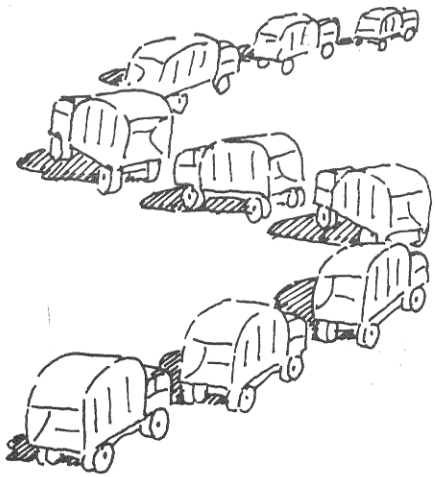
BOOK I

Too Much Trash

A Little Book About a Big Problem

Every day, each person in the United States throws out about 3 1/2 pounds of trash. Put that all together, and it would fill 100,000 garbage trucks.



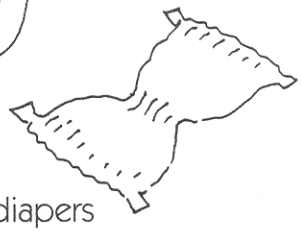
Collect all that trash for a year, and it would fill enough garbage trucks to circle the earth two and a half times.

A

Here are some of the things that end up in the nation's garbage can every day:

4 thousand trucks and buses

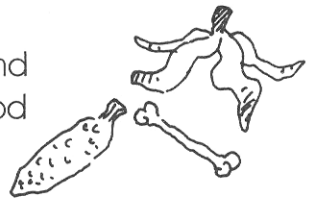
548 thousand tires



48 million disposable diapers

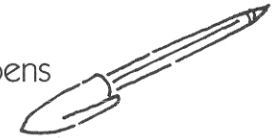
B

43 thousand tons of food



20 thousand cars

4 million ballpoint pens

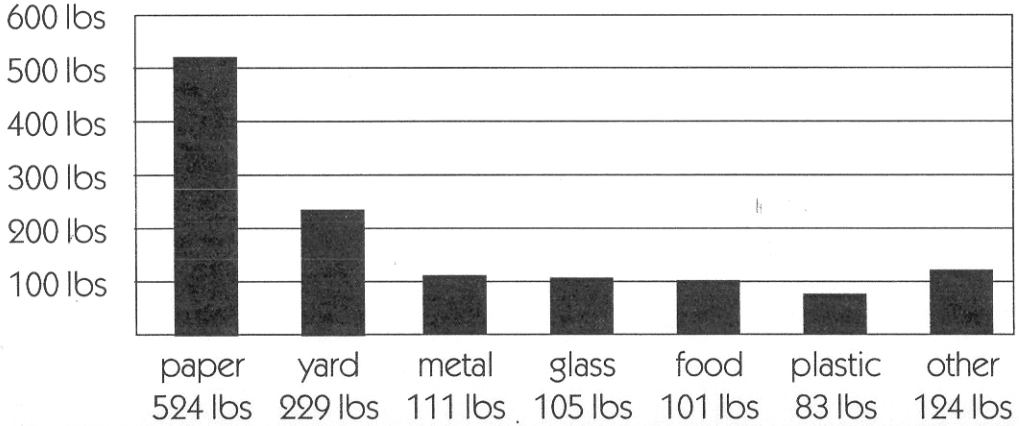


20 thousand television sets

Source: **Garbage!** by Evan and Janet Hadingham (Simon & Schuster, 1990)

Most of what we throw away is paper. But we throw away plenty of metal, plastic, and food, too. This graph shows what each person throws away in just one year.

WHERE DO YOU THINK ALL THIS TRASH ENDS UP?



Source: The Environmental Protection Agency (based on 1988 figures)

