

TEACHER'S GUIDE

JANITORS SCHOOL OF GARBAGE



ABOUT BOOK 1

Ordinary trash becomes extraordinary at the magical school of garbage—a summer school for young garbologists.

Garbage has come to life as animated creatures called junklets and are wreaking havoc in elementary schools. Only the specially trained kids from the magical School of Garbage can stop the rise of the trash monsters. With the school's magical janitorial supplies—brooms that can fly, toilet plungers that can reverse gravity, and mops that can capture anything in their strings—the ordinary becomes extraordinary.

Landon Murphy discovers the undercover janitorial world when his soon-to-be-stepsister, Jade Shu, guides him through a magical portal at the bottom of a dumpster that leads to a fantastical landfill and the home of the School of Garbage, where she has secretly been a student for the last few years.

Problems at home with his family make it hard for Landon to feel like he belongs anywhere, but he is quickly welcomed as a student at the intriguing school for wizard-like janitors. His class on the science of garbology is like being a crime-scene investigator, and every student gets to bond with one of three Servites—small, magical animals who exhale enchanted dust to help kids focus or be creative or have energy.

Landon and Jade—along with allies from the original series—are tasked to take out the trash and figure out who—or what—is behind the mysterious garbage attacks and stop them before the entire world is literally trashed.



"Returning fans will welcome some familiar characters—including supposedly vanquished villains—as well as more janitor gags to wince at and desperate struggles aplenty with towering assemblages of animated detritus. There's more than enough gross, slimy action to sweep readers along."

—KIRKUS



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PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Take a minute or two and examine the cover of the book. What do the illustrations on the cover tell us about the book? Make some predictions about the characters and the story. Share with a partner. What evidence on the cover supports your predictions?
2. What does the summary of the book tell you about what the story is going to be about? What catches your interest? Are there any words you don't recognize? What do you think they could mean? Does what you read make you want to read the book? Why or why not?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The Scrubbish breathes out an extra boost of creativity. Who do you know who is creative? What do they do to show their creativity?
2. The Filter breathes out an extra boost of physical energy. Who do you know who is athletic? What do they do to show their athletic abilities?
3. The Shine breathes out an extra boost of focus. Who do you know who is focused? What do they do to show their focus?
4. If you could bond with a Servite, which type would you want? Why? What would you name it?
5. Look in the nearest trash can. Pretend that the first item you see was given to you by a Junklet. Would you keep it or throw it away again? Why?
6. What is something you consider valuable that other people might consider trash?

7. Have you ever thrown away something by accident? What was it? Why was it important to you?
8. If you could open a magical dumpster portal to anywhere, where would it lead? Why? What would you do there?
9. At the beginning of the story, Landon didn't want to be friends with Jade. Have you ever made friends with someone you didn't think you'd get along with? What changed your mind?

ACTIVE READING STRATEGIES

1. **Summarizing:** Pretend one of your classmates has been absent, then summarize for them the last chapter you read. Pick which parts of the chapter are most important to share to help your classmate catch up quickly. Leave out small details that are not important to the overall story or chapter. Did your summary focus on an important story development, important traits of a certain character, or something else? Explain your decisions on what you included or left out of your summary in a small group or to the whole class.
2. **Visualizing:** Reread one of your favorite scenes in the book. Think about all the things that Landon can see, hear, smell, taste, or feel in the scene. Then draw a picture. Be sure to include specific details from the text. Find a partner and explain what details you chose to include from the story and why.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. **Invention:** Many different tools are used to fight Toxites. What were some that were used in the book? What did they do? Imagine you have been tasked by the School of Garbage to come up with a new invention. What is the everyday item or cleaning supply you'll use for your invention? What does it do? How does it help garbologists? Are there any dangers to using it?
The Bureau of Educational Maintenance will need to be convinced of the importance of this invention. Write a paper that convinces them why they need to produce your invention. Make sure it includes sound reasoning and solid evidence, logical reasoning, and examples of situations where it would be beneficial.
2. **Timeline:** Create a timeline for the book. Include key events, decisions, and interactions that have influenced the character's development and journey. Use illustrations, quotes, or summaries to highlight significant moments.
Are there any events that should be included on the timeline that occurred before the book began?

