider the global need to protect the environment and discuss ways people accept this responsibility. To illustrate an example, students will underline garbage such as greasy napkins, cellophane, chicken bones, and rancid meet. Students will circle compost items such as egg shells, brown bananas, withered greens, and tangerines. Students will complete the activity by discussing if this action would help protect the environment and provide reasons why. Then, students research efforts to protect the environment and reduce carbon footprints such as recycling efforts in their community, energy saving tips and suggestions for the home, water conservation, etc. In an argumentative essay, students will determine whether people should be responsible for protecting the environment and reducing carbon footprints. Students will provide details from their research to support their claim. The argumentative paper should also address counter claims.
- *Have students read the text, “Teens, Texting and Driving: Disaster in the Making.” Use the text dependent questions below as you read the article with students. Finally, have students complete a second culminating task. Using the **rhyme** and exaggeration*

techniques found in “Sarah Cynthia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out,” create a poem that addresses the causes/consequences of teen texting and driving found in the article “Teens, Texting and Driving: Disaster in the Making.” Refer to the evidence chart for sample quotes students could include with their responses.

- Answer: Answers will vary. Students will create a narrative poem. The poem must address the causes of texting while driving mentioned in the article and potential consequences. In addition, the poem must mirror the literary techniques found in “Sarah Cynthia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out.” For example, students may include causes such as denial, impulse control, myths of being multi-taskers, etc. Consequences students could include in the essay are accidents and fatalities.

Text-dependent Questions	Evidence-based Answers
Who is the narrator of the article, Teens, Texting and Driving: A Disaster in the Making?	The narrator is a concerned mother who has been in accidents because of teen texting.
The author’s claim is that (teenage) texting and driving should be illegal. How does the narrator’s point of view affect the argument?	The narrator is a parent who has been the victim of teen texting. The reader is sympathetic to victims. The narrator is a parent of teenagers who have been in car wrecks. This increases her credibility with her audience (other parents) because she’s “been there”. This strengthens her argument because her evidence (her experience; data; and advice) uses reasons that would best fit the audience.
What is the author’s purpose in the texting article?	The author’s purpose is to: 1)inform the reader of the how teen texting is a serious and alarming issue today 2)explain the reasons teens text even though they have been warned 3)advise parents on ways they can prevent their teens from texting and driving
List three causes and one effect (consequence) of teen texting	Causes/Reasons: teen denial, underdeveloped impulse control,

and driving.	myth of being a multi-taskers, overconfidence in driving abilities, enjoying the highs of risk-taking Consequence: accidents, fatalities
Based on the article, what would be a parent's argument against multi-tasking?	"A second is all it takes to get in a wreck." "Talking doesn't take your eyes off the road, texting does." "Multitasking skills are irrelevant when you are driving a two-ton automobile at 60 miles an hour."
What is the tone of the article?	The tone of the article is concerned, stern, poignant, fervent, alarmed, and urgent.
What words/phrases from the article help the reader determine the tone? (Teacher Note #3)	The fervent tone is evidenced by words and phrases such as: "I have renewed interest and alarm about the behavior." "Lest you think it's no big deal, consider this-" "So why, oh why , do teens persist in texting while barreling down the road at 50 mph. despite warnings, admonitions, and threats- "
How would the tone change if the article was told from the perspective of a teenager?	Answers will vary. The tone might be serious but less fervent. A teenager might be more understanding of the behavior.
Why does the author of the article, Teens, Texting and Driving: Disaster in the Making, introduce the text with a personal experience?	The personal anecdote draws the reader in; conveys credibility; and humanizes the topic.
Based on the poem and the article, which of the following BEST represents the theme both passages share. (Teacher Note #4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Stubbornness in relationships can cause tension. b. Children should listen to their parents to avoid conflict. c. One small decision can have many large consequences. d. Parents should be strict with their children to avoid dangerous consequences. <p>Not taking the garbage out and texting while driving are both seemingly small decisions that can have severe consequences (being carried away by garbage/fatality)</p>
Map out the progression of the events in the poem, using the	Exposition: Refusing to take the garbage out

plot diagram, to help support the theme. (Teacher Note #5)	Rising Action: Garbage grows out of control Climax: The garbage reached across the state/Cynthia is in the garbage Resolution: Sarah met an awful fate.
Provide textual evidence from the Teens, Texting and Driving article to support the theme.	““In the moment a text comes in, the urge to read it (decision) is as strong as the need to keep their eyes on the road. This is an accident waiting to happen. (consequence)”

<i>Evidence Quote or paraphrase</i>	<i>Page number</i>	<i>Elaboration / explanation of how this evidence supports ideas or argument</i>
“Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would not take the garbage out!”	Lines 1-2	Students will use this rhyme scheme to help them create a similar one in their own poem. Example: Michael Murray Matthew Moan Would not put away his phone!
“Teens are in great denial.”	Parag. 6	Students will address the causes of teen texting and driving. Example: “ “And so he drove and texted madly, It’s “all good” he thought to himself gladly.”
“And so it piled up to the ceilings.” “It raised the roof, it broke the wall.” “At last the garbage reached so high That finally it touched the sky.”	Line 7 Line 22 Line 33	The exaggeration technique in the poem shows stages of increased magnification of the events through the rising action. Example of increased “multitasking”: “And so he cruised, and texted while eating his lunch.” “He sped at a thousand miles and tempted fate with a confident smile.” “At last his speed reached a million an hour, His knees were steering as he winked, the hot rodder!”

"Poor Sarah met an awful fate." "5800 people killed."	Line 43 Parag. 3	Students must address the consequence of texting while driving and provide a resolution to their poem. Example: "Poor Michael Murray met with a terrible fate, Crashed and flew through the glass at an alarming rate."
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Note to Teacher

1. Lead students to draw out possible themes after reviewing the definition of theme.
2. Elements of a plot should have been taught in a previous lesson to this poem. Therefore, review with students the five parts to a plot (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action and resolution). Then, have students draw a plot chart and label the elements of the plot chart as it relates to the events to the poem.
3. Review the definition of tone and how word choice creates the tone.
4. Refer back to #1.
5. Refer back to #2.

Name _____ Date _____

Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out

1. Read the title. What type of figurative language is being used by the author? Identify three other examples of this figurative language technique within the poem.
2. Who is the intended audience of this poem? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.
3. Give three examples of exaggeration used by the author that you identified in the second read and explain why the examples are exaggeration.
4. In the poem, the author uses exaggeration to illustrate the impact of the garbage on the household. Explain the impact of this exaggeration on the poem.

