



PABLO FINDS A TREASURE

Andrée Poulin

GRADES 1-4 / ENGLISH

THEMES Social Themes • Homelessness & Poverty
Character Education • Resiliency

THE STORY

A poignant, simply-told story that shows the resourcefulness of poverty-stricken children around the world.

BOOK SUMMARY

Pablo and his sister spend every day at “Treasure Mountain,” the local dump. There, they rummage through the garbage looking for items that their mother can sell for food. The work is exhausting, and sometimes not very lucrative, but the worst thing they have to contend with is Filthy-Face, a bully who steals the finds of all the children. One day, Pablo discovers a real treasure: a gold chain. Thanks to his ingenuity, he manages to hide it from Filthy-Face. This beautifully illustrated book brings home the reality of child poverty around the world.



AUTHOR PROFILE

ANDRÉE POULIN has written over 30 books for children. Many have won awards, including the TD Children’s Literature Award (French language) for *La plus grosse poutine du monde*, now published in English by Annick Press as *The Biggest Poutine in the World*. Her stories deal with friendship, empathy, tolerance, and child poverty. Andrée believes books can change the world. By setting her stories in Canada, Africa, and Asia, she allows her readers to discover other cultures. She writes a blog, reviews books, and gives workshops in schools and libraries. She lives in Gatineau, Quebec.

WEB RESOURCES

- Author Website:
<http://www.andreepoulin.ca/english.html>
(most pages are in French)
- Publisher Website - author: <http://www.annickpress.com/author/Andree-Poulin>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Canadian Teachers’ Federation. Social Action Projects: Making a Difference, www.imagine-action.ca/teachers/Resources.aspx?id=34&lang=EN&set=1
- Canadian Teachers’ Federation. Social Action Projects: Making a Difference Video, www.imagine-action.ca/teachers/Resources.aspx?id=41
- Statistics Canada. National Household Survey Profile, www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E.
- Statistics Canada. NHS Focus on Geography Series, [Online]. www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/fogs-spg/Pages/CSDSelector.cfm?lang=E&level=4.
- Statistics Canada. Summary Tables, www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/lfs04g-eng.htm
- Wikipedia: Waste Picker https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waste_picker
- Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing & Organizing (WIEGO) - Waste Pickers <http://wiego.org/informal-economy/occupational-groups/waste-pickers>

READING COMPREHENSION

- What was Sofia's first find of the day? What is Sofia's second find of the day?
- What will the children's mother do at the end of the day?
- What is Pablo first find of the day?
- What is Sofia 2nd find of the day?
- Why does Sofia cough?
- What is the real treasure that Pablo finds?
- What does Pablo dream of after he finds the treasure? What does Sofia dream of after Pablo finds the treasure?
- What does Pablo have in his mouth?

DISCUSS

Note: As children we may have been taught that "sticks and stones can break our bones, but names can never hurt us." Unfortunately, that is simply not true. Children who live in poverty, like all children, deserve to be treated with respect and in a manner that preserves their dignity. We encourage teachers to tailor the lessons to their students, to be sure that students who are experiencing poverty do not feel stigmatized and to encourage students who do not know poverty first-hand to develop compassion for those who have been less fortunate.

The following discussion themes are mentioned as potential sources of discussion in class, if and when appropriate for your students.

- What is the "Treasure Mountain"? Why are the children going to the "Treasure Mountain"?
- Calgary has 3 landfills (Spyhill Landfill, East Calgary Landfill, Shepard Landfill); do you think children in Calgary can go to the landfills and find treasure? Why? Why not?
- Who is Filthy Face? Can you describe him?
- When Pablo finds a book, Sofia tells him that "Reading won't fill your stomach"; do you agree with Sofia?