BOOK II

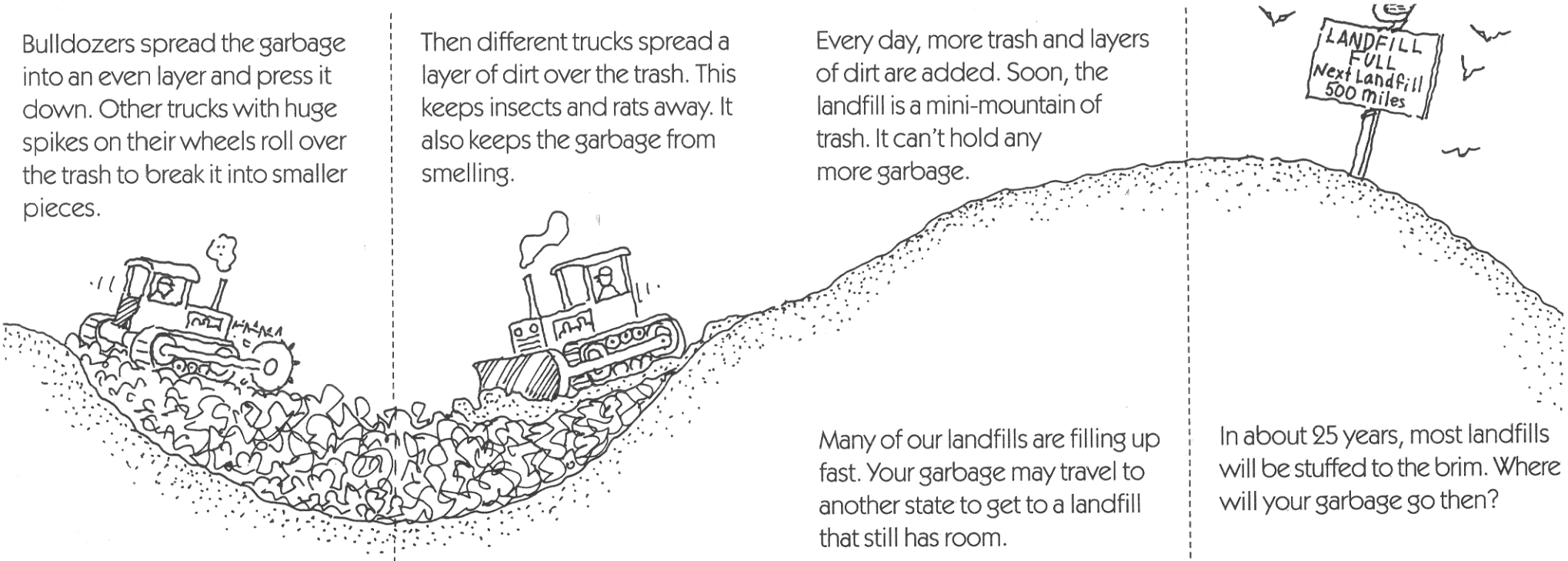
Where Does Your Garbage Go?

A Short Story About a Long Trip

Bulldozers spread the garbage into an even layer and press it down. Other trucks with huge spikes on their wheels roll over the trash to break it into smaller pieces.

Then different trucks spread a layer of dirt over the trash. This keeps insects and rats away. It also keeps the garbage from smelling.

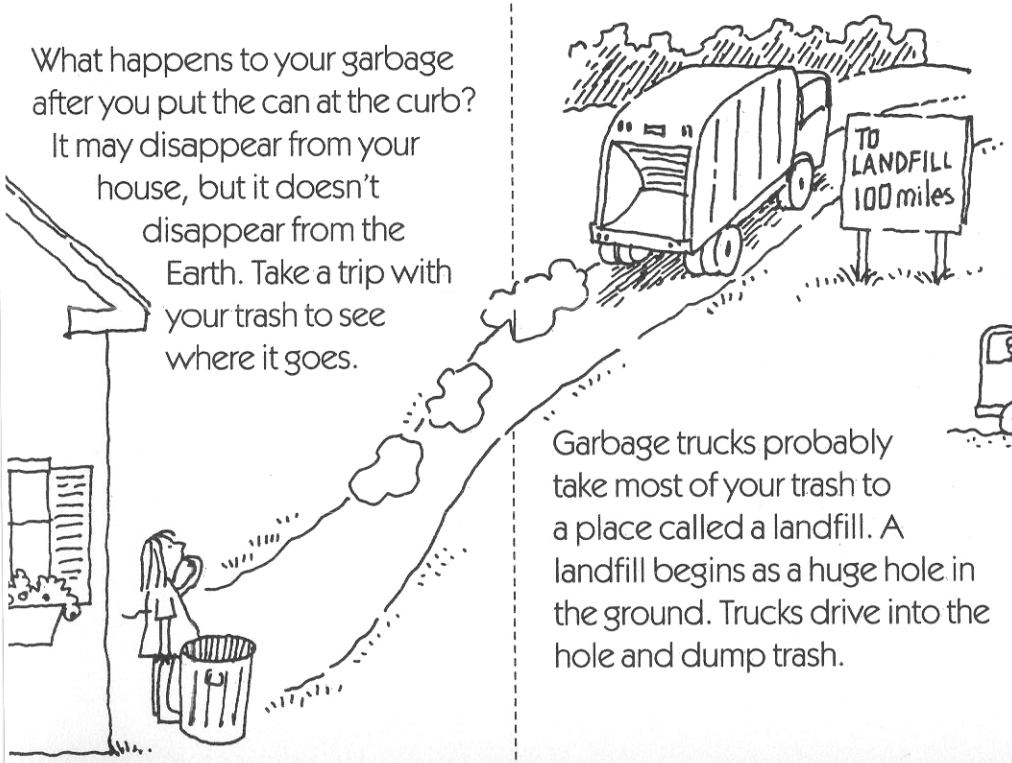
Every day, more trash and layers of dirt are added. Soon, the landfill is a mini-mountain of trash. It can't hold any more garbage.