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ABOUT BOOK 2

Three young garbologists must defend the world from new magical trash creations.

Landon Murphy never imagined he would spend his summer battling the animated trash monster known as the Megalajunk, and he is eager to continue studying from the wizard-like janitors at the School of Garbage. He'll need to improve his skills with magical pushbrooms and plungers now that the Thingamajunks have gone rogue.

When two Thingamajunks show up at Landon's mother's wedding, Landon is desperate to save his family. Using the lock he kept after defeating the Megalajunk, Landon accidentally triggers his own temporary transformation into the trash leviathan.

Now, he and his stepsister, Jade Shu, must team up again with Sabra, Dr. Bernard Weizmann, and Daisy Gates to figure out why the Thingamajunks are popping up to ruin parties, weddings, concerts, and other celebrations. Landon suspects the Locksmith is behind the attacks, but information about the mysterious figure is scarce.

The questions continue to pile up, but one thing is certain: War is coming to the landfill, and Landon, Jade, and Sabra will need all their courage, creativity, and focus to lay a trap for the Thingamajunks—before it's too late.

NEW



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Tyler Whitesides once worked part-time at a middle school as a night custodian. Wandering the halls each night sparked the ideas which eventually led to the Janitors series. As an author, Tyler has presented in many states, speaking to more than 700 schools across the country. He loves music and the great outdoors. He lives in northern Utah with his two sons.

JANITORS SCHOOL OF GARBAGE

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Take a minute or two and examine the front and back cover of the book. Make some predictions about the characters and the story. Share with a partner. Choose which prediction you can support with the most evidence from the cover. Share the best prediction with the class.
2. What do you remember about the first book in the series? Where did the story leave off? What do you think is going to happen in this book based off the covers? What unique vocabulary is used in the summary?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you had a scrap drone with magical spy bubbles, who or what would you like to observe? Why?
2. Shadowbox was being watched by the Locksmith, so she felt pressured to smash the wedding cake. What should you do if you feel pressured into doing something you don't feel right about?
3. If you could ride a giant Servite, which type would you pick? Why?
4. Have you ever been to an event that might qualify as a "Trial of the Trash"? What would be special about the event that would make it a target for the Thingamajunks to attack?
5. After saving Daisy, Target passes away from the strain. Have you ever lost a pet or someone close to you? What do you do to remember and honor them?
6. Landon is sure that Shadowbox is an enemy, but he turns out to be wrong about her. Have you ever been wrong about someone? What did you do about it?

7. Daisy tells Landon that his anger isn't bad, it's what he does with the feeling that makes it right or wrong. What are other big emotions? What are some appropriate ways to deal with these feelings?

ACTIVE READING STRATEGIES

1. **Understanding Key Words:** Read a paragraph from the story and identify key words that capture the scene or character. Select words that are descriptive, impactful, or significant in conveying the mood or setting of the story. Create a list of these key words and use them to write a short summary of the paragraph. Draw a picture to go along with it.
2. **Foreshadowing:** Good readers often imagine or think about what will happen next in a story. What do you think will happen to Landon next? Use details from the story to support what you predict and think.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. **Redesign the Book Cover:** Design a new book cover for *Janitors School of Garbage: Trials of the Trash*, incorporating key themes, characters, and settings. Consider using symbols and imagery that reflect the tone of the story. Make sure to include a title and the author's name. Write a brief explanation of your choices, including how each element represents a significant aspect of the story.
Would you rename the book? What would the new title be? Why?
2. **Character Interviews:** Imagine you are interviewing a character from the book. Prepare a list of questions that explore the character's background, motivations, and personality traits. Consider asking about their relationships with other characters, their goals and fears, and how their goals have evolved throughout the story. Write a script for the interview, including both the questions you would ask and the character's responses. Use insights from the book to craft authentic and engaging dialogue that provides deeper insight into the character.
3. **Book Review:** Begin by summarizing the plot, main characters, and key themes. Share your overall impression of the story, highlighting what you enjoyed and any aspects that could be improved. Discuss both the character development and your favorite parts of the story, providing specific examples to support your thinking. Consider the book's impact on you as a reader and whether you would recommend it to others. End your review with a thoughtful reflection on the book's strength and weaknesses, offering a balanced critique.