SUGGESTED READINGS

FROM THE SAME AUTHOR

- (for Gr. 4 to 6) *The Biggest Poutine in the World* (2016)
<http://www.annickpress.com/Biggest-Poutine-in-the-World-The>
- (for Pre-K to Gr. 2) *Going for a Sea Bath* (2016)
http://pajamapress.ca/book/going_for_a_sea_bath/
- (for K to Gr. 3) *The Magic Clothesline* (2012)
http://www.andreepoulin.ca/romans_jeunesse/la_corde_a_linge_magique.html

BY OTHER ARTISTS FROM WORDFEST 2016

- (for Gr. 1 & up) *L'abécédairre du pet* (2014) by Phillippe Béha <http://www.soulieresediteur.com/details.php?isbn=978-2-89607-264-4>
- (for Gr. 1 & up) *Je suis heureux* (2016) by Phillippe Béha <http://www.editionsdelisatis.com/je-suis-heureux/>
- (for Gr. 1 & up) *Douze oiseaux* (2015) by Phillippe Béha <http://www.leseditionsdelabagnole.com/douze-oiseaux/renee-robotaille/livre/9782897140823>
- (for Gr. 6 & up) *Lettre a ma douce* (2014) by Larent Tardy <http://www.editions-bilboquet.com/lettre-a-ma-douce.php>
- (for Gr. 2 & up) *L'île aux fleurs* (2009) by Larent Tardy <http://www.editions-bilboquet.com/l-ile-aux-fleurs.php>

OTHER BOOKS AND MOVIES ON RELATED SUBJECT

- (for K to Gr. 2) *Fly Away Home* (1993) by Eve Bunting <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/fly-away-home#cart/cleanup>
- (for Gr. 1 to 3) *Maddi's Fridge* (2014) by Lois Brandt http://www.flashlightpress.com/Maddis_Fridge.html
- (for Gr. 1 to 5) *Four Feet, Two Sandals* (2007) by Khadra Mohammed <http://www.eerdmans.com/Products/5296/four-feet-two-sandals.aspx>
- (for Gr. 1 to 4) *The Hundred Dresses* (2004) by Eleanor Estes <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/book/hundred-dresses#cart/cleanup>
- (for K to Gr. 3) *Beatrice's Goat* (2000) by Page McBrier <http://books.simonandschuster.ca/Beatrices-Goat/Page-McBrier/9780689869907>

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Consider the word “poverty”. What does it make you think of?
- For a child your age, living in poverty means not being able to...
- Is poverty something you can see?
- What is a food bank? What is a shelter?
- What activities in your community are designed to help those living in poverty? Which of these activities did you participate in?
- Did you know: An estimated \$12 billion worth of food is wasted in Canada, thrown away by distributors and packagers along the way to your local grocer. 210 million kilograms of food is tossed each year by retailers in Toronto alone. Most of it is still fine to eat. How much food are you throwing away every day? Week?

ACTIVITIES

FACT SHEET – LEARN ABOUT POVERTY IN CANADA

One of the challenges about poverty in Canada is that there is no official definition of poverty or consistent indicators of poverty. So how do you tackle a problem if it is not defined?

An estimated one in seven Canadians — or 4.8 million people — currently live in conditions of poverty. That means that 4.8 million people struggle to meet their most basic needs every day; to make challenging decisions like paying the electricity bill or going to the dentist, buy nutritious food or buy a transit pass.

FACT SHEET – LEARN ABOUT TREASURE MOUNTAINS

What is there to know about Treasure Mountains?

Take your class through a landfill tour with the City of Calgary: Classes are invited to take a guided tour at the Shepard Landfill and a peek inside Calgary’s recycling facility from the vantage point of a viewing gallery. Students will discover how The City of Calgary safely and responsibly manages our city’s garbage. They’ll also learn how waste diversion programs help reduce the amount of garbage ending up in the landfill. No charge for tours, but schools must provide their own bus transportation. More at <http://www.calgary.ca/UEP/WRS/Pages/Resources-for-educators/Landfill-and-recycling-facility-school-tours.aspx>

Visit the Calgary Food Bank and learn about what they do for the community in need. For tours with children, your group must contain one adult for every five children. Children must be 8 years of age or older. More at <http://www.calgaryfoodbank.com/contact/tours/>

CURRICULUM CONNECTION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

GRADE 1:

- Use knowledge of context, pictures, letters, words, sentences, predictable patterns and rhymes in a variety of oral, print and other media texts to construct and confirm meaning (2.1)