Many of our landfills are filling up fast. Your garbage may travel to another state to get to a landfill that still has room.

In about 25 years, most landfills will be stuffed to the brim. Where will your garbage go then?

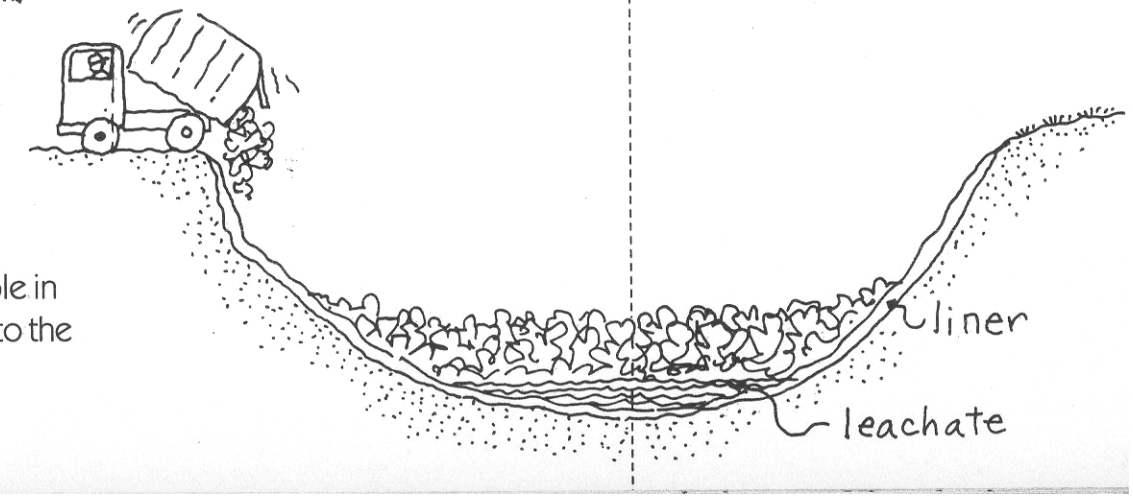
What happens to your garbage after you put the can at the curb? It may disappear from your house, but it doesn't disappear from the Earth. Take a trip with your trash to see where it goes.



Garbage trucks probably take most of your trash to a place called a landfill. A landfill begins as a huge hole in the ground. Trucks drive into the hole and dump trash.

When it rains, water trickles through the garbage. This makes a slimy, polluted liquid called leachate (LEE chate).

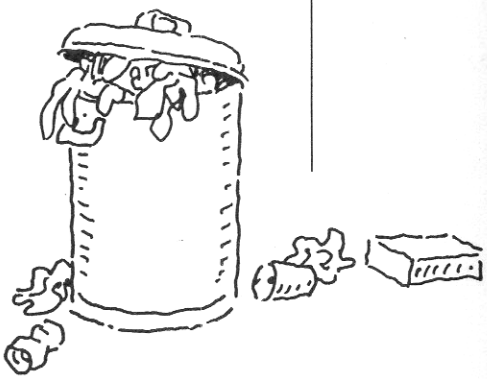
At the bottom of the landfill is a lining of clay or plastic. The liner keeps the leachate from leaking into the drinking water supply.



Name _____

Trash Log

What do you throw away in a day? On the chart below, record each piece of garbage you toss out in one day. Then describe the activity that produced the garbage. Continue the chart on the back of this page if you need more room.



trash made	activity
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	

Name _____

Trash Log

follow-up

1. What do you think about the amount of garbage you produced?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What activities produced the most trash?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Why is it important for people to become more aware of what they throw away?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name _____

How Does Your GARBAGE Grow?

What would happen if you didn't take out your trash for a week? A month? A year? As you read the rap, think about all the trash you make. What happens to that garbage after you throw it away?

TRASH RAP

News alert! Important flash!
We've got a problem—it's in our trash!
Garbage is mounting bit by bit,
But we're running out of space for it.
A bottle here, a tin can there,
Let's toss it out—but where? But where?
Our garbage dumps are piling high
With paper, plastic, and food we buy.
A bag of leaves, a pizza box,
A broken toy, some ragged socks,
A soda can, a cardboard cup,
Trash is piling up, up, UP!
An old TV, a worn-out tire,
Garbage higher, higher, HIGHER!

Whoa! I say, and let's slow down.
There's too much trash all over town.
Another bag, another load,
Our garbage dumps have overflowed.
The problem's bad, as you can tell,
And—PHEW!—it's getting worse to smell!
But we can "trash" this problem now,
By taking action, learning how.
We've got to go on a "garbage diet,"
Learn each step, and then apply it.
Another can, another cup,
Trash is piling up, up, UP!
Another box, another wire,
Garbage higher, higher, HIGHER!

by Meish Goldish