GRADE 2:

- Identify the main idea or topic and supporting details of simple narrative and expository texts (2.1)
- Ask questions to focus on particular aspects of topics for own investigations (3.1)
- Discuss, represent or write about interesting or important aspects of oral, print and other media texts (2.2)

GRADE 3:

- Discuss, represent or write about ideas in oral, print and other media texts, and relate them to own ideas and experiences and to other texts (2.2)
- Make inferences about a character’s actions or feelings (2.2)
- Summarize the main idea of individual oral, print and other media texts (2.2)

SOCIAL STUDIES:

- Value the groups and communities to which they belong (1.1.2)
- Develop age-appropriate behaviour for social involvement as responsible citizens contributing to their community (1.S.6, 2.S.6)

FACT SHEET – Learn About Poverty in Canada

One of the challenges about poverty in Canada is that there is no official definition of poverty or consistent indicators of poverty. So how do you tackle a problem if it is not defined?

An estimated one in seven Canadians — or 4.8 million people — currently live in conditions of poverty. That means that 4.8 million people struggle to meet their most basic needs every day; to make challenging decisions like paying the electricity bill or going to the dentist, buy nutritious food or buy a transit pass.

Here are some facts:

- Child Poverty: The number or percentage of people under the age of 18 living in poverty
- 546,000 children across the country live in conditions of poverty.
- 16.2% of all children in Alberta lived below the low-income measure (LIM After Tax) in 2012. What about in 2016?
 - 40% of indigenous children in Canada live in poverty.
 - 8% of food bank users across Canada are children.
 - About 1 in 7 users of shelters is a child.
 - Youth aged 16-24 make up about 20% of the homeless population
 - Nearly 15% of elderly single individuals live in poverty
- A recent study conducted by McMaster University found a staggering 21-year difference in the life expectancies between the poorest and wealthiest members of a community.



Source: CBC.ca. *10 Things You Might Not Know About Poverty In Canada* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/strombo/news/10-things-you-might-not-know-about-poverty-in-canada>.

Additional resources for teachers:

Fact Sheet: Child Poverty in Alberta

http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/child_poverty_fact_sheet.pdf

FACT SHEET – Learn About Treasure Mountains

We don't really think about garbage that much – after all it's something we throw away.

However, there is a world where garbage is people's entire lives. Children live and work on dumpsites or landfills all over the world, such as the huge Jardim Gramacho landfill in Brazil and the Deonar site in Mumbai. They are usually referred to as "Waste pickers". Waste pickers collect household or commercial/industrial waste. They may collect from private waste bins on the curb or from dumpsters, along the streets and waterways or on municipal dumps and landfills. Some rummage through garbage in search of necessities; others collect and sell recyclables to middlemen or businesses. Some work in recycling warehouses or recycling plants owned by their cooperatives or associations. What waste pickers have in common is that they do this work to earn a livelihood, and often help support their families.



Source: Matthew Karsten (Photojournalist). *Vultures, Cows and Wild Horses Pick Through Garbage With People* [Photograph]. Retrieved from <http://expertvagabond.com/la-chureca-managua-photos/>.

Here are some fascinating facts about their lives:

No reliable statistics are collected (except in Brazil) but we think that several million children live on dumpsites around the world – mostly between the ages of 5 and 17.

They are taught to scavenge anything that can be sold – from old tin cans and plastic bottles that can be recycled, to perhaps something more valuable, like an old purse. Their scavenging can mean a second meal for their family that day.

Their houses are often built from the rubbish, using boxes and wood which they can find to make walls and roofs

These young waste pickers must find everything on the dump because they have no possession of their own.

Many children never get to attend school, making it hard for them ever to escape the landfills.

As you can imagine living on a dumpsite isn't healthy and they are often likely to get sick from different diseases – Pneumonia is one of the main diseases children can catch on a landfill.

Additional reading for teachers (or older students):

Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing & Organizing (WIEGO) - Waste Pickers
<http://wiego.org/informal-economy/occupational-groups/waste-pickers>

Wikipedia: Waste Picker
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waste_picker